

Meeting Minutes of the Meeting of  
Michigan State Waterways Commission  
June 20, 2008

Cheboygan City Hall  
Cheboygan City Council Chambers  
402 N. Huron  
Cheboygan, Michigan 49721

A regular meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission was called to order by Chairperson Carol Oakley at 11:31 a.m. on Friday, June 20, 2008, at the Cheboygan City Hall, City Council Chambers, Cheboygan, Michigan. The following Commissioners were present:

Carol Oakley, Chairperson  
Bryan Amann  
Denny Bailey  
Bob Brown  
Mike Bryanton  
Janet Mansfield

Commissioner Curtis Hertel was absent.

Parks and Recreation Chief Ron Olson and other Department of Natural Resources (Department) were present.

Chairperson Carol Oakley thanked the City of Cheboygan for hosting this meeting and allowing the Commission to utilize its facilities.

Mr. Scott McNeil, City Manager of Cheboygan, thanked the Waterways Commission for helping to fund various projects in Cheboygan.

Public Appearances:

**Written Correspondence**

There was no written correspondence.

**Appearances (Non-agenda Items)**

There were no appearances for non-agenda items.

Minutes

**April 18, 2008**

Approval of the minutes was postponed until the next Waterways Commission meeting on August 8, 2008.

Old Business

**Project Status Report**

Mr. Bill Boik provided an update on harbors as follows:

Harbors:

- The project at Mackinac Island State Harbor (Mackinac County) has been completed and includes comfort station upgrades, sidewalk replacement, a new pump out facility, utility upgrades, new decking, and harbor wall repair. The Waterways Commission participated in a rededication of the Harbor yesterday and was impressed by the upgraded facilities.
- The Commission visited Cheboygan Lock and Dam (Cheboygan County) this morning. The dam is undergoing structural repairs, spillway and cribbing repair, buttress repair, and installation of a lamprey trap. The project required dewatering of the plunge pool.
- The Charlevoix Municipal Marina (Charlevoix County) project is nearing completion (expected by July 1, 2008) and includes dock construction, new harbormaster building, seawall and dock connections, utility improvements, and a new parking lot.

Mr. Paul Peterson provided an update on boating access sites as follows:

Boating Access Sites (BAS):

- The Forks BAS (Cheboygan County), which the Commission visited this morning, is in the midst of a project that includes ramp construction, parking lot construction, maneuver area construction, grading and drainage, retaining wall, vault toilet, dredging, and skid piers.
- Bear Lake BAS (Hillsdale County) is undergoing site redesign, parking lot paving, sidewalk construction, launch ramp relocation, vault toilet relocation, and site restoration.
- The project at Bird Lake BAS (Hillsdale County) consists of site redesign, parking lot paving, entrance drive paving, sidewalk construction, vault toilet relocation, and site restoration.
- The Grindstone City BAS (Huron County) project includes dredging and a haul road (to assist in mechanical dredging).

- Montague BAS (Muskegon County) is undergoing a project that includes parking lot and drive development, sidewalk construction, striping, and fencing.

Mr. Paul Peterson also provided a development timeline for Eight Point Lake BAS (Clare County) as follows:

- Land purchase completion (summer 2008)
- Preliminary and final engineering (fall 2008)
- Permitting (winter 2008/2009)
- Bidding (winter/spring 2009)
- Construction (spring/summer 2009)
- Site open (summer 2009)

Commissioner Bryan Amann thanked staff and the contractors involved for the projects that are underway in the Cheboygan area.

### **Operations Status Report**

Mr. Jason Fleming asked if there were any questions regarding the written Operations Status Report. Commissioner Bryan Amann asked about the status of Gray Haven. Mr. Fleming went to the site with the surveyors this past Tuesday and staff is hoping for a settlement soon. Commissioner Michael Bryanton asked about the status of the Central Reservation System. The numbers are down due to a combination of recent weather and the economy. Mr. Ron Olson provided information on a new camper/boat storage program to address gas prices. At participating locations, boats may be left in place for up to 15 days if they have a paid reservation. The next time Commission meets staff will have more information on the boating season.

