

Charter Township of Orion

Oakland County, Michigan

Environmental Resources Committee Draft Minutes

Regular Meeting, Monday, May 5, 2014

Orion Center – 10:00 AM

1. Call to order:10:02am by Chair Sue Donovan
2. Roll call: George Hanley, Beth Sheridan, Joe Laveque, Mike Flood, Heather Muzzy, Christine Modovsky. Gene McNabb Jr. and Supervisor Chris Barnett were also present.
3. Determination of a quorum: Yes, 5 voting members present
4. Public comments: Gene McNabb Jr., address 680 E Silverbell, asked the OTERC for help resolving an ongoing problem he has had with getting a gravel pit on Judah Rd, which borders his and his father's property, monitored. He stated that the gravel pit, owned by Dan's Excavating, needs to be monitored, and asked us for phone numbers to call to help him with this situation. Mike Flood described the long history of Mr. McNabb's efforts to resolve this problem. Mike Flood also made the committee aware that the committee has no authority over Ord. 99, Earth Balancing & Excavation and landfills. Chris Modovsky furnished Mr. McNabb with several phone numbers of federal and state agencies to contact.
5. Regular order of business
 - a. Approval of minutes for March 3, 2014 meeting: Mike Flood moved to approve the minutes as presented, Heather Muzzy seconded, motion approved.
 - b. Approval of agenda: Mike Flood moved and Heather Muzzy seconded to approve the agenda as amended; motion approved.
6. Pending business
 - Website: Christine Modovsky, Heather Muzzy, and George Hanley are drafting content for the OTERC page of the Township website. The goal is to have the OTERC webpage up and running by June 1st. Chris Barnett stated that he is willing to cooperate fully with the ideas that the group comes up with to make the OTERC webpage easier to find, and to include any content the committee creates. He also described an app the township is investigating that we could use so citizens could map phragmites stands in the township. Chris Barnett gave our committee his permission to educate citizens on phragmites, and stated that he would like to see a 3 and 5 year strategy plan, and something to distribute to people.
 - Phragmites attack strategy George Hanley

George Hanley described the preliminary work he had been doing since the March meeting to develop a strategy for addressing the Phragmites epidemic in Orion Township. Based on an informal "drive around" mapping process, there are patches throughout the Township, ranging from small catch basins to significant acreage near

developments and in wooded wetlands, including Bald Mountain and DEQ-managed privately-owned conservation easements. To simplify strategy discussions, properties can be categorized as commercial, government/schools and residential, ranging from single homes to condo-complexes. He has contacted several commercial organizations regarding willingness to do treatment and all have been receptive. The School District has infestations at 3 schools and is willing to partner with the Township for treatment. The DNR is reviewing with its stewardship committee while the DEQ understands the issue and requires its signed approval before treatments can be done by the private owners on easement property (see the large fenced property on Silverbell across from Eagle Valley and east of the large commercial buildings). Road Commission involvement is yet to be determined. Going forward, much work needs to be done. To start, monitoring the two test sites treated in fall 2013- -Gingelville Nature Center and private property on Axford St. south of Indianwood. Further steps should include detailed mapping using the MISIN capability, determination of ownership (e.g. roadside infestations), development of communications materials (info packets, press releases, newspaper articles, ONTV programming, website content) and recommendations regarding certified treatment providers, and follow up with/expansion of commercial contacts as well confirmation of the Township/School District partnership. George has provided Chris Barnett with a letter to Pete Auger, Auburn Hills manager, proposing a highly visible partnership along the Brown Road corridor from the GM Plant across Joslyn Road to Baldwin where infestations are highly visible on both sides of the border. Ideal spray treatment timing for maximum affect is late August until the first heavy frost, with the plants taking the chemical into the rhizomes, the primary means of spreading, to kill a high percentage of the infestation. Subsequent harvesting or burning and retreatment can be done the following year. At this point volunteers with ideas, energy and commitment needed, reflecting the scope of the problem. A multi-year plan is warranted. However, ideally, by the end of 2013, every resident should know what Phragmites are and the threats they represent, all Township/School District properties should have been treated, a significant number of commercial properties should have been treated and a number of residential properties will have hopefully agreed to start the treatment process. George also discussed two possible elements of an Ordinance (standalone or modification of Ordinance 79) to address the situation by 1) requiring contractors to provide for treatment before, during and after completion of projects and 2) possible creation of a requirement that escrow accounts be set up to provide for treatment of properties that are sold within the Township. A Committee has been instituted to review the situation.

Based on this report, our strategy will consist of these elements: identification, community education, contacts with the landowners/business owners and follow through. We will develop both short and long term plans to measure our success."

- Ordinance 73 Revisions: Update: Mike Flood provided each committee member with a copy of the Charter Township of Orion Board of Trustees, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals Special Joint Meeting - Wednesday, April 2, 2014, meeting minutes. The meeting minutes contain verbatim the three ad-hoc committees formed to address three local ordinances, as follows: 1. Ord. 73. Solid Waste & Recyclable Materials Collection. 2. Ord. 79, Noxious Weeds. 3. Ord. 99, Earth Balancing & Excavation.
- Recycling issues/No-HAZ events- Joe Laveque: Joe asked for comments and edits on his NOHAZ press release draft, which he will give to Chris Barnett's office this week to be released. Joe will contact people to volunteer at the NOHAZ event May 31st.

7 New Business

- Board Presentation by George Hanley, with assistance from Harold Flood, will give a 10 - 15 minute annual committee presentation at the June 16th meeting, with special emphasis on George's ongoing Phragmites project within the township. Christine Modovsky will help in preparing the presentation.

8 Committee comments: Heather Muzzy reported that Kathy Kline of Waste Management is doing environmental stewardship at the Orion Center.

9 Township Supervisor off-agenda comments: Supervisor Barnett asked the committee for support of the single hauler concept at the meeting. After a brief discussion, a motion was made to support the single hauler initiative from the standpoint of environmental benefits. All 5 of the voting members present voted yea on this motion. However, after the meeting, Mike Flood indicated that the motion was improper since the Alternate member, George Hanley, should have been able to vote. Mr. Barnett was advised of this error and asked instead for a statement which would summarize the position of the committee as expressed at the meeting. Sue Donovan sent him the following email after asking the committee's approval: "The OTERC discussed the single hauler concept at its May 5 meeting. 4 members agreed that from an environmental standpoint, single hauler makes sense. Further discussion included the following comments: many homeowners are happy with the service they now have. Some HOAs have negotiated their own deals with companies. It would depend on the savings homeowners would see. Some companies may not have the capacity to collect for every site. It would be important to put it to a general vote first."

10 Adjournment: Heather Muzzy moved to extend the meeting 20 minutes as we were running over our 12:00 ending time, and Joe Laveque seconded; motion approved. Mike Flood moved to close the meeting, Sue Donovan seconded. Motion was approved; meeting adjourned at 12:22pm.