

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township
THORNAPPLE RIVER SAD AD-HOC COMMITTEE MEETING
July 25, 2022 at 5:30pm
Cascade Charter Township Hall
5920 Tahoe Dr. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

ARTICLE 1. The meeting was called to order at 5:33pm.

Members Present: Members Leann Rowland, Scott Rissi, Chuck Whitley, Trustee Shipley, Michael Wiegand, Mike and Lori Gottlieb (via Zoom)

Members Absent: Thomas Keith, Jeff Carpenter, Paul Strauss

Others Present: Township Manager (TM) Ben Swayze and Jamie Desjardins (PLM Lake and Land Management)

ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda

Motion was made by Member Rissi to approve the agenda as written. Supported by Member Wiegand. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 3. Acknowledge Visitors & Public Comment

There were not any visitors who wished to comment at this time.

ARTICLE 4. Approve the Minutes of the June 6, 2022 Meeting

Motion was made by Trustee Shipley to approve the June 6, 2022 meeting minutes as written. Supported by Member Rowland. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 5. Update on 2022 Thornapple River Weed Management Program - PLM

Jamie from PLM shared that there was a slow start to the Thornapple River treatment as they did not receive approval for their permit from EGLE until the end of June but they were able to successfully treat all the milfoil and curly leaf. In the untreated section (Kilmer to the South and upstream), where there were not any invasive species at the original time of survey, native plants have become much denser. The untreated areas have shallow sections, making it difficult for boats to navigate, and there is considerable flow in the area, pushing away treatment solutions. EGLE also restricted treatment to a 50x20ft area of frontage, per residence, where that area must be in front of the corresponding property.

One way to treat the dense native plants would be to try using anti-drift products but that still may not be effective. Another would be to mechanically harvest the plants but the areas of the river in question would be difficult to navigate with a harvester.

Member Rissi took the Harvest Manager for PLM out on the river to evaluate the river for successes and areas they could get access to the river for future treatment. They cannot use Member Rissi's ramp for access because it is on the wrong side of the

railroad bridge; that leaves access via other resident's properties. Member Rissi has been contacting residents in the area, one of which he is hoping to dump the harvested weeds in their bayou, but has not had success. There is access along Peacock Pt and Member Rissi doesn't have a contact with anyone there. There is one person who is willing to grant access but they are requesting compensation; this is a problem because it says in the township ordinance that no one can pay for ramp use for commercial profit. Member Rissi suggested \$100/year may be a price a resident could pay for this use but the neighbor thought \$400 may be a starting point.

Member Gottlieb said that, if the residents on Kilmer do not want to provide ramp access to treat the native nuisance plants, they do not have to be treated this year as they are not an invasive species.

The Oakmont Landing is hilly and the harvester could damage pontoons due to the narrowness of the channel with boats along both sides. There were thick enough weeds when they tried to go out in the row boat that they could not move through them. There are not any county or state-owned launches in the area.

Desjardins of PLM stated that the sections initially treated may not need any more treatment as they cleared up so well. PLM will be out the second week in August to resurvey and treat the week of August 27th. They will also survey and perform water quality testing at this time. Once the testing is complete, PLM will provide a packet of the results and data to the township. The first invoice for the treatment will be around \$32,500 and the second invoice will be around another \$10,000-\$12,000. Harvesting of the weeds, neither via harvester or herbicide, will harm the endangered fish in the river. The treatment of the native weeds with chemicals would cost \$1,500 while using a harvester would be closer to \$2,500 if the weeds were able to offload them nearby.

The committee decided to hold off on treating the nuisance plants for the 2022 year but would continue looking into ways to access the river for future years.

ARTICLE 6. State Uniform Waterway Marking System

TM Swayze asked if the committee was still interested in creating a marking system for the waterway. Most of the committee wanted to look into it more which would require hiring a consultant. They would only look at between the expressway and the railroad bridge. It is not likely that the installation would be difficult or expensive and would increase navigability with little cost for maintenance.

Lori disagreed on using SAD money for marking the waterway as she thought the township should pay for it. TM Swayze encouraged the board to advocate for their interests and write a letter or resolution to the Township Board. The committee also talked about partnering with the Township Board on different types of projects as they are more likely to fund a partnership rather than the committee solely asking for funds. TM Swayze will hire a consultant to look into what would be required to mark the waterway.

ARTICLE 7. 2022 Thornapple River SAD Budget

TM Swayze did not have new information to provide for a budget update as the budget has not gone to the Township Board yet. This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

ARTICLE 9. Next Meeting?

The next meeting will not take place on 7/1 and will be scheduled after there is more information from PLM.

ARTICLE 8. Roundtable Q & A

TM Swayze said he would find out what is going on with the river and why its water level is so low. Member Rissi asked why there are screw jacks that appeared on the last flood gate at the end of last season and TM Swayze agreed to look into that.

ARTICLE 9. Public Comment

There were not any visitors who wished to comment at this time.

ARTICLE 10. Adjournment

**Motion was made by Member Rissi to adjourn. Supported by Member Wiegand.
Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.**

Approved by the Thornapple River SAD Ad-Hoc Committee – 12/5/22