

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
Environmental Commission
Wednesday-January 17, 2018
MINUTES

The meeting was call to order at 7:00 pm in the Denton Room by Chairman Brownlee

ROLL CALL :

Present: Brownlee, Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Emekpe, White

Absent Excused: Debuck, Akers

Staff: Best, McGuire

Audience 2

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion Gibson, Seconded by White to approve the January 17, 2018 agenda as modified.

Motion Carried

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion White, Seconded by Ross to approve the December 20, 2017 Minutes. Motion Carried.

Communications: HWIW – Mr. Brownlee stated Environmental Geotechnologies is applying to the EPA applying for a permit in Romulus to do some modification to the injection well. These modifications would increase the pressure and viscosity of the well. The well is located between Middlebelt Rd and Inkster Rd, about 10 miles away and would not exceed the projected area in 10,000 years. A question asked to EPA; once the waste is injected into the earth's crust where does it go. EPA representatives could not answer the question and advised that a FOIA request be sent to the EPA. FOIA requested and information received. Theoretically unsure of the consequences pumping untreated toxic waste vice placing in a landfill that is equipped to dispose of toxic waste. Many protests came from the community and their leaders. This process could contaminate waterways and once waste is sent through the well there no mitigation plan, and by the time they recognize there is an issue it is too late for a correction. Based on the receipt of an e-mail the permit has been approved.

Mr. Gibson asked Mr. Best if he was aware of what is going on at the US Ecology Center down by the Cadillac Asphalt plant. Where they draw their water out, they bring a tanker truck to drain the leaching field. Now there are boring machines that have been on the property for the last week doing boring and would like to know the reason. Mr. Best unsure but can ask Gary or Sylvia.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Coal Tar Brochure - received a copy of the current Coal Tar Brochure. Informational sheet would replace information on corresponding sections in the brochure. This information is Township specific. Contractors are given a certificate stating they are registered with the Township and they are to carry the document when doing business in the Township. Homeowners should ask about the certificate or contact the number in the brochure to verify the company is registered. Per Mr. Best there is a version of the brochure on the web site and will be replaced when this brochure is approved. Mr. Brownlee called Rebecca Esselman about the sentence that stated, "The University of Michigan found it more cost effect to repave occasionally than sealcoat regularly." Mr. Brownlee stated he could not believe that it is cheaper to repave than to sealcoat over a specified period. He was told that experts of seal coating state there is a marginal benefits. The main use is to make driveways look good; it does not extend the life of the pavement. Mr. Brownlee further stated crack sealer does a better job with the longevity of paved area. Mr. Brownlee also stated that he was uncomfortable with the statement as written in brochure. The wording gave the impression that the Township is recommending that the drives be replaced every several years. Mr. Brownlee believes the wording will be replaced with different wording. Game plan is to put the specific information for the Township in the trifold and disseminate the information with water bills sometime in spring. Educational process Mr. Brownlee would like to coordinate with the cable department to use the web site to educate the public concerning seal coating.

2. Lake Drawdown – Board members were asked to obtain public opinion about the drawdown. There was only one person with misgivings based on information that was given about the collapse of the sea wall. Mr. Brownlee explained that the drawdown would not be long enough for it to affect sea walls. Mr. Brownlee further explained he recognized his concerns and would bring the issue to the committee. The remaining residents canvased are in favor of the drawdown with comments of why it has taken 20 years since the last drawdown. Mr. Brownlee stated that a drawdown was done every winter and that created problems in itself. The depth of water at the shoreline is 2-3 feet and at the end of the dock, the depth is about 5 feet. Mr. Merritt researched similar issues via internet and found they went down further than our recommendation and has had minimal effect to the shoreline.

Supervisor's office is looking for a recommendation to take to the Township regarding whether or not to do the drawdown. If decided to recommend the drawdown, the Supervisor is looking at this commission to spearhead the volunteer effort that will coinciding with the drawdown. The Township would direct people to the State, so that they can help residents file and process permits. There could be as many as 3,000 volunteers to help with the cleanup effort and beautifying of the lake. We could work with our partners i.e. Watershed Council, Friends of the Rouge and other organizations who have done projects like this and identify issues and solutions on how to handle the volunteer effort. You can also organize high school student and other organizations to help with the cleanup. There are opportunities of managing a large volunteer work force for some of the residents to make repairs to properties.

The first step is to recommend it. Step two if we do recommend how we are going to do it. Need to coordinate and educate the community on things that they can do, things they cannot and things they should not do. The commission would need to provide the education provide the assistance and lead volunteers by example. Which historically, this committee has done. Not a done deal now it is still in the study phase and the soonest the drawdown would be is 2019. If decided to do this we need to give the residents enough time to contract for repairs and pull the required permits through the state. The approval of these permits could take about a year to approve. We need to be able to make a decision soon. The Supervisor would be looking at this commission to spearhead and manage the volunteer work.

Some of the issues to consider is when to do the drawdown and how far too drawdown i.e. 5 feet to do the drawdown. In addition, could the drawdown be done in the winter to help kill the vegetation on the west side of the lake and how would this affect the lake? Boats could not be able to be used during this time and how is the drawdown going to affect the marinas. Can we request to do drawdowns more frequently?

Mr. Best stated that the agreement and the recommendation from Eagle Valley are for 2 weeks draw down, 2 weeks level and 2 weeks rise. The current agreement is fixed, if a change is requested it can be taken to the Supervisor for consideration. However, if we asked for more time unsure of what the ramifications would be. Other communities that have different drawdowns are based on the needs of their communities.

Question asked how the damn would generate electricity and revenue during the drawdown. Eagle Valley would absorb the lost revenue for the drawdown. However, will balance it off from other facilities. The damn will balance out the level of water by letting water bypass the turbines to keep the water level low. The higher the water level the more turbines move and the more electricity. The lower the water level the less electricity generated.

What is the expense of the drawdown to the Township residents? The expenses would be lost revenue to the dam and a cost for managing the volunteer force that would have to be budgeted. There will also be individual expenses for those residents making repairs.

This project will take a lot of investigating, planning, and establishing timelines. This issue needs to remain on future agendas. Pro and cons of the aspects of a drawdowns action plans

3. Clarification of permit process US Ecology to make major modifications. They have requested some additional way streams. A way stream is not the same as a chemical stream. A way stream is a fingerprint of the chemicals being treated. Every time a new company or new chemicals are being treated and application needs to be submitted for treatment. US Ecology would like to posture themselves for large clean ups with the major modifications. A holding area is to treat and dispose of waste. Based on the current process if truck or container with waste is received at the end of the day, the waste remains in the trucks and/or containers until the next workday. The permit will increase the holding areas for trucks and containers, a

monitoring well designed to contain any chemical spills and the ability to treat some of containers outside of the treatment field. To treat outside the treatment field the waste is treated, wrapped, and buried. In terms of the permit process there will be a public review meeting to talk about the review process and permit process. There will not be a public hearing unless requested by the 12th. When issued the draft permit there will be a public notification and another opportunity to request a public hearing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion Merritt, seconded by White to adjourn at 8:30 pm. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Laura McGuire, Recording Secretary