



March 14, 2018 Regular Meeting

I. Introductions

II. Review and Approve the meeting minutes from Feb 14, 2018

Pat moved, support from Stu to approve the minutes, subject to changes made by J. Schulte and R. Schirado.

Motion carried.

III. Reports:

A. Financial statement:

J. Schulte - \$2,260, recent contribution from Pat Allen & Family.

B. Report from GVSU Website Team – cancelled

C. Letter in the Squire – Gretchen and Schirado wrote a letter to the Squire, in the Thurs. March 8 2018 edition. Jessie's notice of the showcase was also published.

Jessie noted the Advance article written by Nick – Save money, plant trees, protect fish!

D. Trout Unlimited Home Rivers Initiative update: Jamie Vaughn

a. Hiring for the "Green Team" – Applications are due April 1st.

b. Nick Sanchez – Michigan Tree Farm, TU, KCD – to reach land owners in the area, help them manage their property responsibly, to pay more attention to the water quality. Name is the Rogue Forest Cooperative.

i. Hoping to encourage participation in the RCPP

ii. 30% off trees if planting on the RRW – KCD

E. Update on Environmental Legislation in MI:

a. Pat – Michigan.gov website has ability to check the status of a bill. The House Bill 5638 – Large Quantity Water Removal, such as farmers – being given a special pass . The permit will allow the state to regulate the amount of water??? Ask

b. Steg – Garrett Ellison wrote a good summary of the bill. Article on FB page.

c. Rob Z – The farm bill programs are "cloaked in secrecy" – information not accessible by the public. The way it currently works, is that large quantity water withdraws, the state does a look into how it's going to impact ground water, wildlife and fish in the area. The bill will allow the burden to move from the person withdrawing to the state.

d. Schirado – the bill would stop the decade long unlimited withdraws from aquifers with no accountability.

e. Steg – call you representatives and let them know the bill will not be beneficial.

f. Jessie – Farm Bureau has a lot of influence and power

- g. Pat will send me the link to website to follow the bill.
- h. Jessie – MAEP – only 2% of farmers are participating. Helping to bridge the gap between agriculture and conservation.

IV. Discussion Item – Flooding in the watershed – What can the RRWP do to make flood control and storm water controls a priority for municipalities.

- a. J. Minor – PC in Rockford – City of Rockford currently doesn't have a storm water ordinance. Finally, GVMC is working with the city of Rockford to get a storm water ordinance and permitting process. Cara Decker specifically is working on this.
- b. J. Minor – also, the new manager is pushing the city council to get the ordinance adopted. Thurs. night at 6pm at Rockford City Hall – Draft storm water ordinance will be reviewed
- c. R. Shirado – needs a component for education of private homeowners.
- d. J. Schulte – what the city is proposing might just be the bare minimum – RRWP should make a statement on record to say that it needs to be beefed up to go beyond the minimum requirements.
- e. J. Vaughn – Tangible things in the ordinance, specific things, such as being able to plant rain gardens in the right of way – currently prohibited.
- f. B. Vredevoogd- people forget about the flooding when it's dry. A flood solution fund to try and get ahead of the flooding. People affected could use the funds to help with the flooding, such as planting trees, rain gardens, etc.
- g. J. Schulte – While private funding is all well and good, we should not take the responsibility away from the municipalities who should be doing more to prevent/control flooding (via ordinances, etc.)
- h. R. Schirado – a partnership would be good.
- i. J. Schulte – Freshwater futures grant – could be a match available for something like this.
- j. Voter education – people need to learn about who to vote for.
- k. M. Minor – Allison Sutter talked about programs that the city of GR had. She suggests having a sustainability commission.
- l. J. Schulte – RRWP could meet with each municipality to suggest tangible guidelines that could be taken into consideration by a sustainability commission. We could look to other communities who are ahead of the game in this realm.
- m. S. Cok – Sustainability study – written by Nichol DeMol (TU) – sources cited. Could contact one of them to get more info.
- n. R. Stegmeijer – we need to modify our mode of operation - detention ponds and retention ponds and increased mitigation requirements.
- o. B. Vredevoogd – less paper.
- p. Sally – adding curriculum to learn about flooding – teaching kids to love the earth so they are able to care for it. Grow Wise Learning. Wheels to woods.
- q. Rob Z. – wetland protection and restoration. Rice lake – wetland where headwaters of the Rogue River. 95% of the historic wetland is gone. Big deal. Water storage is one of the biggest component of flood control.
- r. J. Schulte – Outreach campaign – RCPP no money for outreach, but there is from the farm bill for conservation. Can do door to door campaign to give farmers info to get this grant money! Kelly Bishop promoting RCPP at rice lake.

V. Upcoming Events –

- A. March 27, Cedar Springs Brewing – Molly Rippke – talk about E.coli.
- B. April 24 – Cellar Brewing – conservation practiced by farmers in the watershed.
- C. May 5 stream insect monitoring – Rockford Community Cabin.

VI. Calendar- May IRS 990-N report due

VII. Miscellaneous

R. Stegmeijer moved, with support from P. Allen, to adjourn – 11:20am