

Pesticide/Herbicide Policy Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
March 21, 2002

Members Present: Paul MacNellis, Garrylee McCormick, Jerry Wilinski, Joe Engemann, Michael McCarville

Members Absent: Kevin Vizard, Ben Yost

Guests: Frank Wolf, Jeff Bye, Dick Skalski, Mary Ann Amperssee

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm.

Garrylee McCormick motioned that all Board term extensions be approved. His motion was seconded by Jerry Wilinski and unanimously approved by the Committee.

Mary Ann Amperssee stated that members had asked that a Committee meeting be held to update the group on the proposed treatment of Woods Lake, specifically as it related to recommendations from the Keiser Report.

Mr. Wolf reminded the group that several years ago, he and representatives from Professional Lake Management had spoken to the Committee regarding treatment of invasive weeds, (i.e. milfoil, algae), in Woods Lake. Further, at that time, Mr. Wolf was anticipating a City funded report from Keiser and Associates regarding their recommendations for alleviation of the problems which were occurring in the Lake due to the sediment deposited there by the five (5) existing storm sewer system outfalls and the resulting large deposits of sediment.

Mr. Wolf stated that Professional Lake Management had treated the milfoil with 2-4 D, with great success. Further, he stated that 90% of the property owners around the Lake had contributed \$3.00 per foot towards treatment, studies, monitoring etc., of the Lake water. Mr. Wolf also informed the Committee that the Lake had been, and continued to be, tested in accordance with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, (MDEQ), Michigan Lakes and Streams guidelines. This testing included routine testing of phosphorus levels, oxygen profiles, etc.

Mr. Wolf displayed a copy of the Keiser Report which contained a detailed profile of the Lake, including recommendations for reducing phosphorus, sediment, etc., which was developed to improve water quality. He stated that a series of public meetings had been held with neighborhood residents, area businesses, etc., regarding the report and the intention to apply for a Clean Water Action Grant to help fund a portion of the recommended improvements/development, specifically in the southwest end of the Lake, (along Kensington Road).

Mr. Wolf stated that the City of Kalamazoo, in conjunction with the Woods Lake Neighborhood Association and the MDEQ, had received grant approval, and that construction of a detention pond, sea wall and micro pool as well as planting of vegetative grasses would begin in April, 2002 and be completed by year end. Mr. Wolf then displayed drawings of the proposed project and area affected. He also explained that the system developed was relatively new and untested, but that the MDEQ had positively responded to the grant application as they were also desirous of development programs and projects which would more holistically treat this common type of problem. Further, Mr. Wolf stated that the sediment retention areas would be inspected monthly, and cleaned yearly as necessary.

Mr. Wolf further stated that the City of Kalamazoo had also applied for a Clean Michigan Initiative Grant for development of a drywell/sewer system in another problem area within the neighborhood which would help diminish phosphorus deposits into the Lake. Mr. Skalski stated that this grant had been turned down as the project was seen as one which would treat the problem, rather than take care of the continued contribution of sediment into the Lake.

Mr. Wolf stated that a pamphlet had been developed informing residents of the problems created by improperly and/or excessively applied lawn fertilizers. Mr. MacNellis asked what the response of the neighborhood residents had been. Mr. Wolf stated that all were very positive about the need to reduce this hazard, however, he was not entirely positive that actual reductions in fertilizer applications had taken place.

Mr. Skalski stated that dredging had taken place in several areas around the Lake in an effort to reduce sediment, but that it was the hope of the group that development of the Kensington area, education of residents and area businesses, continued progress in development of other recommendations within the Keiser Report, as well as treatment of existing invasive species would eliminate the need for further dredging.

The group discussed a variety of related issues including the application of alum which would "seal in" the existing phosphorus, water lillie removal from the northeast end of the Lake which had become more of a wetland than part of the Lake due to construction of a sanitary sewer across the Lake in the 1950's, as well as other proposed chemical treatments of undesirable, invasive weeds.

Mr. Wolf stated he had also spoken with Frances Jewell, Parks and Recreation Director regarding some different approaches to turf management adjacent to the City's Woods Lake public beach area. Those included more natural plantings, less frequent mowing, development of "border" areas, etc., which would also help protect the Lake from further undesirable deposits.

Mr. Wilinski asked about last year's unsuccessful project to mechanically excavate the water lilies. Mr. Skalski stated that a contractor had been hired to remove the water lilies along the public beach area, by mechanical excavation. He stated that once the project began the contractor had been unable to remove the root system due to higher water levels, but that he had "harvested" the lilies, which had actually resulted in an increase in propagation. Upon investigation, it was discovered that it is virtually impossible to physically remove this type of vegetation due to the extensive root system and that chemical treatment is most always warranted and necessary. He also stated that the contractor had agreed to fund the cost of treatment for a period of up to five (5) years, due to his inability to perform the requirements of his contract.

Mr. Wolf stated that he was seeking Committee approval for treatment of water lilies with 2-4 D as well as an exotic invasive specie of curly leaf pondweed with Aquathol or Reward. He stated that both products and treatments were within MDEQ requirements and were considered very conservative.

Mr. McCarville asked whether or not continuous harvesting of specific growth would result in removal of phosphorus from the Lake. Mr. Skalski stated that studies had been undertaken and that removal of cattails, (which absorbed phosphorus), had been shown to be effective. However, given the size of the Lake, this option was not considered due to cost and probable ineffectual results. He also stated that, many times, harvesting can actually spread these undesirable species.

Mr. MacNellis stated his pleasure with the environmentally sound progress made thus far and congratulated Mr. Wolf for the great job he had done to improve the quality of the Lake. He also stated that his questions regarding the treatment and proposed developments had been answered. Mr. Wolf stated he had great support from the Neighborhood Association, City staff, (specifically Mr. Skalski), the City Administration and City Commission.

Garrylee McCormick motioned approval of the proposed treatment. Paul MacNellis revised the motion to include approval of the application on the condition the work be performed by a registered, licensed firm. With acceptance of this inclusion, he seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by the Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.