

Michigan State Waterways Commission Meeting Minutes

Location: Virtual meeting

Date: August 25, 2021

Roll Call

Present for the Waterways Commission:

- Commissioner, Chair, Barb Brooks, Boyne City, MI
- Commissioner, Vice-Chair, Mary Rising, Fenton, MI
- Commissioner, Secretary, Pat Egan, Brimley, MI
- Commissioner, Elaine Isely, Grand Rapids, MI
- Commissioner, Fred Sitkins, Traverse City, MI
- Commissioner, Mark Yonan, Clarkston, MI
- Commissioner, Pete Beauregard, St. Clair Shores, MI

Others Present:

- Ron Olson, DNR
- Maia Turek, DNR
- Jordan Byelich, DNR
- Paul Petersen, DNR
- Michelle Wieber, DNR, Recorder
- Jackie Blodgett, DNR
- Dylan Smythe, DNR
- Linnae Dawson, DNR
- Kristen Bennett, DNR

Guest Speakers

- Jennie Kahn-Jacques, DNR
- Tamara Jorkasky, DNR

Absent:

- Vicki McGhee, DNR
- Michael Desnoyer, DNR

Meeting minutes

Opening Comments:

- Chair, Barb Brooks called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., August 25, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually.
- The meeting began with reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Appearance:

- Written correspondence was submitted for the meeting packet by Bob Schultz, seasonal slip holder at Marsten Marina in Northport. Mr. Schultz wrote a letter to express his opinion of the request to grant a boat permission to be used as an Air B&B in G. Marsten Marina.

Action Items:

- MOTION: Chair, Barb Brooks asked for a motion for approval of the minutes from the June 17, 2021, Michigan State Waterways Commission meeting. The motion was put into place by Commissioner Elaine Isely and was seconded by Commissioner Mark Yonan. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.
- MOTION: Chair, Barb Brooks asked for a motion for approval of Resolution 08-2021-03 to support the Proposed State Waterways Capital Project 2021-2022 Plan. The motion was put into place by Commissioner Pat Egan and was seconded by Commissioner Elaine Isely. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.
- MOTION: Chair, Barb Brooks asked for a motion for approval of Resolution 08-2021-04 in Recognition of Commissioner, Pete Beauregard. Pete has completed his 3-year term as a Commissioner. The motion was put into place by Commissioner Mark Yonan and was seconded by Commissioner Pat Egan. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

Committee Reports:

- The Facilities Subcommittee met and reviewed the proposed State Waterways Capital Projects. The Commission supports the proposed projects.
- The Operations Subcommittee met and reviewed the two variance requests that were submitted from Northport and Traverse City. Both requests were approved by the Committee.

General Updates

- Guest speaker Jennie Kahn-Jacques, spoke to the Commission regarding the Waterways Lean Process Improvement (LPI) methodology, resulting in a process improvement plan. The purpose of the workshop was to identify gaps, improve efficiencies, formalize processes, and respond to trends to ensure the Waterways Capital Outlay Program continues to support acquisition, design/construction, and the operations and maintenance of the highest priorities for quality, world-class public recreational boating facilities. Some key LPI outcomes included, restructuring the assessment and prioritization of investments, identifying critical staffing needs and where efficiencies can be gained to meet program needs and assessing core program components and identifying where alternative strategies are needed. Next steps include detailed implementation planning and

action teams working to move the outcomes forward.

- Ron Olson mentioned the state budget is still sitting but gaining steam in the legislature. The nearly \$250 million in investments to modernize state parks and trails, to enhance tourism and boost local economics is pending, but DNR staff have been busy planning and prioritizing.
- Commissioner Pete Beauregard informed the Commissioners the Michigan Boating Industries Association proposal regarding non-motorized watercraft has stalled.

Financial Updates

- Financial information updates were provided to the Commissioners in the meeting packet. Dylan Smythe provided further details including updates to revenue and expenditures. These items are updated twice per year.

Operations Updates

- Linnae Dawson provided an Operations update to the Commissioners. Harbor Year-to-Date Net Nights and Reservations up significantly for the 2021 season, with the biggest challenge being low staff levels. Seasonal and transient slip rates for 2022 will not see an increase.

Marketing Updates

- Maia Turek spoke on updates regarding the 75th waterways anniversary, gearing up to highlight boating and its value of access to Michigan's waters, and a vision of boating for what the next 25 years could bring. The celebration will take place next year with a multitude of options to join in the fun.

Project Repots

- The Michigan State Waterways Development Program Project Report was included in each commissioner's meeting packet for their information.
- Jordan Byelich provided an update to the Commission on State projects. Lexington State Harbor has active projects – Boating Access Site (BAS) redevelopment and paving has been completed, and the marina harbormaster building redevelopment and expansion is in final stages of design/permitting. Hoping to have permit in place this fall, with construction to follow for a summer 2022 completion. Federal grants are being sought to assist with dock replacement in a future phase. FY22 state waterways capital outlay project recommendations include but are not limited to design and construction project at Cheboygan Lock & Dam, construction at Lime Island State Harbor, and construction at Jackson Field Office, a boating support facility.
- Paul Petersen mentioned a busy grant program, with 22 applications approved, and 7 agreements remaining to write.

Transmittals

Great Lakes Water Level Report

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

Non-Agenda Items

- Commissioner Fred Sitkins attended the 150th celebration in Onekama, mentioned it was an outstanding event, and was happy to represent the Michigan State Waterways Commission.
- It was discussed this year's remaining Michigan State Waterways Commission meetings will be held virtually.
- Chair, Barb Brooks reminded Commissioners to push forward, work actively with the Retreat Action Items.

Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

The next Michigan State Waterways Commission Meeting: December 2, 2021