

Environmental Board
March 12, 2014

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm

Members present: Ruth Caputo, David Mayfield, Martha Dahlinger, Christin DeJong, Jamie McCarthy, Spencer Welling, Tim Winslow, Christopher Barnes, Judy Graham

Members Excused: Catherine Niessink, William Beck, Genevieve Sertic

Martha moves to approve the February minutes and seconded by Jamie.

South Westnedge Trailway

\$350k Department of Transportation grant rewarded to the City of Portage to construct a trailway from where it ends currently on Shaver Road to connect it to Osterhout. This will end approximately where the entrance to Eliason Reserve will be.

\$500k grant to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Grant application would be sent in April with a decision by October.

Osterhout is getting expanded/fixed in 2015 and will have six-foot wide shoulders that will allow for walkers and hikers easier access to Schrier Park.

Motion to write a letter in support of the grant application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources made by Martha, seconded by Dave.
Approved.

Jamie will write the letter of support to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Goals and Objectives

Tim brings up the point that goals that are dropped off from last year may be revisited in the future.

Martha would like us to add a column to our table regarding when our goals are met or completed.

Christin brings up we can add steps for our goals as well.

Goals are due April 15th to the City Council.

Martha would like to get a display board that doesn't fall over with the slightest breeze. Judy and Martha will work on potential signs.

Christin would like to try to quantify how much garlic mustard we have within the City of Portage boundaries or at least in our city parks. Christin would like to try to quantify this for one park at least. Christin will work on this goal.

Spencer brings up whether we should prioritize our goals for this year and also try to have more "winnable" goals.

Martha would like to add as a goal: maintenance of the native planting/landscaping that was done at the water treatment plant. David brought up buying beetles that eat Canadian Thistle to help with the maintenance.

Add as part of our goal of restoring Eliason Nature Reserve that we are going to request money to help us meet our goals.

Goals are in effect from July 2014 to June 2015.

Next meeting we'll work on prioritizing our goals.

Dave brings up possibly getting recycling bins at city parks, on city trails, etc. We can add this as a deliverable to our city goals regarding single-stream recycling.

Next week we'll prioritize our goals.

Invasive Species Issues

Garlic Mustard Flyers

Ruth's flyer has been finalized and printed. Members will post them where they can and also email them to certain people.

Portager Article

Article has been submitted.

Dave's Brochure

Dave sent a final copy of the brochure with pictures and all information present. It looks very nice. Dave obtained approval for all pictures in the brochure.

Updates on Bigger Goals/Objectives

Phragmites Burn In Consolidated Drain

Chris has not heard anything from the group doing the burn regarding when they will do the burn as of yet.

West Lake Association might buy Purple Loosestrife beetles as well.

Martha is working with Chris on the maintenance plan for the native planting/landscaping at the water treatment plant.

New Business

SAW grant: Portage was the fifth runner-up so they might get some money if the bigger cities don't use all of their funds.

Announcements

David would like all emails regarding changes to the brochure sent to him by end of day tomorrow.

Wild Ones, March 26th. First United Methodist Church. Role of Restoration in 21st Century Conservation, Edward Stanton from The Nature Conservancy will present.

Whole series on climate sponsored by the WMU Faculty Working Group on Climate Change, local faith communities, and the Interfaith Partnership of Bronson Park Churches. Monday evenings, 5:30pm to 7:30pm at First United Methodist Church. March 17th The Economic Debate on the Cost of Inaction, presented by Ahmed Hussen; March 24th Climate change and Agriculture in Michigan: What We've Seen and What We Can Expect, presented by Phil Robertson of the Kellogg Biological Station MSU; March 31st Our Response in Kalamazoo, presented by Kiran Cunningham of Kalamazoo College.

Dalton Theatre at Kalamazoo College, 8pm, Thursday, March 13th. Sandra Steingraber author of "Raising Elijah: Protecting Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis" will read from her book and discuss that the ongoing environmental crisis is fundamentally a crisis of family life.

You can buy rain barrels from Kalamazoo River Watershed Council. Kalamazoosriver.org is the website. May 10th is the deadline.

Planning Commission heard a brief update on the Comprehensive Plan.

Christin made a motion to adjourn, Martha seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32pm

/s/ Tim Winslow