

## **BEAR LAKE WATERSHED ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Rich Russell, Maria Somsel, Barb Farfsing, Dick Graham, Chuck Wolverton, Dave Adams, Bob Yates, Don Raiff, Phil Kench, Bob and Barb Cummings, Jeanette May and Jennifer Scholl

**Regrets:** Bill Fronk

Rich called the Bear Lake Watershed Alliance Steering Committee meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27, 2015 at the Bear Lake Township Hall in Bear Lake, Michigan.

Maria introduced Jennifer Scholl, GVSU college student, who is interested and available to help with BLWA projects this summer. Jennifer spoke about her program of study and introductions to others were made.

Meeting minutes for the October 29th meeting were reviewed. Barb made a motion and Rich seconded the motion to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

Rich presented the need for a resolution in the minutes to remove Jeanne Hybza from the BLWA bank accounts at Honor State Bank and to add Richard Russell as a signatory on these same BLWA accounts along with Bob Yates. Barb made a motion to accept this resolution and Bob Yates seconded the motion. Motion carried. The proper paperwork will be completed with the bank and this resolution presented in the minutes.

The Treasurer's Report was shared by Rich Russell who has been acting as treasurer following Jeanne's resignation.

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| April 30, 2015 Bank balance | \$24,007.27 |
| 2015 Banquet tickets income | 1,350.00    |
| 2015 Banquet donations      | 1,785.00    |
| 2015 Banquet expenses       | 345.00      |
| Current Bank balance        | 27,142.27   |
| BLWA Endowment report       | 5,872.09    |
| Interest and yields         | \$146.78    |
| Total Combined Assets       | \$33,014.36 |

Bob made a motion to accept the report as given and seconded by Barb. Motion carried.

Dave Adams will present a \$920.00 check to the BLWA for the endowment which remained from the Greater Lions Club of Manistee County which was left from a walleye project and banquets from many years ago. This money was left in a

bank account that was inactive. The group agreed to divide the monies equally with the BLWA and Portage Lake Watershed. We offer our deepest gratitude for this gift of thoughtfulness.

Bob provided an update on the ongoing search for a Treasurer. We are awaiting responses from individuals who have been asked to consider this opportunity.

Maria provided an update on the Greater Bear Watershed Coordinating Committee's last meeting. A meeting of the Greater Bear and surrounding watershed groups is being planned to address possible opportunities for collaboration.

Barb said that Rick Farfsing and Jack Sawka are working on updates to the website for the Greater Bear, Bear Lake Watershed Alliance and Bear Creek Council.

Dick Graham sends his regrets for this meeting. Rich shared Dick's report regarding road signage. Approval was obtained for the County Road Commission to prepare, assemble and install the signs. Work is targeted for 2015.

Barb Farfsing, chair of the banquet, provided a report on activities for the BLWA Annual Banquet. Tonya Allen has been assisting this year and will take charge of the decorations. Same location, dinner and dance. Phil Kench, ticket committee chair, provided a report. Thirty tickets were sold and over \$2,000 were received from an early letter and mailing that went out this winter. The banquet group will meet tomorrow and continue to work on selling the tickets and soliciting donations. A flyer will go out in the Bear Lake Bulletin this week also.

Don Raiff provided an update on the rain garden project. He has a group of individuals gathered and more volunteers are welcome. There are four potential areas for the project. The most obvious is behind the village maintenance building in the Hopkins Park and that is the first one selected for action. It is very visible and in a good location for a garden and provide a ready display for education to the public. They are working with the village and local landscapers to replace the railroad ties that are falling in behind this area to have a common look and design as what was used in another area near the former J.J. Witty's building so that there is a consistent appearance from the park area. It was recommended that the plants be native to Michigan so that they do better. Information will be sent out to members. The group will come to the June meeting with a funding request. This project is scheduled for late June so that it will be completed for Bear Lake Days. This could be used as a project for display and education for Bear Lake Days BLWA booth and we should get signage for this garden also.

In Dick's absence, Rich provided an update on the Storm Drain project. Dick and others have completed work on all of the village storm drains and now have requested information from the school to identify where they enter storm drains and then finish mapping which is nearly complete. A couple of new drains have recently been found. He reported some irregularities in how these drains are structured. There is one drain they cannot assess that is under the state highway and they are seeking approval to get access to this drain so they can complete an assessment.

We would like to do a booth at Bear Lake Days on Saturday, July 11th. Volunteers will be needed. Rich reported that we would like to invite the Manistee Co. Conservation District Executive Director, Susan Spencer, and other members to participate also. Dan Zatarga has agreed to bring the power washer here and do the demo again regarding invasive species hitch-hikers. The request has been put in for the power washer. Volunteers will be needed. Ideas for dates that it might be good to request the power washer should be sent to Dan.

The Annual meeting will be held on Saturday, July 18th from 9-11 a.m. at the Bear Lake United Methodist Church. Manistee Co. Conservation District Executive Director, Susan Spencer, will be the guest speaker. Elections will be held for two officers whose terms are expiring - Rich Russell, President, and Maria Somsel, Secretary. Don Raiff will chair the nominating committee. Both candidates would like to be replaced, but are willing to serve if no one steps forward.

Fall Autumn Glory Day will be Saturday, October 3, 2015. It will be sponsored by the BLWA and other groups are being solicited to participate and host events. Tanya Allen is helping with this event. We will focus on community and target families that are both fun and educational. It will be in the Hopkins Park and ideas include children's activities, hayride, farmer's market, fall and watershed photo contest, silent auction of these photos, chili dinner, bonfire and DJ with music. The goal is to engage our community and get the watershed name, mission, projects, information and education out. BLWA will provide seed money for this day. Any groups or anyone with ideas should reach out to Barb.

Rich provided a report on E.coli testing in Bill Fronk's absence. District 10 is going to do testing again and they are doing parallel testing with the old and new technology. The new technology can distinguish between DNA from human and animal waste and live and dead bacteria. This will not cost us any additional funds. Bill will be back in June from Tennessee and will provide an update regarding additional testing that he spoke of last fall. Chuck Wolverton reported that he has collected a spring phosphorous sample and then last week to a spring chorophyll sample and submitted them to the DEQ.

Maria shared highlights of an Outreach Program that would focus on providing information and education on a variety of topics in prepared presentations of varied lengths to community and area groups. Some examples include: general information about what a watershed is and how it works, topographical education and activities on drainage, invasive species, rain gardens, etc. Content and presentations would need to be developed for varied ages and audiences and lengths of time. Presenters would be selected based on content knowledge and presentational skills. We would develop materials and presentations over this winter for use this coming summer. Dan identified opportunities to work with John Prokes at the school and offered to discuss ideas for involving the school youth to do projects and demonstrations for use at a fall event and possibly other events. We will talk with a few of these individuals to solicit their involvement.

#### Old Business

None

#### New Business

Bob asked if this group needs to have these meetings every month during the summer months. He is suggesting that we eliminate the July monthly meeting as we have the Annual meeting that month and eliminate September. Discussion from the floor ensued. Article VIII of the By-laws were reviewed and it was agreed that the only meeting that is required to be held is the Annual meeting. Other meetings can be held as needed. Therefore we will schedule meetings according to our needs.

Dave Meister, Onekama township supervisor for the Onekama. They have hired a consultant to assist them with bringing forth discussion regarding a sewer system.

Next meeting is June 24th.

A motion was made to adjourn by Rich and seconded by Bob. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.