Chairperson Carol Oakley asked about the possibility of a program for seasonal slip holder to be able to utilize a slip at another state harbor in their travels. Department staff is still checking into the possibility of such a program. Commissioner Mike Bryanton indicated that we much do whatever we can in the short term to keep people boating. Mr. Ron Olson stated that it is a challenge to staff to initiate inventive ideas to draw boaters to events.

Chairperson Carol Oakley thanked staff for the audit system that is being put in place. Four more audits were completed this week.

### **Standing Committee reports**

There were no standing committee reports.

### **Strategic Planning Update**

Ms. Vicki Anthes provided an update on the strategic planning process. Goals, objectives, and actions have been internally approved through the Parks and Recreation Division Management Team. Appropriate goals and objectives will be forwarded to difference standing committees for review. More information will be provided at the next Waterways Commission meeting in August.

### New Business

#### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Dredging Projects**

Mr. Wayne Schloop from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) provided an update on dredging and other Corps responsibilities:

- Dredging: The Corps can only budget for the deep draft (commercial) harbors unless they receive a congressional appropriation (earmark) for shallow draft (recreational) harbors.
- Breakwater repairs: There are approximately 160 miles of breakwaters on the Great Lakes.
- Lock operations (including the Soo Locks): The locks are operable from March 25 to January 15. This leaves a narrow window of opportunity for repairs.
- Historical water levels: A handout was provided to the Commission on water levels.
- Great Lakes navigation: When water levels are below datum, there can be groundings on the Great Lakes. Due to low water levels and a dredging backlog, there were four groundings in Muskegon last year, one at Rochester, one in Grand Haven, one at St. Joseph, and one in Waukegan.
- Shallow draft harbors: Because of no dredging, Little Lake Harbor (on Lake Superior, near Two Heart) is shoaled in, as is Portage Lake Harbor (in Onekama). Little Lake was last dredged in 2004. It shoaled in within a couple of months as it is susceptible to prevailing winds. Little Lake used to be funded annually for dredging. It is not financially possible to build a breakwater.
- Funding and trends: -Congress was good to the Great Lakes this year. The amount of amount of dredging was more than doubled. Twenty projects were dredged in 2007, while there are 53 scheduled for this year. Communities want dredging to occur in April and May, but that is not always possible due to weather and equipment issues.

Chairperson Oakley asked if staff looks at currents and prevailing winds when establishing a harbor. Staff does address those issues, as does the Corps. Commissioner Mansfield requested information on the Grand Marais breakwater and Mr. Schloop said that funds have been appropriated to work on a new design. There are also coordination issues with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service because of a piping plover issue. Mr. Schloop believes there is Congressional support for the new design.

Mr. Ron Olson requested that Mr. Schloop provide an update to the Waterways Commission once a year update. He said he would be glad to do so.

**August Meeting Location**

Mr. Ron Olson addressed the Commission regarding the August 8, 2008 meeting location. Following discussion, Port Austin in Huron County was agreed upon.

**Todd Wyett**

Waterways Chairperson Carol Oakley read the white pine plaque honoring former Waterways Commissioner Todd Wyett. Commissioner Wyett also served as Chairperson for a portion of his time on the Waterways Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Bryan Amann moved to approve a resolution honoring former Waterways Commission Chairman Todd Wyett. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bob Brown and unanimously approved.

**Keith Wilson**

The Commission reviewed a resolution in acknowledgement of the passing of Mr. Keith Wilson. Mr. Wilson served the Waterways Unit for 32 years and provided strong leadership.

MOTION: Commissioner Denny Bailey moved to approve a resolution honoring Mr. Keith Wilson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryan Amann and carried unanimously.

**Amendment of Bylaws – Consent Agenda**

MOTION: At Mr. Ron Olson's request this item was tabled to the next meeting via a motion by Commissioner Bryan Amann. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Janet Mansfield and unanimously approved.

Other Business:

MOTION: Commissioner Denny Bailey moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Janet Mansfield. This meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.