

BEAR LAKE LAKE BOARD

REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday 1/18/2017
6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Kim Arter at 6:00 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

ROLL CALL:

Present: Brenda Moore, Sam Janson, Kim Arter, I. John Snider and Darrell VanFossan

Absent: None

Also: Recording Secretary Veronica West, and several area residents/citizens.

MINUTES: Sam Janson moved to accept the minutes December 1, 2016. Darrell VanFossan supported the motion. The motion carried by voice vote. The minutes will be placed on file.

REPORTS:

Management Plan – progress update: Brenda Moore noted she has compiled information and material to begin writing the document.

COMMUNICATION:

- Presentations from Environmental Consultant RFP Bidders:
 - **PLM Lake and Land Management Corp** – Jason Broekstra introduced himself and noted that PLM has been providing treatment services to Bear Lake for many years, but he stressed they are not just applicators, but consultants and employ environmental scientists, biologists etc. He talked about the convenience of having a consultant and applicator all in one company and stressed that being both leads to more efficiency. He also commented that having a long standing relationship with Bear Lake results in lower costs than most other consultants. Mr. Broekstra talked about a sample PLM management plan that was provided in the handouts, he showed several slides and discussed services they provide such as biobased mapping, bathymetry, sediments, bottom hardness and plant surveys using the latest equipment as the current maps they've been using to treat are quite old. Darrell VanFossan asked Mr. Broekstra to elaborate on treatments that are available besides herbicides. Mr. Broekstra talked about mechanical harvesting, aeration (that he doesn't recommend), bacteria augmentation, and beetles but stated that due to the wide range of variables, biological controls are unpredictable and don't get the same results as herbicides and noted the goal is to maintain native plants and control invasive plants as it isn't possible to eradicate the invasive milfoils. There was a discussion of copper sulfate as well covering that residual copper that is leftover, but that it would take a person drinking 27 gallons of treated water to ingest the amount of copper in a typical daily vitamin. He also added the ph of the water would need to be about a 2 for the copper to be released and at that ph everything would already be dead. Brenda Moore asked about other types of invasive species and why aeration isn't recommended. Mr. Broekstra talked about possible types of invasive plants and noted even native plants, such as coontail can become a nuisance. He talked about the different ways an invasive plant is treated vs a nuisance native plant. He stated that aeration needs to be done in deep water and with the shallow depths of Bear Lake it wouldn't be very effective. He also added that overuse of aeration can change the ecology of the lake. Brenda Moore also asked about the data, what it tells us and why it is needed. Mr. Broekstra stated the data is necessary to know the condition

of the lake and what is there in order to make good decisions about appropriate treatments and devise an effective management plan. In addition the data is often useful in applying for grants for lake treatment. Darrell VanFossan also asked about reporting. Mr. Broekstra talked about the plant surveys being done in the spring and fall with treatment done in the summer and how those surveys can be looked at over time to judge how effective the treatment and management has been.

- **Progressive AE** – Paul Hausler introduced himself (senior scientist) and Rick Buteyn (field scientist) and gave a brief overview of Progressive AE, noting they currently working with 75 lake communities around the state and about 40 of those include lake boards. He stated that Progressive is a full service consultant that employs engineers, GIS technicians and landscape architects to perform all aspects of lake management and are well versed in lake board formation and he referenced a provided flow chart of the formation process for a lake board. Mr. Hausler stated that since the RFP asked for services is an a la carte format that is how they responded with their proposal. He reviewed the RFP proposal item by item, giving descriptions costs for the various services; reviews of existing data, water quality testing (noting that some tests are sent to an outside lab and they use Prein & Newhoff), a baseline aquatic plant survey using aerial photography, GIS mapping, annual monitoring of water samples and not meters as they samples provide more accurate information, a plant control program, hydro-acoustic survey & mapping with more advanced technology than existing maps, and administrative services. He added that they do not do the treatments but use a 3rd party objective contractor and oversee their work to make sure it is done correctly and the work is warranted. He also reiterated their expertise with lake boards, setting up special assessment districts and helping through the hearing process, noting that the assessment needs to be fair and equitable as well as defensible or residents can appeal to the tax tribunal. I. John Snider asked about complaint services and communication. Mr. Hausler stated they are very open and available to handle complaints and questions and a educating the public is a big part of what they do. Darrell VanFossan asked how they operate and handle so many projects and if they provide a contact person. Mr. Hausler stated they provide a field contact person and an administrative contact person. They utilize full time field managers and full time summer interns to complete the work. Brenda Moore asked for more explanation as to what the data collected tells us and why it is needed. Mr. Hausler discussed the example of dissolved oxygen and knowing how it affects fish and other aquatic animals in order to keep the lake healthy; noting a big part of their work involves educating the public and the residents living on the lake as they have a huge impact on the lake. He also referenced a free website for helpful information and frequently asked questions (www.michiganlakeinfo.com). Darrell VanFossan asked about costs and concerns about surprise costs when dealing with a special assessment. Mr. Hausler answered that a good study and data to create a management plan will save money in the long run and good oversight of the applicators and treatment is a very necessary component as well. The last questions asked related to what contractors Progressive usually uses and if they use other methods besides herbicides. Mr. Hausler stated they use a bidding process for obtaining contractors and estimated that about 60% of their projects are with PLM in this area. He added that herbicides are the most effective treatment for the invasive milfoils, but that weevils have been used but predatory pan fish typically eat them so they are not as effective and the results are less predictable. Mr. Hausler added that they are selling predictability and they use the least amount of chemicals to get the desired treatment results.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

