

Wixom Lake Improvement Board (WLIB)
Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2023

Meeting called to order at Billings Township Hall by Joe Sova at 6:00 pm

Pledge of allegiance recited.

Roll call: Board members present: Joe Sova, Ray Drumright, Robert Kelley, Jeanette Snyder, Don Zakett, Terry Walters, Larry Woodard, Tami O'Donnell

Board Members Absent: Carol Ayers,

Others in Attendance: Norma Stuart from Midland County Drain Commission, Lucy Zeestraten from Gladwin County Drain Commission, Paul Hausler from Progressive AE, Casey Shoaff from PLM Lake & Land Management Corp., and approximately 40 members of the public

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was presented with an opportunity to add items. No changes. Jeannette Snyder made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Larry Woodard. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Robert Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 14, 2022 meeting. Terry Walters seconded the motion. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Matters: Joe Sova presented the financial statement showing a balance of \$288,156.98. Larry Woodard made a motion to receive and file the financial report, seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Several invoices were presented: Invoice #107 dated May 18 2023, for \$200 from the Gladwin County Treasurer for the annual administration fee for managing finances. Larry Woodard made a motion to pay the invoice, seconded by Don Zakett. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Invoice #5002255 dated Jan 12 2023, for \$1,825 from PLM Lake and Land Management Corp for permit application fees. Don Zakett made a motion to pay the invoice, seconded by Larry Woodard. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Invoice #00192522 dated April 11 2023, for \$1,546.25 from Progress AE for contact associated labor. Terry Walters made a motion to pay the invoice, seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

The list of board members and their contact information was updated to include Tami O'Donnell and contact information for Ray Drumright was modified. A motion to receive and file the updated list with noted changes was made by Terry Walters, seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Paul Hausler spoke about the upcoming aerial herbicide treatment plans. Existing aerial photography from the US Geological Survey augmented with ground spot checks of vegetation was used to create a draft treatment map for helicopter herbicide application covering about 600 acres in the WLIB jurisdiction. This area includes both top priority and secondary priority areas in the main lake and is likely to undergo modifications depending upon the results of discussions with DNR that Paul Hausler and Don Zakett will have concerning establishing fish habitat. Treatment with mixture of herbicides (Triclopyr + Imazapyr) is expected to occur in late June. Permits have been issued but there remains

negotiations about how close treatments can be to the river channel. Current permit is for treatment up to 42 feet from river channel but since herbicides are approved for aquatic use there is desire for treatment to the river channel edge. EGLE has indicated that they would be OK with treating to rivers edge as long as DNR gives approval with respect to fish habitat considerations. WLIB desire is to kill trees now up to rivers edge to stop growth with intent to leave a strip of dead trees near the river channel for fish habitat. There is the potential for grants from the DNR to establish rock/gravel beds, other types of fish habitat, and potentially better connectivity of canals to the river channel which will all be broached by Hausler and Zakett with the DNR at their upcoming meeting. They will also inform DNR that ~ 1 mile of Wixom lake shoreline has been stabilized with rip-rap to prevent erosion and upon refill of lake, these areas will be excellent fish habitat.

Since the herbicide combination provides broad spectrum kill, set-back from the historic shoreline has been increased from 50 feet to 80 feet to lessen potential for drift onto yards. Removal of woody vegetation close to historic shoreline and in canals will be addressed at a later time.

Joe Sova mentioned that the Midland Drain Commission has received federal funds for a drain improvement project in northern Midland County to create 2-stage drains. He is making inquiries to see if some of this money can be used to address flood plain connectivity of canals/river channel in the WLIB district. Regardless of outcome of this inquiry, there are other opportunities for counties to apply for funds to improve drains. Joe also shared that he and Terry have a meeting next week with engineers from the Spicer group to discuss evaluation of feasibility and estimated cost of sediment removal and canal/channel connectivity on select canals. This evaluation has been funded by FLTF and will be a good reality check on practicality. In addition, Joe mentioned that an individual property owner on Sanford lake is navigating the permitting process for canal improvement. This will provide good learning that can be leveraged. In summary Joe indicated that any canal improvement projects will fall outside of WLIB mandate but are within the purview of the drain commissions (Midland and Gladwin) and that any sediment removal would almost certainly require some property owner cost share.

Chairman Sova formally opened the meeting for public comment:

Public Comment:

Monty Wiseman – 5314 S. Pine (Venice subdivision). Shared ideas on areas to treat near Pleasure Island and Perry Drain to build on successful treatments of canal test plots last fall.

WLIB response: revisit in next few months after aerial spraying complete.

Ernest Sittaro - 5459 S. Pine, Shared that he thinks there was treatment near his property last fall but there appears to be little change in vegetation. Would like to review treatment maps and summary of results to make sure he understands status.

Mary Blaine – 5370 Grouse Ct. , Have EGLE representatives visited Wixom Lake to see the vegetation problem for themselves?

WLIB response: They are infrequent visitors. Hausler mentioned that EGLE reps shocked by images of vegetation that he has shown them.

Glenn Turskey – 5262 Mallard Ct., Silt barrier on Perry/Paine Drains (North of Red Oak) was taken out. Now would be an excellent time to fix this problem.

WLIB response: Gladwin Drain and Road Commissions working with Spicer group to re-install silt trap.

Tate Belanger – 1215 Linda Lane, Concerned about plant growth in canals. What is the plan for sediment, trees, cattails?

WLIB response: Any earth/sediment removal beyond WLIB mandate. Vegetation will be mitigated prior to lake reflow.

Lynn Worley - Will the herbicide treatments have adverse effect on wells?

WLIB response: Hausler commented that all applications will be down-grade from wells and that the herbicides are EPA approved and break down quickly in the environment.

Sam Bittar – 5179 Maple Lane, When will herbicide spraying occur? Will there be notification?

WLIB response: Targeting late June for herbicide treatment. There will be a public notice once date(s) confirmed and also postings in the treated areas.

End Public Comment

Adjournment: Larry Woodard mad a motion to adjourn at 7:08 p.m., seconded by Terry Walters. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Drumright