

**Minutes of the
Michigan State Waterways Commission
February 24, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission (Commission) was called to order by Chairperson Gary Marowske at 11:45 a.m. on Friday, February 24, 2012, at the Country Inn and Suites by Carlson Lansing, 6511 Centurion Drive, Lansing, MI 48917. The following Commissioners were present:

Commissioner Gary Marowske, Chairperson
Commissioner Van Snider, Vice-Chairperson
Commissioner Janet Mansfield
Commissioner Mike Bryanton

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Parks and Recreation Division Chief, Ron Olson and other DNR staff were present. Mr. Robert Reichel, First Assistant Attorney General was also present.

I. PUBLIC APPEARANCE

A. Written Correspondence

There was no written correspondence.

B. Appearances (Non-agenda items)

Mr. James Sarna, of Brighton, a slip holder in the Traverse City area, addressed the Commission regarding his concerns with a parking issue during the Traverse City Cherry Festival. Mr. Jason Fleming from the Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) responded that the City will be notified that their boating facility should open up parking for boating use. Mr. Sarna also suggested that a larger amount of parking spaces should be provided to the boaters.

Mr. Sarna addressed the Commission with a concern over the October 2011 meeting minutes, that they did not reflect his closing statement to the Commission regarding a discussion about the efficiency of the marinas. In his opinion, slip owner expenses have increased and the marinas are not run efficiently enough. Commissioner Marowske assured Mr. Sarna that his comments will be noted in the February meeting minutes. The October minutes have been reviewed and approved and will remain un-amended.

Mr. Brian Kelley, Marina Manager of Sundog Marina on the Clinton River in Harrison Township, introduced himself as a first time visitor to the Commission meetings and talked about his marina.

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of the December 16, 2011 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Mansfield moved to approve the December 2011 Minutes of the Michigan State Waterways Commission as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Snider and it carried unanimously.

III. OLD BUSINESS (Information Items)

A. Recreation Passport Update

Mr. Olson from PRD spoke about the Recreation Passport. He reported that as of the month of January there is a 22% participation rate, and the DNR is projecting 30% for this fiscal year. Last year, Passport sales were up June through August and this year's projection is the same. The DNR will continue to update the Commission on the progress. The sales of Motor Vehicle Permits have gone away, but Waterways Fund will continue to be made whole by replacing the revenue with Passport funds.

B. Project Status Reports

Mr. Jordan Byelich from PRD reported that Michigan is home to 907,360 registered boats. Mr. Byelich updated the Commission on current projects with a presentation that he provided.

- ◆ Selfridge Boating Access Site (BAS) – Approximately \$980,000 construction cost with 75% of the project funded with federal grant money. The scope includes sheet pile wall construction due to failing seawall, railing, and sidewalks. The anticipated completion is fall 2012.
- ◆ Cross Village Area Feasibility Study - \$30,000 includes the investigation of a new harbor facility development. At this time the project team is gathering background information for the study.
- ◆ Aloha State Park BAS Design – \$35,000 is for the engineering for a dredging project at the BAS. This is a heavily used facility on a large lake (Mullett Lake). Currently the shallow channel and channel mouth to the lake reduce navigability.

Mr. Paul Petersen from PRD reviewed Grant-in-Aid (GIA) projects.

- ◆ Escanaba Municipal Marina – \$108,000 – The scope includes 50' concrete L-Dock replacement, dock pilings, structural frame, and utility lines.
- ◆ Northport Municipal Marina –\$275,000 – The scope includes a Harbormaster building replacement with a completion date of mid-July.

C. 2012 Meeting Dates/Locations

Commissioner Marowske reviewed the Waterways 2012 meeting schedule with the Commission. The August meeting is scheduled for Manistique; the June meeting will be held at Crystal Lake; and the October Meeting will be held in St. Joseph. The April 13th meeting was changed to April 20th due to a conflict.

IV. EMERGING ISSUES

Mr. Olson reported that there recently was an article released in a Detroit newspaper indicating that Erma Henderson Marina may be scheduled to close or stop operating. He stated that discussions that include the City and Mayor are occurring on this issue. No decisions have been made yet.

V. NEW BUSINESS (Information Items)

A. Waterways Commission Workshop Overview

Commissioner Marowske mentioned that the Commissioners met for a workshop earlier in the morning. The highlights are as follows:

- ◆ Subcommittees were established and include three to four Commissioners in each, including Finance, Marketing, Facilities, and Revenue Enhancement. Subcommittee goals have been suggested but will be established by the committees.
- ◆ The DNR will endeavor to set up meetings this year with Harbormasters from around the State to discuss marketing and operating methods, and share best practices to see how we can improve all of our harbors including GIA. The Commission inquired about how the State addresses harbors in need of immediate dredging assistance.
- ◆ There will be updates to the Commission rules and regulations. A Representative from the Attorney General's office is reviewing the rules and regulations to clarify the Commission's role.

B. Federal BIG P Program Review

Ms. Vicki Anthes from PRD reviewed the BIG P Program with the Commission. Ms. Anthes mentioned that a press release was shared with the Commissioners electronically regarding the recent awardees from last fall's BIG P applicants. The DNR had anticipated the Commission would have questions about the BIG P program and was prepared to explain it further. This program specifically addresses the transient boaters. These grants are for larger vessels 26' long or greater, and require a match. No boating access sites are eligible. The federal application deadline for the next round of applicants begins in May 2012; and the announcement of awardees occurs in Feb/March 2013. The grant process is a pass through, so the process for communities is that they have to submit their application through the DNR. The project scope must be very clear, because it can be laborious to make changes later. The DNR will provide a list to the Commissioners in April, showing eligible applicants. The DNR will continue to work with those communities if they are interested. The BIG P information has been available for a long time; however, we

will continue to be more proactive in alerting GIA's to the grant opportunities. Mr. Byelich commented that the grant funding dictated yearly is based on the available federal grant program budget.

Mr. Olson reported that a question arose in Elk Rapids regarding a building downtown that was purchased with funds from the local community harbor fund. The DNR had interest in this because Elk Rapids marina was developed with Waterways Funds through the Grant-In-Aid program. Mr. Fleming has forwarded information to the Harbormaster regarding the Department's concern about following correct protocol. There is reason to believe that the community may sell the building and since this property was purchased with marina funds, it would require the City to reimburse the Waterways Fund. There will be follow up information at the April meeting.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Marowske offered the audience a last opportunity to address the Commission. No comments were made.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.

The next Waterways Commission meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 20, 2012 in the Lansing area.