

Minutes

Muskegon Lake Public Advisory Council Meeting
at Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center
200 Viridian Drive, Muskegon, MI 49440

March 26, 2007

Muskegon Lake Public Advisory Council (MLPAC) members in attendance were: Cynthia Price, Chair; Dennis McKee, Vice Chair; Wayne Groesbeck, Secretary; Kathy Evans, Director; Mark Evans, Steelworkers Local 1015; Delphine Hogston, Muskegon County Cooperating Churches; Lea Markowski, Muskegon Conservation Club; Greg Mund, USDA/NRCS; Gary Noble and Terry Stilson, Muskegon River Watershed Assembly;

Guests: Carl Ruetz, GVSU-AWRI;

Kent Stroop, Shanna Stroop, Chantal Bisson, Anthony Hull, Jennifer Nelund, Nicole Beatty, Michael Magnuson, and Terri Simpkins, Muskegon Community College Biology.

The meeting was called to order by Price at 6:34 PM.

Mund mm/sm McKee to accept the minutes of the 02-26-07 meeting as submitted by Groesbeck. Passed.

Price reviewed the history of Areas of Concern (AOC's), and the definitions of Public Advisory Councils (PAC's) and Beneficial Use Impairments (BUI's) for the benefit of Muskegon Community College (MCC) students attendees, stressing the bureaucratic nature of the delisting process. Some of the students were in attendance for a portion of the preceding PAC habitat committee meeting as well.

Targets for Delisting:

Evans reported that, after reviewing the five (5) delisting targets submitted to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) for approval to date, the DEQ had three (3) comments: (1) the fish consumption advisories advocated by the PAC do not differ from the existing state standards, so that needs to be made clear; (2) clarification is needed to be specific about when the proposed beach closings target (for three years of no major sewer failure discharges) would begin. That BUI is the result of anomalous sewer main failures, the current, March 2007 failure resulting in sewage being diverted into lower Ryerson Creek, part of the AOC; and (3) Ryerson and Ruddiman Creeks need to be included, in addition to the Muskegon Lake benthos target, because they are currently listed for Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for poor macroinvertebrate communities.

The MLPAC agreed that the clock needs to start ticking for the Beach Closings BUI once we have a target accepted by MDEQ, or from the most recent sewer break (March, 2007).

Hogston mm/sm Markowski to make the necessary changes to the BUI targets to address the MDEQ's comments.

Subsequent discussion determined that the MDEQ's requirements do not change the PAC's intent. Evans will contact Rick Rediske to explain the MLPAC's input and to have the changes sent to the MLPAC and MDEQ electronically. Motion passed.

Contaminated Sediments:

Evans coordinated a (technical team) tour with Marc Tuchman of the EPA, Dan Rockafellow, MDEQ, City of Muskegon representatives and PAC members to check the Division Street site for potential ongoing sources of mercury. Any ongoing sources would be related to soils, not

groundwater. The amount of contaminated sediment could be twice the size of the Ruddiman Creek cleanup. A feasibility study should be underway this summer.

Offshore from Ryerson, the mercury appears to be in a much smaller area, but up to four feet below the lake bottom. Soil samples need to be taken on shore to check for ongoing contamination. The Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) of the EPA will fund that work this summer.

Legislative Activities:

Kathy Evans and Theresa Bernhardt participated in Great Lakes Day in Washington D.C. on March 6th and 7th, meeting with legislators on funding for Great Lakes restoration. Authorization for the Great Lakes Restoration Act of 2007, and continuation of the Great Lakes Legacy Act, looks promising despite federal budget concerns.

Evans provided testimony for the MDEQ budget on behalf of Michigan's Statewide Public Advisory Council (S-PAC) in Lansing on March 21st.

Habitat Committee Update:

On 04-23-07, the ML-PAC will conduct a habitat tour with the EPA and BioHabitats, designed to implement the PAC's habitat-based wildlife BUI targets. This will begin the development of a habitat design for several areas of the western and central part of Muskegon Lake's southern shoreline, including portions of Ruddiman Creek.

Stewardship Activities and Announcements:

Upcoming stewardship events include a March 31st Marsh Monitoring training; an April 14th MERES workday; an April 20th No Child Left Inside program at the Gillette Nature Center; an April 21st high school salmon release; an April 22nd shoreline cleanup starting from the AFL-CIO Hall at 8 AM; a May 4th workday at Grand Trunk; a May 4th & 5th Project Fish training in Fremont; and a May 16th Ruddiman Creek workday beginning at noon. Contact Kathy Evans for details.

The Michigan State University School of Journalism is training people to participate in a Wikipedia environmental website. An evening session will be held at MCC in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 PM.

-submitted by WJG