



MICHIGAN STATE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

June 8, 2018

Bay City, Michigan

PRESENT FOR THE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

Commissioner, Vice-Chair, Ward Walstrom
Commissioner, Denny Grinold
Commissioner, Steve Arwood
Commissioner, Mary Rising
Commissioner, Nicki Polan, via phone
Commissioner, James Hansen

OTHERS PRESENT

Ron Olson, DNR
Vicki McGhee, DNR
Jordan Byelich, DNR
Linnae Dawson, DNR
Michael Desnoyer, DNR
Michelle Wieber, DNR, Recorder

GUEST SPEAKER

Robert Frye, Michigan Waterfront Alliance, President

NOT PRESENT

Commissioner, Chair, Dennis Nickels



MINUTES
MICHIGAN STATE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

OPENING COMMENTS

In the absence of Chair Dennis Nickels, Vice-Chair Ward Walstrom called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m., June 8, 2018. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE

Written Correspondence: A written correspondence was submitted by Kenneth Cygan, sharing his opposition to the registration of paddle craft, as discussed in the now amended resolution number 02-2018-01.

A written correspondence was submitted by Daniel Comeau, requesting a boat launch on Detroit's Belle Isle.

A written correspondence was submitted by TJ Custard, voicing his concern with log jams along the Dowagiac River. Mr. Custard also inquired about helping to keep the waterways clear of debris, so all can enjoy kayaking and canoeing without hassle.

A written correspondence was submitted by Dennis Alward, questioning the water levels of the Cheboygan River.

A written correspondence was submitted by Gary L. Randall, Clerk, Michigan House of Representatives. Mr. Randall submitted House Resolution number 307; a resolution to oppose the Michigan State Waterways Commission recommendation that legislation be introduced to require the registration with a fee of all rigid-hulled kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards eight feet or longer.

All correspondence was included in each commissioners meeting packet for their information.

Appearances: Rob Covers and Brian Agar, both with the Huron Yacht Club, voiced concerns regarding the breakwall at the Caseville Harbor. Concerns included: lack of protection from wind driven waves from southwest to westerly direction, as it does not provide a safe entry into the harbor. The issue has been enhanced with the steel seawall installed in spring of 2018, along the breakwall side of the river. Videos were shared, showing the rough waters of the mentioned area. Improved breakwall protection was requested.



APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Vice-Chair Ward Walstrom asked for a motion for approval of the minutes from the April 25, 2018 Michigan State Waterways Commission meeting. The motion was put into place by Commissioner Denny Grinold and was seconded by Commissioner Steve Arwood. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FACILITIES UPDATE

The Facilities subcommittee discussed the topics of the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG Program) and the Waterways Program Study. The BIG Program is a Federal grant program that requires the State of Michigan under the DNR to be the applicant for all Michigan grant applications, be it public or private. Concern has been raised regarding the eligibility of applicants under the Federal grant program that may not be eligible for grants under the State's Waterways Grant Program, which is the program that oversees grant inquiries from non-DNR owned harbor facilities. At this time the program will continue as is, however further discussion will occur. For the Waterways Program Study, a draft outline was distributed for Commission review. The study will consist of numerous studies, reports, and collaboration with various stakeholders. The study will evaluate the program in relation to facility and boater trends as well as other boating related initiatives. Comments on the draft outline are due by Friday, June 29, 2018.

FINANCE UPDATE

The Finance update was provided during the Financial Update portion of the meeting.

MARKETING UPDATE

Ward Walstrom provided an update regarding the following topics: Pure Michigan, Michigan Boating Week, Free Fishing Weekend, and Paddle Craft.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Nicki Polan mentioned that just one variance request was submitted. Manistee requested the variance in seasonal slips due to damage suffered during a recent storm.



WAYS AND MEANS UPDATE

No updates to provide at this time.

INFORMATIONAL BUSINESS

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Michael Desnoyer recapped the financial report, in which the supporting documents can be found in the Michigan State Waterways Commission meeting packet.

GENERAL UPDATES

Ron Olson provided an update on the Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) O, and SBS 763 and 931-932. Park Endowment Fund was provided, related to proposed changes to the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund and the Park Endowment Fund. The consideration process by the Legislation is continuing.

Robert Frye, President, Michigan Waterfront Alliance, addressed the Commission on some current problems: the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout all of Michigan's inland lakes, and financial burden suffered by Michigan inland lake riparian property owners regarding the cost of aquatic invasive species control and eradication. Mr. Frye believes the major cause of the infestation is from watercraft being launched at Waterways created access sites. Mr. Frye provided his presentation outline and an open letter written by Scott Brown, Michigan Lake Stewardship Association Executive Director. Mr. Frye also stated that the Michigan Waterfront Alliance is in support of paddle sport registration.

Roscommon District Manager, **Bill Doan**, and Grayling Construction Crew Manager, **Josh Pellow**, presented on Major Maintenance and Construction Crew projects. Bill and Josh discussed boat wash stations which would help control the spread of aquatic invasive species. If the boater chooses not to use the boat wash, at least an educational piece is passed on. A PowerPoint presentation shared pictures of various projects, including skid pier building, ramp replacements, construction of new vault toilet buildings, culvert replacement, and dredging.

PROJECT UPDATES

Jordan Byelich provided project updates on the following State and Grant-In-Aide Projects: East Tawas State Harbor (State) Phase 2 was substantially completed recently. This phase included fixed and floating pier demolition, dredging, float pier construction, and new broadside pier construction. Design for Phase 3 will begin later this year. Union Lake (State) Boating Access Site (BAS), is a new development in another location on the lake due to the existing site having the launch area separated from the parking area by a busy road.



There was a public open house held on May 22, 2018 to capture comments on a preliminary design. Following this open house, the DNR is revising the design and finalizing the plans. The Clinton River cutoff BAS (State) had spring dredging completed and is undergoing a study to look at the collection of material that ends up at the launch basin. The Harrisville Harbor (Grant-In-Aid), is undergoing repair and construction of new piers. The first phase is substantially complete, and the second phase is to begin later this summer.

GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL REPORT

Commissioners requested Ron Olson to send a letter to the United States Army Corp of Engineers to emphasize the need to perform their Cheboygan River dredge project as soon as possible.

The US Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District Great Lakes water level outlook was included in each commissioner's meeting packet for their information.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

The next Michigan State Waterways Commission Meeting: Ontonagon, August 30, 2018