Asylum Lake Policy & Management Council Meeting  
Thursday, 9 March 2006  
7:00 p.m.  
Parkview Hills Clubhouse  
3707 Greenleaf Circle

" The recorded comments below are expressions of council members and are not approved policy until voted on. The statements were not recorded verbatim and cannot be used as quotes. "

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call

   a. Sign-in Roster

Council Members Present: Tim Holysz, Cam Vossen, Bob Nagler, Mark Hoffman, Bill Steinmann, Kay Chase (rep. for Tyler Bassett), Steve Kohler, Duane Hampton, Chuck Ide, Paul MacNellis, Ann Paulson, Michael Nassaney

          Guests Present: Cari DeLong, Cal Mastin

III. Adoption of Agenda

   ▪ Chuck Ide moved to adopt the 9 March 2006 meeting agenda. Tim Holysz seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

IV. Approval of 9 February 2006 Meeting Minutes

   ▪ Mark – The word “sampling” should be added to a sentence on page 2.
   ▪ Mark – The last sentence of page 3 should read “Is there a stream going under Parkview Avenue?”
   ▪ Mark Hoffman moved to approve the 9 February 2006 meeting minutes as amended. Chuck Ide seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

V. Old Business

   a. Asylum Lake Preserve Management Plan Progress  
      (Watershed Loading and Lake Quality Study) Subcommittee

      Motion: Bob Nagler moved to allow the subcommittee to proceed with the finalization of the watershed loading and lake quality study. Ann Paulson seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Michael Nassaney and Bill Steinmann abstained.

   ▪ Duane – The subcommittee has met twice. Discussed changes to the water quality proposal by Kieser & Associates.
   ▪ Paul – These changes were summarized and sent to Mark Kieser. Mark will not be able to address it right away.
   ▪ Paul – The study was expanded to include the testing of more components. The subcommittee discussed what studies should be done by WMU and what should be done by Kieser. Dr. Steve Kohler will sample for nitrates to test for any breaks in the sewer pipe that run along the north shore of Asylum Lake. Dr. Carla Koretsky will analyze sediment samples for 16 metals. A measure of the lake bathymetry will be done by the Physical Plant. Kieser will do the water quality study. Steve and Carla will give estimates.
• Steve – Estimate $3-5,000. Carla’s study will be more expensive.
• Mark – Why measuring levels of atrazine?
• Tim – Atrazine was used on the prairie and orchard for years until WMU stopped it.
• Mark – Would residues still exist?
• Chuck – If atrazine binds it will be degraded however in the water it does not bind and will dissolve and migrate. Atrazine has many harmful environmental effects. Helpful to have baseline data to compare to future measurements.
• Paul – We need to know what is out there in order to trace it back to its source. It has to be dealt with.
• Duane – These studies are not just for research interest. The parameters chosen for the study have credibility.
• Chuck – For example, the subcommittee had considered testing for PCBs, but decided against it because there was no evidence for the existence of PCBs on the property.
• Paul – PCBs are commonly found in electrical transformers. Transformers existed in the basements of the State Hospital buildings. They were supposedly taken out and disposed of when the buildings were demolished.
• Bob – PCBs were developed later than the Hospital era. They probably would not have been there.
• Mark – Will these parameters provide info indicating whether or not the septic system from the trailer park is affecting Asylum Lake?
• Duane – The study will include the analysis of inflows on the west side of the lake. This data should answer that.
• Chuck – mercury analysis is included in the study. The source is probably the air.
• Kay – Will this increase the cost significantly?
• Chuck – Testing for methylmercury will cost much more than mercury.
• Duane – Costly not to test key parameters up front and then realize they have to be tested later.
• Chuck – Important to test for mercury since people fish there.
• Paul – Mark Kieser has not provided any estimates yet. This will delay the process. How does the Council feel about sending out requests for proposals?
• Bob – Mark Kieser has a terrific reputation with the city.
• Duane – Kieser’s proposal may not be cost competitive. We could bid out in order to motivate Kieser to lower their prices.
• Paul – Council could approve the subcommittee to make the final decisions. In order to expedite the process.
• Bob – Council’s input would not be of much additional value. Trust the subcommittee. We need to keep the process moving.
• Bob Nagler moved to allow the subcommittee to proceed with the finalization of the watershed loading and lake quality study. Ann Paulson seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Michael Nassaney and Bill Steinmann abstained.

b. Dogs at Asylum Lake

Tom Edmonds, Paul MacNellis

• Paul – Talked to WMU DPS. They do not enforce Kalamazoo City ordinances. City does not have the resources to patrol Asylum Lake. Talked to Steve Lawrence, the county animal control officer. Can send out officers in blocks of 2 hours. $23.50 an hour.
• Paul – Tom Edmonds could not make the meeting but sent an email. Tom’s email stated that control officers can only issue citations, they cannot arrest. He is worried they will encounter uncooperative individuals and call for police back-up. There are also other enforcement issues that need to be dealt with such as drinking parties. He will contact...
WMU DPS to coordinate with animal control to patrol periodically. If they do not wish to participate in the patrols he will contact the sheriff.

