

Friend of the Maple River
Minutes of February 20, 2008
Ovid Lions Club/VFW Hall, Ovid
www.friendsofthemapleriver.org

PRESENT:

Jeff Wadell, President
Ed Mikula, Vice President
Joe Latoff
Dale Ladouceur
Jon Morrison
Ruth Dow
Diana Olney
Joe Thelen
David Wittkop
Jason Kimbrough
Clare Applebee
Jim Ellickson
Phil Hanses
Gary Fritz
Bill Lasher
Judy Emmons, 70th District State Representative

CALL TO ORDER

Wadell welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Wadell stated the purpose of the group.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Wadell introduced David Wittkop, Plant Manager, Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA), Ovid.

Mr. Wittkop, who is a MSU graduate, explained that MMPA is a cooperative of milk producers consisting of approximately 1500 farms located primarily based in mid-Michigan and the thumb area. Mr. Wittkop discussed existing plant operations, types of product and the quantity produced. He also discussed the present wastewater treatment plant, its present treatment capabilities, including capacity. Mr. Wittkop also discussed the proposed plant expansion, the wastewater treatment plant's ability to handle the increased production, and the plants impact on the community, MMPA with a desired outcome for the creation of an Agricultural Renaissance Zone in Ovid.

At the conclusion of Mr. Wittkop's presentation, Wadell thanked him and lead the group in a round of applause.

AGENDA REVIEW, REVISIONS AND ADOPTION:

Additions to the Agenda: Latoff motioned to add CAFO's (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) to the agenda. Hanses seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Latoff moved to approve the agenda. Morrison seconded the motion. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

A. Ladouceur did not attend the meeting. D. Ladouceur presented the meetings minutes from January 16, 2008.

Latoff moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mikula seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

1. Checking Account Balance: Smolka did not attend the meeting. Latoff reported a balance of \$293.00 in the checking account.
2. Donations & Contributions: none to report.
3. Fundraising Raffle:
 - o The committee discussed the need for a chairperson. Morrison volunteered to be co-chair.
 - o Raffle License status – Morrison is researching the details (cost of license, printing costs, time lines, etc).
 - o D. Ladouceur reported he has contacted Dunham's in St. Johns requesting the donation of a kayak.

Morrison moved to approve Treasurer's report. Hanses seconded the motion. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. News Articles
 1. Mikula reported notice of meeting was sent to all area newspapers.
2. FOTMR Poster
 - o Wadell reported the watershed poster board was put on display in town prior to the meeting.
3. Workshops
 - o Latoff provided the committee with two announcements for upcoming workshops with the suggestion that someone from the committee attend.
 1. Green Mid-Michigan – Tri County Regional Planning Commission, March 6, 2008
 2. Quiet Waters Symposium, March 1, 2008
4. Website: no report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Watershed Improvement Committee: Nutter did not attend the meeting.

1. Spring Cleanup Project
 - Wadell reminded the committee the river cleanup project will be held on May 3, 2008.
2. Elsie Dam Project: no discussion
3. Maple Rapids Boat Launch & Park Project: no discussion
4. New Launch Site, Clinton County Green Space Commission:
 - Hanses shared that the location is at French and St. Clair Roads.
 - A DEQ permit is still needed.
 - Latoff commented that consideration should be given to parking at the site as it is typically inadequate.
5. Muskrat Lake Project:
 - Fritz reported that public notice has been completed and the DEQ is reviewing the permit application.

Education Committee: Rabe did not attend the meeting.

1. Float Trip Plans:
 - Jim and Fred are not interested in heading this up this year. A major problem getting involvement is that open house for high school graduates conflicts with available weekends.
 - Latoff suggested the group seek affiliation with the Village of Maple Rapids or the Mint Festival committee to make this an activity of their festival.
2. Signage Project: Wadell shared the status.
3. Educator Awards: Wadell will discuss with Rabe

Watershed Monitoring Committee: Gary Boersen did not attend the meeting.

1. MRW Monitoring Plan: no report
2. 319 Watershed Management Plan:
 - Fritz reported the start-up is scheduled for March 1 per feedback from DEQ.
 - A steering committee needs to be formed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Timberland RC & D:
 - Wadell reported that the 2007 grant application was not approved; however, the submittal is being re-looked at.
2. CAFO's:
 - Latoff shared that he has been receiving a lot of emails concerning this subject, most recently due to a proposal to expand an existing operation in the county.

- Latoff suggested FOTMR get involved in the process by identifying the concerns and adopt a policy as to how to address them.
- He further suggested that a representative from the group meet with interested parties such as the MMP Board, other producers, DEQ and Dept of Agriculture.
- Fritz added that he is getting phone calls concerning the proposed expansion and that when concerns are identified there is a process to follow to address them.
- Hanses added that there seems to be questions as to the accuracy of the reported number of animals for the operation.
- General discussion on the subject touched on specific concerns (storage, land application – over application and odor), and the CAFO definition regarding the number of animal units.
- Wadell indicated that the presenter for next month's meeting would discuss much of this issue.
- Latoff indicated he would meet with Wadell to discuss a future motion on this issue

Prior to the close of the meeting, Judy Emmons, 70th District State Representative, introduced herself and spoke to the group, expressing interest and offering assistance.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Committee Participation

- Wadell suggested that people get involved in the various committees.

ADJOURNMENT:

Hanses moved to adjourn the meeting. Mikula seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Regular Monthly Meeting will be held on March 19, 2008 at the Lyons/Muir Lions Club.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Dale Ladouceur.

Please direct any and all modifications to the minutes to Anita Ladouceur, 989-981-6869.