

Little Manistee River Watershed Assembly

Minutes for October 13, 2015 Meeting

Attendance

Armas Soorus, Corey Jerome, Robert Carson, Tim Ervin, Greg Goudy, Laura Heintzelman, Jordan DeVries, Jack Bails, Joyce Durdell, Chris Riley, Barbara Stenger, Mark Tonello, Jim Squier, Murray Stall, Sally Blank

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to gather to hear confirmation of our shared vision of the high level Scope and Objectives for the Watershed Management Plan (EPA and DEQ Criteria) and to initiate the next phase of Consultant Selection and Fund Raising. We also discussed the Funds established at the Manistee County Community Foundation and the status of gathering signatures on the Partnership Agreement.

Agenda:

1. Introductions – We each introduced ourselves as we had a number of new individuals at this meeting.
 - a. See the attached Steering Committee Contacts List for detailed contact information.
2. Review of Minutes From June 24, 2015
 - a. We reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting in June and several corrections to the contact names list on page 3 were made. The final version of the minutes is attached as “2015 06 24 Steering Committee Minutes”. Revised a few of the other participants on page 3.
3. Status Update –
 - a. EPA AND DEQ Criteria - The development and implementation of a Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan to EPA and DEQ Criteria was approved by the LMWCC at their August 1 Council Meeting. This formally aligns the Scope and Objectives of the Watershed Management Plan between the LMWCC and this group.
 - b. Funds at Manistee County Community Foundation (MCCF) were also approved at the August 1 LMWCC meeting as described below. Documents signed by the LMWCC and checks have been delivered to the MCCF and the creation of the funds is in progress.
 - I. A “Plan Fund” to be used to develop the Watershed Management Plan was created to hold money donated for development of the plan. Any money remaining in this fund after the development of the plan is completed will roll over into the “Plan Implementation Fund” described below. The LMWCC contributed \$7,000 to this fund.
 - II. An “Implementation Fund” to hold money to be used to implement the Watershed Management Plan and maintain it long term. The Fund will be an Advised Fund. The Little Manistee Watershed Conservation Council will establish an Advisory Committee comprised of 5-7 members including Council members and other stakeholders representing diverse interests and perspectives from throughout the watershed to manage spending. The LMWCC has contributed \$5,000 to this fund.

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- III. An "LMWCC Fund" to be used by the LMWCC to hold funds donated for use by the LMWCC. The purpose of this fund is to help ensure the long term viability of the LMWCC so it can perform its role in the creation, implementation and long term management of the plan as well as other projects as determined by the LMWCC. The LMWCC contributed \$25,000 to this fund.
 - IV. We briefly discussed the need for a group to fill the role of the Advisory Committee for the Implementation Fund so everyone was aware of the long term need. We deferred the decision to a later time when the group is more fully formed, and we have some money to spend.
4. Status of Partnership Agreement Signatures – We've met with all townships in the Watershed with very positive results, see below. We are expanding now to businesses and educational groups.

Organization	Initial Meeting Contact	Partnership Agreement
Lake County Commissioners	y	Signed
Lake Co. Twp. Officers' Mtg.	y	May Sign Individually
Lake Co. Twp.- Eden	y	Signed
Lake Co. Twp.- Elk	y	Signed
Luther Village	TBD	
Lake Co. Twp.- Ellsworth	y	Signed
Lake Co. Twp.- Newkirk	y	Signed
Lake Co. Twp.- Peacock	y	Signed
Manistee Co. Commissioners - Sent us to Planning Commissioners	TBD	
Manistee Co. Twp. - Norman	Y	Signed
Manistee Co. Twp. - Stronach	Y	Pending
Manistee City Council	TBD	
Mason Co. Commissioners	27-Oct	
Mason Co. Twp. - Meade	12-Oct	Pending
LCRPOA	17-Oct	Pending
DNR		Signed
Cool Lake Property Owners Association		Signed
LMWCC		Signed
Little River Band of Ottawa Indians		Signed
Schmidt Outfitters - Pending	9-Oct	Pending

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Additional suggestions to approach for signature on the Partnership Agreement were made at the meeting and include:

- I. Great Lakes Energy
- II. Consumers Energy – Eric Gustad (also City Council Member)
- III. Networks Northwest (Traverse City)
- IV. Farm Bureau
- V. MSU Extension
- VI. U.S. Senators , US – Debbie Stabenow, Gary Peters
- VII. Packaging Corporation of America
- VIII. Martin Marietta – Jim Vreithel, Ops Manager
- IX. City of Manistee – (Rob Carson will Contact them)
- X. Manistee County Sport Fishing Association
- XI. Convention Visitors Bureau
- XII. Manistee Manufacturing Council

5. Initiate Consultant Selection Process

- a. We have been considering simplifying the consultant selection process by going directly to Public Sector Consultants (PSC) instead of through a RFQ/RFP process. This is based on previous good experience members of the group have had with PSC on other similar projects in the area.
 - I. PSC consulted for the Greater Bear Watershed Management Plan (Bear Lake/Bear Creek)
 - II. PSC consulted for the Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan Research and Development
 - III. Jack Bails and Jon Beard would be the leaders in developing this plan. Both have broad experience in the field and are well known and respected.
 - IV. Jack Bails lives in the area, reducing travel cost most consultants would incur.
 - V. Costs for PSC were competitive compared to other consultants considered for the other projects.
- b. Presentation by Public Sector Consultants
 - I. Jack Bails made a presentation to the group detailing the experience of Jon Beard and himself, background and resources of PSC, a summary of past projects and an outline of the planning process they are proposing for the Little Manistee. Documents detailing each of these items are attached to these minutes as “PSC Presentation”.
- c. After the PSC presentation the group discussed the idea of not going through the full RFP/RFQ process. We did not identify any reason we could not proceed in this manner and there were no expressed concerns by the group present.
- d. The consensus decision was to request a proposal from PSC to work as our consultant on developing a watershed management plan for the Little Manistee River that is approvable under both the state (CMI) and federal (319) programs. At this point in time we are still considering getting just the one proposal instead of going through the full RFP/RFQ process. We will defer the decision on the RFP/RFQ process until after we have reviewed and discussed the PSC proposal.

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Note from Armas – PSC received our request on October 14 and has indicated they can have the proposal to by Oct. 29.

6. Initiate Funding Program - Tim Ervin
Now that we have the MCCF Funds in place Tim will put together a Proposed News Release/Communications Schedule.
7. Suggest “The Little Manistee River Watershed Assembly” be the group name.
 - a. The Group thought the name was OK. Suggested we avoid “Alliance” or “Council” in the name as these have specific legal definitions we should avoid. Joyce and Armas will run this by the LMWCC and see what they think.
8. Email Address is: littlemanwsassy@gmail.com
 - a. There was a little concern that the “sassy” might be abused, but nobody really objected to the address. Joyce and Armas will run this by the LMWCC and see what they think.
9. Next Meeting – Will be on an as needed basis. The PSC proposal will be circulated when received and we will review it and determine if we can agree by email or need a meeting.