

Friends of the Maple River
Minutes of May 20, 2009
Clinton County Courthouse
100 E. State Street, St. Johns, Michigan

PRESENT:

Joe Latoff
Ed Mikula
Jon Morrison
Jeff Wadell
Anita Ladouceur
Jim Ellickson
Art Bloomer
Duane Platner
Phil Hanses
Gary Fritz
Gary Boersen
Steve Stolz
Chris and Nicole Kowatch
Allan Soros (6 scouts)
Steve Malkin (3 scouts)
Blain Sochor (1 scout)
Chris Briggs
Darin Dyer (1 scout)
Kris Clark (1 scout)
Jon Bartholic, guest speaker

CALL TO ORDER:

J. Wadell welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ethan, Scout, lead the group in the pledge of allegiance.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

J. Wadell stated the purpose of the group.

INTRODUCTIONS:

J. Wadell introduced Jon Bartholic from the Institute for Water Research, MSU.

Bartholic's presented information on:

1. The "Digital Watershed" <http://www.iwr.msu.edu/dw/>
2. The Maple River and the list of impaired waters within the watershed that have shown an increase in nutrients, a poor fish population, a poor macro-invertebrate population, or an increase in algal growth.
3. Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool that allows high capacity well owners (pump capacity 70gpm or greater) to determine if an adverse resource impact will occur on the fish populations when their well is in production.

FOTMR Awards:

- Wadell introduced the many scouts and parents that attended the meeting to receive a FOTMR award for their work in the Maple River State Game Area.
- Paul Socier, scout, reported on their activities: putting up new wood duck nesting boxes and cleaning existing boxes out. They see eggshells and feathers in the boxes and have lots of volunteers to help. They put up 25 boxes in 2009 and 15 boxes in 2008.
- Those receiving awards were Troop 72, Pack 572, and Pack 520.
- Everyone thanked the scouts and parents for all their hard work.
- A FOTMR award was also presented to Gail Bloomer for her work in cleaning up an illegal dump site at Muskrat Lake. Gail's husband, Art, accepted the award for her.

AGENDA REVIEW, REVISIONS AND ADOPTION:

Latoff moved to approve the agenda. Mikula supported the motion. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

A. Ladouceur provided the minutes from the Regular Monthly Meeting, April 15, 2009
Mikula moved to approve the minutes of April 15, 2009 meeting. Bloomer supported the motion.
Motion carried.

Meeting minutes are posted on the FOTMR website prior to the next meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Checking Account Balance:

- Ellickson reported a balance of \$833.26 in the checking account. Morrison moved to approve the Treasurer's report. Mikula seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Insurance for Board of Directors:

- Ellickson reported that a \$595 bill is due to Allaby and Brewbaker for our insurance.
- Wadell will check into this and report back at the next meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

News Articles:

- Mikula sent the meeting notice out to all 8 local newspapers, along with a thank you to all the clean-up volunteers.

Website:

- Platner discussed a problem he had using the "contact us" form on the website. He could not see what he was typing. The color font has since been changed to resolve this problem.
- Ellickson also reported problems with some of the links. He uses a Mac computer. Ladouceur will follow-up with Ellickson on what specifically wasn't working correctly to see if anything can be done.
- Ladouceur is in the process of reorganizing the photos on the website into categories with a brief explanation of each photo.
- Ladouceur will post the Annual Report on the website.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE:

Ellickson & Fritz & Latoff reported for Nutter and the committee.

May 2nd Spring River Clean-Up:

- There were 12 people who participated in the clean-up.
- Due to flooding, volunteers were on foot cleaning up along river banks and bridge crossings.
- There are a couple areas that need follow-up attention.
- Ladouceur shared with the group their discovery of an illegal dump site (100's of plastic bags of animal waste most likely from a nearby kennel) at the boat launch near Muir. She filed a complaint with both the DNR and with the Adopt-A-Forest group.
- The group discussed moving the clean-up to mid April, but flooding would be even more prevalent in April.

Muskrat Lake Project:

- Fritz is waiting on a response from the DEQ regarding their concerns.

Elsie Dam:

- The township is waiting to hear on the funding request in June.

Maple Rapids Boat Launch/Park:

- It is still on schedule for 2010.

Downed Tree Removal Team:

- Hanses reported that there was a discussion of tree removal at a recent Drain Board meeting.
- Nutter has volunteered to float the river periodically, check for trees blocking the river, and remove them. This will save the county money.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Latoff reported for the committee.

Committee Update:

- Latoff reviewed the 3 laminated maps (historical water trails project, watershed information, and road signs.)
- Latoff acknowledged those individuals heading-up the committee projects.
- Latoff asked for volunteers to help on the committee or anyone who would like to replace him as the Education Committee Chair.

MUCC:

- Latoff and Platner will be attending the MUCC convention in Mt. Pleasant June 19-21.

FOTMR Award:

- Latoff motioned to give Ducks Unlimited a FOTMR award at the meeting in July. Hanses supported. Motion passed.

WATERSHED MONITORING COMMITTEE:

Fritz & Boersen reported for the committee.

319 Watershed Management Plan:

- There will be a second public meeting at the Fulton Township Hall on June 16th.
- Fritz attended a Rainbow Lake Management Association meeting and they will be invited to the meeting on the 16th.
- Fritz will be documenting problem areas on Rainbow Lake and Lake Ovid.

Monitoring Grant Application:

- They are still waiting to hear back from the Capital Region Community Foundation on the grant application to purchase monitoring equipment.
- Latoff and Boersen drove the watershed to determine proposed sampling points.

Tillage Survey:

- 4 of 5 of the sub-watersheds are covered by volunteers.
- Each volunteer will receive a detailed booklet on the survey.

OLD BUSINESS:

Logo Wear:

- Wadell is waiting to hear back on prices.
- Wadell was given another source to check for printing.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Open Comments from the Public:

- Latoff will work on getting a flyer done using the Annual Report as a basis.
- There is a new access point to the river near Elsie at French and St. Clair roads.

Upcoming Festivals:

- Wadell will bring the list of festivals to the next meeting so that members can volunteer to man the FOTMR booth and handout information.

Breakfast on the Farm:

- This is an education event at Tony Jandernoa's farm on Wacousta Road, south of Colony, Fowler on June 20th.
- They will have activities for adults and children from 9am to noon.
- This event is open to anyone, but you need a ticket for breakfast.
- Interested individuals should contact the county Farm Bureau office to tickets.

FOTMR Foundation:

- Latoff stated that in order for FOTMR to have long term financial support, we should create a foundation where people can donate money.
- Latoff will explore this further and report back to the group.

Election of New Board Members:

- Ellickson nominated Morrison to replace him as Treasurer.
- Latoff motioned to approve Morrison as the new Treasurer and to keep Wadell as President, Mikula as Vice President and Ladouceur as Secretary. Hanses supported. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Morrison moved to adjourn the meeting. Ellickson seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Regular Monthly Meeting will be held on June 17, 2009 at the Duplain Township Hall, 145 W. Main Street, Elsie, Michigan. Dave Wittkop, the MMPA plant manager in Ovid, will be the guest speaker.

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