- Duane – Is there an intermediate step the Council can take?
- Michael – Certain places come to have certain practices. Not always easy to transform.
- Paul – We should post signs saying the property will be patrolled by police. Most preserves do not allow dogs. However, the public would be upset and there are the enforcement issues.
- Bob – Talked to people walking dogs at the property. They seem to think as long as other people are not using leashes, they shouldn’t have to either. But they were willing to use a leash. Most had one with. It is a chance for dogs to enjoy the natural world.
- Duane – Maybe animal control is the intermediate step, versus the police.
- Tim – Would pedestrians have to be carrying i.d. in order to be served a citation?
- Tim – Sunday afternoons are a busy time. Many dogs without leashes fighting. Random patrolling is good, as long as weekends are included.
- Paul – Maybe just having animal control out there would discourage unleashed dogs.
- Duane – We could alert the media in the same manner the police publicize their seat belt laws.
- Mark – Could we make it sporadic? For example, patrol for 3 months and then stop for a period of time. Once word gets out, the problem will get better.
- Paul – Yes. We could make it sporadic.
- Bob – Random from the beginning is better.
- Paul – Yes, but there are peak times that we should be patrolling. We could randomize the days.
- Mark – Are dogs prohibited from swimming in the lake unless they have a leash on?
- Paul – Yes. The rule includes the lake.
- Duane – We should let people know beforehand. Is there a public communications person at WMU that could alert the media?
- Paul – Yes.
- Michael – It could also be announced on the website.
- Paul – This issue will be pursued.

VI. New Business
a. Invasive Species (Purple Loosestrife)

- Paul – Invasive species are a problem at Asylum Lake. Purple loosestrife and phragmites are both present. Phragmites has no filtering value, and is not an appropriate food source for wildlife. Unsure of the scope of the problem. Garlic mustard is a problem in the forests.
- Paul - Part of water quality study includes a plant inventory which will tell us where and how abundant the invasives are. Council needs to know which controls, biological, physical or mechanical are most effective for each species.
- Cal – ALPA is planning a garlic mustard pull at the Asylum Lake property on Earth Day. Last fall 7 bushels were pulled.
- Paul – That is a great idea. A protocol must be filled out.
- Cal – ALPA will fill out a protocol.
- Paul – Asylum Lake is part of the Stewardship Network. The Network is planning a garlic mustard pull at Kleinstuck Preserve on Earth Day.
- Cal – Earth Day is April 22.
- Bob – Multiflora rose is also a problem. Many invasives were planted as decorative landscape during the State Hospital period.
VII. Project/Special Committee Reports
   a. Research/Education Committee
      (Group Visit Form)
      ▪ Michael – The committee discussed a group visit form that was submitted. The Land Trust Alliance is holding a conference on March 24-26. They were hoping to conduct a tour on the property. Paul, Mark and Cari will be involved in the tour and discussions. There will be 30-40 adults. The subcommittee recommends that the group be allowed to pursue the activity.
      ▪ Paul – The Council is invited. Nate Fuller asked us to do this. We will be talking about the history of the property, problems, and exchange ideas.
      ▪ Michael – Wanted to remind the Council of the property’s historic value. This property is the product of human activities and natural processes. Even the introduced plants are part of the history of the creation of that space. These species should be looked at and evaluated as such.
      ▪ Paul – Included in each management plan is a sentence that states we will consult with archeological experts before manipulating the property.
      ▪ Kay – Another aspect to invasive species is their value as a food source. We should be careful when removing invasives to replace with an adequate native food source for the wildlife. Complicated issue.

b. Operations Committee
   Nothing to report.

VIII. Public Comments
   None.

IX. Council/Staff Comments
   ▪ Tim – This year’s prairie burn will be coming up. No details are known yet. Last year most of the west and north sides were burned. They have discussed sectioning off different areas to burn instead of burning the entire parcel. A section of 10 acres would be burned each year. There is much new growth in sections that have been burned in the past. Fire lanes will continue to be mowed for people to walk and for practical reasons. This year we will try to burn the east section which has not been burned before.
   ▪ Duane - Is there a fire management plan?
   ▪ Paul – Yes, it is required by the fire department. Our fire management plan is posted on the website.
   ▪ Bob – Is the money for the burn taken out of our budget?
   ▪ Tim – Yes. It is taken out of the maintenance budget for Asylum Lake.
   ▪ Mark – Do the fires control poison ivy? Tim – yes. Anything that is shallow rooted. Mark – Are the fumes a danger? Paul – Poison ivy can be contracted through the fumes if burned. Mark – Does the plume dissipate? Tim – yes.
   ▪ Michael – Is there a lot of poison ivy in the prairie? Tim – no. There is more of it closer to the woods.
   ▪ Chuck – Prairies get burned in natural settings. But we have to think hard about getting rid of species, even ones that we may not see as having value. Wildlife adapts and there may be a rich ecosystem in what we would term “weeds”.

X. Adjournment
   Meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.