- Environmental Consultant Proposals – Decision: Chairperson Kim Arter asked if the board would like to discuss the 4 proposals and presentations of if they felt they need more time to think and compare the proposals. Board members discussed the presentations, noting that all are qualified and capable of the task. Darrell VanFossan noted he feels Progressive AE and Kieser & Associates LLC are bigger companies with bigger overhead and added he was very impressed with Restorative Lake Sciences and the potential for alternatives to herbicide treatment she presented. Sam Janson and Brenda Moore expressed a lack of enthusiasm for Keiser & Associates LLC due to their higher cost and being located further away in Kalamazoo. Sam Janson also noted that with Progressive he was less than excited that they would utilize interns for much of the work, but liked their expertise with lake board processes. Kim Arter noted that Restorative Lake Sciences proposal also addressed being able to address lake board processes, special assessment districts and public hearings. There was also discussion that this is just the start of the project and then there will be costs for the actual treatment once the study is done and the plan has been devised. Darrell VanFossan estimated that the Bear Lake Association has been spending approximately \$18,000 per year for their current treatments. Brenda Moore suggested the possibility of a second round of questions, in writing, for clarification if needed. I. John Snider and Darrell VanFossan expressed leaning towards either Progressive AE or Restorative Lake Sciences with Mr. Snider expressing a strong confidence in either of these firms. Members expressed a desire to hear public comments before making a decision and Chairperson Kim Arter opened the floor for public comments (see below). Darrell VanFossan reiterated his preference for Restorative due to the potential for alternatives to more chemical sprays. I. John Snider stated he feels it is of utmost importance to have someone to guide the board with the lake board processes and feels either Progressive AE or Restorative would be good choices. Sam Janson pointed out that it appears that Houghton Lake started with PLM and then switched to Restorative for their project. Brenda Moore also noted that this board has retained attorney services and the attorney will also be helpful in the special assessment and public hearing processes.

Darrell VanFossan moved to retain Restorative Lake Sciences as the environmental consultant to the Bear Lake Lake Board. I. John Snider supported the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Sam Janson, Darrell VanFossan, I. John Snider, Brenda Moore and Kim Arter

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Additional discussion occurred relating to costs and the fact that this board has no funds at this time as the special assessment district has not yet been formed. The base cost plus extras from Restorative were discussed.

Sam Janson moved to request that the City of North Muskegon and Laketon Township each split the costs which are to be reimbursed when the special assessments are set and paid. I. John Snider supported the motion. Brenda Moore noted that there needs to be additional funds due to costs for preparing and printing the draft plan. It was also noted that there will likely be costs for the attorney as well as the recording secretary and other administrative costs. Brenda Moore suggested a cushion be included to cover these costs. Sam Janson amended his motion. He moved for the City of North Muskegon and Laketon Township to request each municipality contribute \$7,500 to cover the costs of the consultants, attorney, recording secretary and other administrative activities, said funds to be repaid by future special assessments. I. John Snider supported the amended motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Brenda Moore, I. John Snider, Sam Janson and Kim Arter

Nays: Darrell VanFossan

Motion Carried.

Darrell VanFossan explained that he had questions about any interest the municipalities may charge for this advance of funds. Sam Janson stated no interest would be charged and Darrell VanFossan then expressed support for the advance of funds from each municipality.

Additional discussion took place regarding the ability of the Bear Lake Lake Board to accept monetary gifts as the Bear Lake Association may be interested in donating money as they are currently seeking 501C3 status and will be actively soliciting funds/donations in the near future. Sam Janson noted that as a governmental entity the Bear Lake Lake Board could accept donations but it would not be tax deductible and noted that the attorney can help with direction for setting up the appropriate accounting and budgeting as the law allows. There was also discussion of signing contracts with Restorative Lake Sciences. It was decided Kim Arter would contact them and let them know they were the chosen candidate

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Debra Shields of 154 N Bear Lake Rd – Ms. Shields stated she had been present for all 4 consulting firms’ presentations and she felt that they all presented in a way that all their skills and abilities are adequate. She noted that she feels PLM are applicators by trade and perhaps have “backed in” to being consultants. She expressed being very impressed by Restorative Lake Sciences. She added that she has a daughter that works in this industry and her daughter also expressed to her confidence in Restorative Lake Sciences based on her research into each consultant company’s website.
- Kim Arter announced that there will be a meeting at West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission with Bear Lake Association tomorrow (1/19/17) at 6:00 pm. The meeting will be held at their offices at Terrace Plaza in downtown Muskegon on the 3rd floor.
- Kim Arter announced that the Bear Lake Lake Board webpage on the Laketon Township website is up and running – it contains meeting dates/times/locations, meeting agendas and minutes. It is available at www.laketon.org then click the BLLB tab at the top right of the township homepage.
- Kim Arter announced that Laketon Township has been awarded a \$300,000 DNR trust fund grant for a complete and total makeover of Horton Park on Bear Lake – it will be a huge benefit to Laketon Township residents and Bear Lake but will necessitate the park being closed at times during the construction this summer.

ADJOURN: Brenda Moore moved to adjourn. I. John Snider supported the motion. The motion carried by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:
Veronica West
Recording Secretary

Approved by the Bear Lake Lake Board on _____.

Signed: _____.