

**MINUTES  
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD, CITY OF PORTAGE  
JUNE 10, 2009**

**Meeting called to order** at 7:01 p.m. by Denise Clegg, Chair

**Members Present:** Bruce Alden, Denise Clegg, Jason Howard, Bill Schwartz, Martin Sepanik, Daniel VanPeenen, and Sara Wick. **Members Excused:** Andrew Cone and Audrey Wierenga **Staff Present:** Chris Barnes **Citizens Present:** Gina Frasson-Hudson, Master Gardner; Stacey Gwin and Kendra Gwin (Girl Scout Troup 827) Cookies provided by Stacey!

**May minutes:** Approved as submitted

**Announcements (non agenda items): Information only by Chris B.** – Two sewer hookup deferments were approved for 12 months by board's ad hoc committee prior to this meeting. Two more deferment requests are pending. The ad hoc committee of Jason, Marty and Bill will meet with Chris and applicants on June 24 at 4 p.m.

**GUEST SPEAKERS (New Business)**

**Storm Drainage Awareness project for Barberry area** – Stacey Gwin presented her ideas for attaching medallions to storm water catch basins and putting door hangers in neighborhood to raise awareness for preventing hazardous runoff. Chris explained that the city has purchased medallions in the past for similar projects. No additional funds needed. The board would have to maintain medallions. The project needs our approval before she meets with Girl Scout Council. Board expressed appreciation for this citizen initiated endeavor and approved project request and will publicize it on Lakeview Park display board.

**Rain Garden at new water treatment plant site (Gina)** – Chris distributed copies and explained layout of site plan and building and areas available for possible rain gardens—potentially 1+ acres. Gina gave input on possible garden types that could be included in this large area—one with shrubbery and trees and another with just flowers. Sara mentioned a suggestion by Council Member Claudette Reid that Portage Cable Access might be willing to document development and growth of garden(s). Gina explained that volunteers are needed for the first 3 years for upkeep during May-June and August. Chris and Gina will meet prior to our August meeting. Board agreed to have August board meeting at Celery Flats to view the site for garden areas.

**New Business (Continued)**

**Environmental Summary Activity Report (Chris):** No spills or cleanup for past month. Complete report is on web site. DNR will be reconstructing the boat launch on Austin Lake this summer off Woodbine. **He suggested we have the DNR rep at our Sept meeting.** Chris is working with county drain commissioner regarding high water levels—would like other local governmental units involved, maybe drawing on WMU expertise.

**Library Joint Program(Sara):** No ideas for any new programs—suggest this be tabled until sometime after January, 2010.

**Lakeview Park Display** – Andrew agreed to do next display which will be on naturalized lawns. Just approved Girl Scout catch basin project may need to be included.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Purple Loosestrife Update(Marty):** Beetle release should be sometime around June 23 for our 15 plants. Two trucks needed from Parks Department. Volunteers from board to assist Marty are Jason, Bill, Bruce and Sara. After much discussion, board approved the following release areas: 1)

Consolidated Drain Area (D&W – 8 plants); 2) Sugar Loaf Lake (4 plants); State Game area near US131 (3 plants)

**Electric bills for Holiday Lights (Chris):** Tabled until next meeting

**(city of)Kalamazoo Env. Council** – Denise received email from its member, Bill Hughes, stating that the City Commission is working on three ordinances pertaining to outdoor wood burning, phosphate fertilizers, and wind turbines.

**KEHAC (County)** – Bill and Aud attended last meeting. Bill distributed info regarding the 6/20 old prescription/medicine collection and gave info on the nationwide healthy homes program that Kalamazoo is involved in.

**KEC(Sara):** No report

**COMMENTS—BOARD MEMBERS:** Jason attended the recent Chamber of Commerce presentation by Wal-Mart sustainability expert, Tara Stewart. He was impressed with some of the actions the corporation is taking especially with proto-type stores and zero waste.

Sara mentioned (again) the need for board to address garlic mustard situation and pick an area for pull to concentrate on for 3-5 years. Marty asked to be excused from the August meeting.

**COMMENTS – CITIZENS:** None

**Adjournment:** 8:40 p.m.

**Next meeting Wednesday, 12, 7 p.m., Celery Flats. Scheduled secretary: Jason Howard**

**Minutes recorded by Sara Wick**