

Environmental Board Meeting, April 12th, 2017

Meeting called to order at 6:58pm.

Members Present: Chair Bill Beck, Vice-Chair Michael Sergeant, Martha Dahlinger, Kathy Fiebig, Jerry Kroehn, David Solberg, Michael Sergeant, Deirdre Nieves, Assistant City Engineer Jamie Harmon, and Secretary Tim Winslow

Guests: Larry Shaffer, City Manager for the City of Portage; Jessika Maas, Kalamazoo Valley Community College student

Excused Members: None, all present.

Motion to approve the minutes made by Jerry, seconded by Dave. Motion approved.

Communication Platform

The board needs to choose a primary communication platform to share documents, communications, minutes, and agendas.

The city uses Dropbox so we feel that using what the city uses to share information is the best solution. Google Docs could be a good backup solution if Dropbox does not end up working for us.

Tim makes a motion to approve Dropbox as the Environmental Board's primary communication platform, seconded by Kathy. Motion passes.

Greenathon

Kathy will pick up the display boards at the Department of Public Services building just past the library.

Volunteers who will be present on Saturday: Kathy, Jerry, and Tim will be attending.

What information would we like to cover: we think it would be best to share information regarding invasive species and natural spaces within the City of Portage.

Kathy and Tim will work on bringing in some actual invasives and Tim will bring in some of the brochures regarding invasive plants.

Fishing Fair

Last year we did not attend this event. The board has found in the past that what they present just doesn't fit well with the Fishing Fair event. The board discussed whether to attend the

event this year and whether they had any information that would be more geared towards children that could suit their interests.

The board decided not to participate in the Fishing Fair this year but would revisit the issue in future years.

Portager

Larry Shaffer brings up that the Portager is the best way to reach the members of the community and comes at the right price (free to the board). Larry mentions that the City is always interested in publishing articles that would be of interest to the citizens of Portage. They like to publish pictures that have people in them and publish articles that quote people to show that the City is an entity of people.

The Portager is published once a month. They like to have a simple message in the articles and not be too technical or complex.

Kathy has drafted a few Portager articles that the board could publish.

Martha drafted a few bylines that we could possibly write articles regarding for the Portager. Martha also brings up the point of referencing the website as well in the article that may contain more information.

Kathy's articles are all very good in terms of content and relating to the people. Kathy's articles do a great job of relating back to the people with regard to how they can affect the environment for the better with a few simple actions.

Martha brought up some discussion regarding a better archive of certain documents and things that the boards, City, and other related entities do. Dropbox will help the environmental board with this task.

The board decided that Kathy and Martha would work a little bit on editing a few of the articles that Kathy wrote and get one ready for the June Portager.

Invasive Plant Pull Dates

We have a Boy Scout troop from Mattawan available to do an invasive plant pull on Saturday, April 29th from 9am to 12pm. We decided to do an invasive plant pull on Saturday, April 29th from 9am to 12pm at Eliason Reserve.

We will also do invasive plant pulls on Saturday, May 6th at West Lake Nature Preserve and Saturday, May 20th from 9am to 12pm at Schrier Park.

Kathy will make sure the supplies are at the April 29th pull. Tim will get the signs out to advertise these pulls.

Project Team Updates

Bill would like the project teams to be ready to have the environmental board make a decision at the May meeting in advance of the City Council's first meeting in June.

The project teams should probably meet offline in the next few weeks to help meet this goal.

May Agenda

It was decided that we would largely focus on the project team reports at our next meeting.

Mike brought up solar roadways as a potential future agenda item or project team update.

The deer exclosures are up with two at Schrier Park, one at West Lake Nature Preserve, and one at Bishop's Bog. Tim is working with the City on making those more visible and safe.

Kathy makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Deirdre. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

/s/ Tim Winslow