

Charter Township of Orion
Oakland County, Michigan

Environmental Resources Committee Minutes
Regular Meeting, Wednesday, May 4, 2016
Lake Orion CERC, Room 301

1. Call to order by the Chairperson, George Hanley, at 7:25 am.
2. Roll call: Mike Flood, Harold Flood, Madeline Braley, Beth Sheridan, Mike DeLuca, George Hanley, Rodney Tocco, Jacqui Carlson, Jessie Richmond, Jeff Stout (guest)
3. Determination of a quorum: Yes
4. Welcome New Members: New members Rodney Tocco (voting member), Mike DeLuca (non-voting member) and Jacqui Carlson (alternate member) were introduced.
5. Regular order of business:
 - a) **Approval of minutes** from April 2016 meeting: Mike Flood moved that the February minutes draft be approved; Rodney Tocco seconded; motion carried.
 - b) **Approval of agenda:** Mike Flood moved that the agenda be approved as amended, Harold Flood seconded; motion carried.
6. New business:
 - a) **Phragmites:** Jeff Stout, Orion Township Operations Director, presented an overview of the phragmites treatment project to date and outlined plans for 2016. Phragmites is an invasive species of perennial grass that spreads rapidly and chokes out native plants. The plants have a deep and complex root system that can adversely impact drainage, and once they have overtaken an area they become a fire hazard and can impede sight lines for drivers. The only effective way to treat the infestation is chemically, and the treatment window is from late August through the first hard frost. The preferred herbicide is glyphosate, which does not remain in the soil.

The treatment project began three years ago and has resulted in a marked improvement. 54 properties were treated last year, including school, business and residential lots and road right-of-ways. The township works with interested landowners to arrange for a no-obligation cost estimate under a township-wide permit and organize a walkthrough with a certified contractor who provides a quote for treatment (approximately \$200/acre). The property owner then can decide whether to participate or not. Depending on conditions, multiple applications over several years may be required,, with the goal of controlling the spread of the invasive species and allowing the native plants to return.

For 2016, the plan is to continue to educate and encourage homeowners and businesses to contact the Township if they have phragmites on their property. Another goal is to work with the planning commission and property developers to obtain agreement properly treat phragmites before clearing land for development, as bulldozing the stalks will actually spread the infestation and increase stand density. The ERC phragmites ad hoc committee will continue their efforts in 2016, including research on whether an additive can be added to the glyphosate to increase effectiveness.
7. Pending Business
 - a) **Greener Orion campaign update:** The first community green-up is scheduled for May 14. Signups will be held at Camp Agawam and volunteers will be assigned to one of three projects – the butterfly garden at the library, a downtown cleanup, or improvements at the Camp. Mrs. Jones at the LOHS career center will publicize the event on LOAM and students will be eligible for service hours if they participate. Flyers have been distributed to local businesses and the event is shared on Facebook.

Available OTERC committee will sign up as volunteers. Hotdogs have been donated by Hollywood Markets to feed the volunteers, and trash bags were provided by Waste Management.

- b) **Environmental Resources List:** Updates to the list have been completed. A copy will be sent to JulieAnn Savard for uploading on the Orion Township website, and to be printed into posters for distribution in the community. Jacqui Carlson volunteered to try and reformat the information into a tri-fold brochure for easy handouts at upcoming events such as the OTERC table at the library and NoHaz collection events.
- c) **OTERC website:** Mike DeLuca volunteered to take this project over from Christine Modovsky.
- d) **2016 NOHAZ update:** The first collection of the season saw a record turnout for the Oxford location, with 962 vehicles participating. 219 participants were from Orion Township. Brochures are still available. Orion provides at least one volunteer for each collection event, and has a void for the September 10 event. Additional volunteers are welcome at the June event at OU since that is typically a large turnout. Anyone who can participate should contact Beth Sheridan.
- e) **PSA-Joint Meeting Scheduled BOT-PC-ZBA:** Turnout was good for the joint meeting. The planning commission is considering a mandate for new housing developments to go to a single trash hauler; however the topic and the revisions to Ordinance 73 are not likely to appear on the next ballot.

8. Committee Comments

- Beth Sheridan informed the committee that the date for the OTERC table at the library is June 23-29. Anyone with fresh ideas for the display should contact Beth. Jacqui Carlson will try to have the tri-fold brochure version of the Environmental Resources list ready for the table.
- Harold Flood mentioned that June 4 is the next free disposal day at Eagle Valley. Residents only need to show their driver's license.
- Mike Flood said that the Orion Center will not likely be open by our next meeting, so an alternate location should be secured. Beth Sheridan volunteered to try and reserve a conference room at the Library. Mike also said that the Board of Trustees would like the committee to present their annual update in June or July.
- Jessie Richmond recommended that the committee members take a look at the 2015 Orion Twp. Survey Results (on the township website) especially the sections relating to environmental topics.
- Rodney Tocco pointed out that the survey response represented less than 10% of the community residents. He also asked if it was possible for members to call in to future meetings if they are traveling out of town. This was confirmed.
- George Hanley is drafting a letter on behalf of the phragmites ordinance committee and OTERC asking for support from the Board of Trustees to modify Ordinance 151 to include a requirement for building contractors to treat phrags before cutting or bulldozing, as long as the requirement does not impede the building process.

9. Adjournment

Mike Flood moved that we adjourn, Rodney Tocco seconded the motion; motion approved at 8:56 AM.

Next meeting:

**Thursday, June 2, 2016 @ Orion Township Library,
7:00 -9:00 pm**