



7110 WEST Q AVENUE
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
269/375-1591
www.texastownship.org

MEETING SUMMARY OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF TEXAS FLOODING TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2018

A meeting of the Charter Township of Texas Flooding Task Force was held on September 27, 2018, commencing at approximately 10:30 a.m. at the Texas Charter Township Hall.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor John Hinkle opened the meeting, thanking everyone for taking the time to attend and inviting the Task Force members to introduce themselves. The following members of the Task Force were present:

Senator Margaret O'Brien

Representative Brandt Iden

Kalamazoo County Commissioner Dale Shugars

Engineer Tom Smith, Prein & Newhof

Jeff VanBelle, Deputy Drain Commissioner

Dan Moyle, Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) Chairman

Travis Bartholomew, RCKC Deputy Director

Kendra Gwin, City of Portage Public Services Director

Mike Corfman, Kalamazoo County Emergency Management Director

Jennifer Jones, Restorative Lake Sciences

Jim Roberts, Crooked Lake Association

Russ Walters, Crooked Lake Association

Amy Coon, Eagle Lake Association

Dian Latora, Pine Island Development Representative

Texas Township Trustee Nick Loeks

Texas Township Trustee Tim Brown

Texas Township Superintendent Julie VanderWiere

Texas Township Supervisor John Hinkle

2. FLOODING STATUS

Amy Coon reported that after the Labor Day rainfall, Eagle Lake was at an all-time high. Since then, the level is down approximately 2 inches.

Russ Walters reported that Crooked Lake is currently 2-3 inches from the highest water level.

It was commented that the current challenge is getting contractors to come do the necessary work, as the increase in demand has reduced their availability.

Dian Latora reported that the Deputy Drain Commissioner pumped down some of the water in the backyards of Finnegan Street in an effort to provide some relief; however, within 3 days, the water all returned.

3. STATUS OF FLOOD STUDY

Tom Smith reported the following:

- The study has been underway for 4 weeks now
- They continue to gather data
- The survey is nearly complete
- They are reviewing soil borings and well logs



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- It is a water table issue, and the best way to bring down the high levels is to find a positive outlet.
- They continue to work on the “modeling”. They are creating a ground water table model and a surface water model. Both models will need to be calibrated.
- The rainfall and soils have been identified as some of the causes of the flooding. Most areas had evaporation during the summer, but we did not experience it here.
- The study will be completed in a few weeks.

Discussion ensued over the Short Term Solution Challenges that we may face:

- Possible environmental impacts could slow or prevent work
- DEQ may not be able to fast track permitting process due to requirements of the law
- Prein & Newhof is working on obtaining costs for the short term solution

Amy Coon asked whether the culvert under 8th Street was blocked and stopping water flow. Travis Bartholomew advised that the culvert is not blocked, but it may not be properly sized to flow water from the marsh area to Bass Lake. They are waiting for the DEQ to advise the proper size, and then they will replace it. Jim Roberts advised that, in his opinion, the culvert is blocked with silt and debris. Crooked Lake is up 42” since last October. The DEQ should allow a slow release before the study is complete, as this is an emergency for all involved.

- Travis Bartholomew advised that there is a “drop-dead” date of November 15th for road projects including the culvert replacement. This is because the asphalt plants typically close on this date. If the culvert is replaced, 8th Street would need to have the asphalt patched because it is a MDOT designated emergency route.

Commissioner Dale Shugars advised that he felt the Long Term Solution investigation has a good plan in place. There has been discussion on establishing a legal lake level which will be required for the Drain Commission to place a structure to maintain the level of the lake. He felt that we needed to focus our efforts on implementing the Short Term Solution.

Jeff VanBelle advised that, to move forward, a number on what amount of water can be pumped downstream needs to be identified.

Jennifer Jones shared that there is a great deal of historical data from both lakes that can be used for the study.

Tom Smith shared that the Public Noticing Process for the DEQ permit will be a challenge as well as ensuring that there will not be any negative environmental impacts to the wetlands. Contractors need to be lined up to do the work once the permit is approved. We will need to continue discussions with the DEQ to attempt to speed up the timeline.

Senator O’Brien suggested that the Township do the Public Noticing for the DEQ permit if that will speed up the process. She also advised that we have not met the threshold to establish a Local



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State of Emergency. Additionally, declaring the Local State of Emergency will slow down the process, and we will lose control.

Jennifer Jones shared that she has a great deal of experience working with the DEQ. The environmental impact investigation will likely take them a lot of time to work through. She advised that we need to share that the Human Impact is far greater here. There are valid health and safety concerns the longer the lakes and homes are flooded.

There was a question about allowing draining into the Sewer System during the low use times to help resolve the flooding. Tom Smith explained the negative impact draining into the sewer system has on the whole system and that if there is too much flow, it will cause the sewer to backup into homes.

4. FEMA GRANT UPDATE

- The boundary map that was created by Township Staff is only being used to determine the flood damage.
- The Notice of Intent for the FEMA Grant was submitted on the due date. We are waiting to be notified by State Police Emergency Management to notify the Township if we meet the threshold to submit for the grant.
- The deadline to submit is December 15, 2018.
- Tom Smith advised that the FEMA grant will not affect the FEMA flood plain designation. If we are awarded the grant for a project, it will actually reduce the need for Flood Insurance because it will drastically reduce the possibility of future flooding. Tom Smith is going to prepare a memo explaining this to assist in resolving some concerns that have been expressed.
- Commissioner Shugars reported that at noon today (Sept. 27, 2018), Kalamazoo County Commission Chair and the Drain Commissioner are going to be signing a letter to the DEQ urging assistance with resolving our flooding.

5. ADDITIONAL

- Tom Smith was going to work on the culvert sizing and provide that to the DEQ and RCKC as soon as possible.
- Next meeting date was set for Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by Superintendent Julie VanderWiere
October 10, 2018