



## MINUTES

### MICHIGAN STATE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

June 24, 2016

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

#### **PRESENT FOR THE WATERWAYS COMMISSION**

Commissioner Chair, Gary Marowske  
Commissioner Vice Chair, Alex Declercq  
Commissioner, Dennis Nickels  
Commissioner, James Hansen  
Commissioner, Ward Walstrom  
Commissioner, Dennis Grinold  
Special Consultant, R.J. Peterson

#### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Ron Olson, DNR  
Vicki Anthes, DNR  
Paul Petersen, DNR  
Jason Fleming, DNR  
Maia Turek, DNR  
Jacklin Blodgett, DNR  
Michelle Wieber, DNR  
Linnae Dawson, DNR  
Jordan Byelich, DNR  
Anna Sylvester, DNR

#### **NOT PRESENT**

Commissioner, Nicki Polan



## MICHIGAN STATE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

### OPENING COMMENTS

Chair Gary Marowske called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., June 24, 2016. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### PUBLIC APPEARANCE

**Written Correspondence:** There was no written correspondence.

**Appearances:** Dan Wyers, Assistant Public Works Director, expressed how thankful he was to the Michigan State Waterways Commission for coming to the City of Sault Ste. Marie to hold the meeting. Mr. Wyers stated that they have a lot going on, lots to do and are working on water trails, as kayaking is growing in popularity. Mr. Wyers mentioned there many needs, as they face some challenges, but wants to make things great for the community of Sault Ste. Marie.

Wayne Koppa, Chairperson for Crawford County Trails, has concerns on water trails, rivers, lakes and all trail types alike. Mr. Koppa is seeking any and all kinds of help to get Crawford County Trails recognized and maintained successfully.

John Lechner, Contractor from Sault Ste. Marie, addressed the commission about the bidding process.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION:** Chair Gary Marowske asked for a motion for approval of the minutes from the April 29, 2016 Michigan State Waterways Commission meeting. The motion was put into place by Commissioner Al Declercq and was seconded by Commissioner Ward Walstrom. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

A brief financial update was given by **Al Declercq**; documents to support this update were included in each commissioner's packet for their review. Concern with fund balances growing, as some municipalities may find it difficult to match grants at 50% to match. **Dennis Nickels**



spoke of seeking any grant community's 5 year plan so the commission can better plan. **Paul Petersen** spoke briefly about grants and gathering survey information. **Ron Olson** reviewed the relationships between the USACE, DNR, and communities noting there is a good working relationship that exists.

## **MARKETING UPDATE**

**Ward Walstrom** started the marketing update by presenting a video he created that depicts a day on the water representing Michigan boating opportunities. Marketing updates were also provided in each commissioner's packets. Topics of discussion included Michigan Boating Week, in which it was found that the attendees had great things to say. It was suggested that boat access sites could have a rack for kayak placement/storage, for customer use. **Maia Turek** discussed some quick facts and figures regarding Michigan Boating Week, states that they are producing 3 or 4 videos on boating around Michigan. The plan is to reach out through social media to increase activity with the Millennial generation.

## **OPERATIONS UPDATE**

**Nicki Polan** was absent from the meeting, and that she is expected to present an update in August at the next scheduled meeting. **Jason Fleming** discussed that we planned to use the August working session to discuss items related to policies and practices. Port Sanilac was addressed in writing and the response was part of the packet. Both Jason and **Linnae Dawson** will be attending a Port Sanilac Harbor Commission meeting before the next Waterways meeting.

## **WAYS AND MEANS UPDATE**

**Dennis Nickels** presented the ways and means update during the work session, as there was a lot of information to cover. Key points being to raise money, improve boating environment, access, quality and safe experiences. Information regarding the presentation was included in each commissioner's packets for their review. A Power Point slide show was presented, with each commissioner given a hard copy for their records. Other topics of interest included, popularity of paddle sports, miles of shoreline available along with the rivers and lakes. Coast guard and State regulations/standards for personal floatation devices were briefly discussed.



## **GENERAL UPDATE**

**Ron Olson** reviewed the meeting held recently with the City Officials from Saugatuck, Douglas, and the Harbor Authority. Attendees included, **Linnae Dawson**, **Paul Petersen**, and Jon Allan from the Office of the Great Lakes. The Detroit Public Boating Update included discussion of harbor capacity at Detroit-area marinas and future boat launch opportunities on Belle Isle and Milliken State Park.

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

No legislative updates to report at this time.

## **OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Brief update was given by **Jason Fleming** on reservations, which were up about 12%. A marina survey is being developed for the feedback by boaters through email out of the reservation system. Jason will provide an update at the August meeting.

## **WATER TRAIL UPDATE**

**Vicki Anthes** stated the department is still compiling information from stakeholders. Vicki believes she will have information to share at the August meeting.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

**Jordan Byelich** informed the commission that dredging and dock construction for approximately 52 transient slips, is in progress at East Tawas State Harbor with completion anticipated in September. The Chestonia Bridge that spans the Jordan River in Antrim County is in need of a new design, as access under the current bridge is a concern to boaters due to its double culvert design. \$1.2 million has been raised through donations for this project, and a design is being worked on through the Road Commission that will incorporate a relocation of a DNR boating access site to the other side of the river. The Fayette Historic State Park Harbor project is nearing completion.

**Paul Petersen** gave a brief Grant-In-Aid project update. Harrisville is in the beginning stage of a dock replacement project that will be constructed over five phases. Paul also touched on recent Leland and Pentwater navigational channel dredge grant projects to be accomplished this summer, both agreements have been executed. Update on the Grand River Waterway study project, financed via General Fund project, field survey work for the study is to be completed by the end of July. The first phase of the Kawkawlin River dredge, which was started last summer,



will be completed by the end of July. Grant agreements that were approved from the April applicants have been written and executed.

## **GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL REPORT**

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

## **OTHER**

Chairman Gary Marowske suggested that the 2017 spring meeting is held in Saugatuck.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

**The next Michigan State Waterways Commission Meeting: Frankfort, August 19, 2016**