

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
Environmental Commission
Wednesday, November 16, 2022
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at **7:00 p.m.** in the Denton Room by **Vice Chairman Ross**

ROLL CALL:

Present: Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Creal

Absent/Excused: DeBuck, Boynton

Staff: Director Lockett, Director Akers, Secretary Zantop

Audience: One (1)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion Commissioner **Gibson**, Second Commissioner **Creal**, to approve the agenda of November 16, 2022, as presented.

(4) AYES – Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Creal

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion Commissioner **Creal**, Second Commissioner **Gibson**, to approve the minutes of October 19, 2022, as presented.

(4) AYES – Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Creal

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Director Lockett informed the Commission he is waiting to hear back from US Ecology with a date for those interested in the tour.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Huron River Watershed Council Meeting Summary

Directed Akers gave a summary of the recent meeting with the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC). There is an open board seat on the HRWC that has historically been someone from Van Buren Township. Supervisor McNamara will be looking for someone to fill that seat to be a

representative from the Township. The Alliance of Downriver Watershed (ADW) program helps the local communities satisfy their MS4 permit requirements. The MS4 permit is a stormwater permit for municipal stormwater discharge. ADW supports us with outreach and education, monitoring phosphors testing, and the Illicit Discharge Elimination Program (IDEP). Other topics discussed at the meeting included updating the Lower Huron Watershed management plan, stormwater best management practices, kayak launch, water trail, and the Dam network. The Huron River Watershed Council tries to get the different Dam operators together to communicate common issues. The HRWC shared contact information for a Lake Scientist with MSU Extension who can help with the lily pads. From experiences with other communities once you start removal it's a 1-3 time a year process. In the past former Director Best had talked to the Council about the erosion issues around Belleville Lake. Director Akers is waiting to get more information about the erosion from them to move forward. The Huron River Watershed Council is a good resource to have and is available for informational items.

Commissioner Creal asked about the phosphors testing. The State does testing on the lake and the Huron River Watershed Council does testing on the tributaries on the river system. The testing site is on the Willow Run Creek, they test for phosphors and bugs to see how many micro-organisms are in the system. Director Akers will reach out to HRWC for the data. Commissioner Gibson asked who the past board member was. The last board member from the Township was the late Dr. Wilson. Commissioner Ross asked if there were other areas other than Quirk and Belleville that had erosion issues. There was an issue at Van Buren Park on the back side of the beach.

2. Wayne County Drain Commission Discussion

Director Akers informed the Commission that there is a petition project on the McKinstry Drian. It is near Van Born and Belleville Road behind the Greenbriar Sub. This petition is to clean out the drain and the residents agree to cover the cost. The Drain Commission is waiting on financing and then they will bid the project out. Director Akers will reach out to the Drain Commissioner about ongoing drain maintenance.

3. Quirk and Belleville Road Discussion

Director Akers will update the commission as he gets more information on the erosion.

4. City of Ann Arbor Wastewater Treatment Plant NPDES Permit Update

Director Akers stated there is a settlement agreement put into place that the City of Ann Arbor approved on June 21st, 2021. The agreement specifies the total daily maximum load limits for the Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Dexter, and Loch Alpine wastewater treatment plants. Documents regarding the settlement were sent to the commission.

5. Microplastics, PFAS, and Foam

The presentation at the library was not recorded but Director Akers got the contact information for the individual who made the presentation. The HRWC has information on its website about microplastics. The USGS studied microplastics in 29 Great Lakes tributaries and found that the highest levels of microplastics are in the Huron River. The majority of the microplastics in the

environment come from clothes and fibers. There is an article about PFAS and Dams on the HRWC site. PFAS concentrations in foam are often 100 to 10,000 times higher than in the surrounding non-foamy water. Commissioner Ross asked if there is any information posted about the PFAS. Director Akers will take a look and follow up about posting information about the foam and PFAS. Commissioner Gibson asked if there was any interest to ask the presenter at the library to present at a future meeting.

6. Lily Pads on Belleville Lake Update

Director Akers will reach out to the MSU Extension contact and Washtenaw County to get information for processes and solutions. The process typically includes a study and the removal by harvesting to spraying. To fund this some communities, create a Special Assessment District for lakefront owners or there may be grants available.

7. French Landing Dam Permit Renewal Update

Eagle Creeks' lease is up in 2027 and they are beginning the process to renew licensing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). It is likely the renewal will be for another 40 years. Eagle Creek is bearing all the cost of the licensing. Eagle Creek will work with several agencies to do a variety of required studies including environmental impact studies. The relicensing application process takes about 5 years.

8. Meeting Schedule

There was an error on the meeting schedule. Two dates showed 2022 they will be corrected to 2023. The Commission discussed a possible time change from a 7 PM start to a 6 PM start. The Commission would like to get input from absent commissioners before any change is made.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS:

Commissioner Creal asked if there were any updates on the Denton Road bridge repairs. Director Akers has an unrelated meeting with Wayne County and will try to get information on the bridge.

Commissioner Gibson stated in the past the Township would send someone out to Willow Run Airport after a heavy snow/ice event to check the creek for deicing fluid used on the airplanes. Director Akers will ask the Airport Authority what their process is to keep the fluid from going into the creek.

Commissioner Gibson asked if leaf pick-up was extended like it was last year. The last week for yard waste pick up is the last full week of November. This year it is the week of November 21st.

Commissioner Merritt asked about the recycling bins for Van Buren. Waste Management has been slowly swapping out recycle bins for 64-gallon toter.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn Commissioner **Merritt**, Second Commissioner **Creal**, Meeting adjourned at **8:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kendyl Zantop
Recording Secretary