

# Charter Township of Orion

## Oakland County, Michigan

### Environmental Resources Committee Minutes

Regular Meeting, Thursday, May 7, 2020

Virtual Zoom Meeting

7:00 PM

<https://cranbrook.zoom.us/j/2824218566>

Meeting ID: 282 421 8566

No password needed

If someone does not have a computer than can just call in:

877 853 5257

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1. Call to order by the Chair – 7:14 pm
2. Roll call – In Attendance: Corinna Womack, George Hanley, Michele Arquette-Palermo, Jessie Richmond, Mike Deluca, Pamela Beilke, Debbie Leveski, Harold Flood  
  
Absent: Paige Feliks, Mike Flood  
Public: Kathy Klein
3. Determination of a quorum -yes
4. Public comments – None
5. Regular order of business
  - a. Approval of minutes from February 2020 meeting – Mike DeLuca makes motion to approve the minutes, Michele seconds motion, Board approves the minutes.
  - b. Approval of agenda for May 2020 regular meeting – Motion by Jessie, seconded by Michele. Motion carried, agenda approved.
  - c. Pending business
    - i. Bee/butterfly updates (Pamela Beilke) – Pamela stated that she had a phone call with Elsa from Habitat for Bees and Butterflies and had submitted an application to get seeds from them for planting at Friendship Park. They are interested and their preference is to till the soil and plant soybeans and in the fall, we can plant seeds that would grow in the spring. George was going to check with Aaron to see about growing soybeans in the Park. Soybeans would destroy all the native grasses unfortunately. No decisions have been made to date. There are some concerns about bees stinging people at the park. Pam was contacted by a beekeeper through the South Bee Keeper Association who has hives North and South of park. Pamela will follow up to see about doing a planting somewhere. Kathy thinks that there might be a planting behind the Orion Center and Michele will look and see if there's a good spot for planting that is away from people and visible. Possible location near Orion Oaks and the water retention pond as well.

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Will work with Aaron to find a location for next year. Kathy suggested covering the ground so weeds do not cover the entrance for the bees.

- ii. Green Up Updates (George Hanley) – Event rescheduled for late May timeframe. George provided an update regarding Arbor Day and the Green Up summary from Aaron. George will send to Corinna to send out to OTERC. Green Up will be a series of days from May 11-15<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 am- 4:30 pm each of those days. There is a list of 24 projects that they are looking to get done. People can volunteer for any project listed. Corinna will send the info to Julianne to have posted to the Township site.
  - iii. 2020 School Design Contest for Reusable Bags (Mike DeLuca and Kathy Klein) Winner Josie Thompson from Lake Orion High School. Mike DeLuca provided information that the library is still closed until July 6<sup>th</sup>. Kathy Klein has the artwork and the bags are in production. 125 bags are being produced with a portion for the library's use. Corinna will follow up with the LO schools to see if a story was written; Mike DeLuca will follow up with the Orion Review to see about getting an article written.
  - iv. NO HAZ update (Mike Flood) –Michele said that Chris Barnett officially cancelled the event due to the COVID-19 situation. She mentioned that Chris Barnett mentioned there is a Free Disposal Day on Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> from 7am-1pm at Eagle Valley. There is also a Food Drive being collected. Hazardous household materials are not accepted, no yard waste, no e-waste recycling. This is NOT an Oakland County No Hazardous event.
  - v. Environmental Resource Flyer Update (Mike Flood) – This is a double sided flyer that lists the locations for recycling and disposal of common household items. George is seeking volunteers to update the literature. Mike Flood has the latest editable copy. Mike DeLuca and Debbie Leveski will look into updating the literature for 2020.
  - vi. Quarterly Green Up Award nominee (Group) – George will reach out to Kay Automotive as a potential candidate. Michele had mentioned that there was going to be a presentation to Trout Unlimited on March 16<sup>th</sup> because of the COVID-19 situation that occurred on March 13<sup>th</sup>. Corinna mentioned that Green Hippo Gifts also practices and sells environmentally friendly products. Mike DeLuca mentioned a the beekeeper that relocates bees (Spencer's Apiaries)
- d. New business:
- i. Phragmites treatment (George Hanley) – George mentioned that the removal of the phragmites are a voluntary type event. He mentioned that many HOAs, roadside sites, and businesses were targeted and treated. George said that school sites have been treated, Pee Wee Patch were contacted and treated, Pomeroy Living and Indianwood Village to be treated as well. Cost estimates were submitted and will be treated later this year. If anyone has a location that needs to be treated, please contact George Hanley. Cost estimation is usually done in August/September timeframe. The Township will cover the cost of the permit and the landowner is responsible for paying for the treatment. Mike

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DeLuca has a list of potential locations that he will provide to George. Michele Arquette has a list of some public areas to be treated as well. For new members, George noted that a Township committee that he and Mike Flood served on researched and developed an Ordinance that was the first in southern Michigan regarding the treatment of the highly invasive Phragmites species. It was approved in 2015 and set up a voluntary process, unlike some areas in northern Michigan, with property owners in Lake Orion able to request a free, no obligation cost estimate for treatment by a township appointed certified supplier under a township permit. Subsequently, Mike led a revision process to mandate that new building projects would need to have the property inspected and commit to treatment in order to receive a building permit. The process overall has been very effective when the before and after reviews of Lake Orion areas are compared with infestations in other nearby townships. Oakland Township and Rochester Hills have followed Orion Township's process. George noted that in the first several years significant strides were made in treatment as all Township properties, Lake Orion Schools and several pre-schools, the Oakland County Road Commission (all infected road right of ways), a number of large commercial businesses, churches, HOA's and individual home owners elected to participate. Treatment generally requires follow up treatments because the seeds are viable for up to 10 years until plants are treated. Without treatment the plants can send out runners up to 100 feet, demonstrating in most areas that they will crowd out all other plant life and cause the loss of animal, bird and amphibian habitat. Last year, George re-contacted a number of previous participants where new growth had become visible and they stepped up to receive fresh treatment. He also contacted several large commercial and residential locations as well as the State Parks Department. Estimates were compiled but in several cases, the approval for treatment extended beyond the treatment window which is the first heavy frost in October. Those projects will be carried over for treatment in September-October 2020. If anyone has suggestions for sites whose owners could be approached regarding cost estimates, submit them and we will follow up in contacting them in July-August to provide sufficient lead-time to get necessary approvals prior to start of treatment season. Michelle and Mike DeLuca indicated they had some suggestions. Orion has made significant strides, but there is still more that should be done.

6. Committee comments - None
7. Adjournment - Motion to adjourn Debbie, seconded by Jessie; meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.