



MEETING SUMMARY OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF TEXAS FLOODING TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 20, 2020

A meeting of the Charter Township of Texas Flooding Task Force was held on February 20, 2020, 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:

- Engineer Tom Wheat, Prein & Newhof
- Derek Haroldson, EGLE
- Jeff VanBelle, Deputy Drain Commissioner
- Travis Bartholomew, RCKC Deputy Director
- Dan Moyle, RCKC Chairman of the Commission
- Keisha Dickason, Senator McCann's Office
- Christine Morse, Kalamazoo County Commissioner
- Greg DeWald, Pine Island Lake
- Veronnica Kenreich-Towne, Restorative Lake Sciences
- Jim Roberts, Crooked Lake Association
- Len Bosma, Eagle Lake Association
- Steven Ott, 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

Dian Latora (Pine Island Development) reported that there is no change there are just frustrated neighbors. They believe the reduction this summer was from evaporation and not from the pumping.

Len Bosma (Eagle Lake) reported that there is no change and the levels are similar from last month. People are concerned about what will happen this spring.

Greg DeWald (Pine Island Lake) reported that Pine Island Lake is currently 904.39 which is 3.48 inches below where we were at last June. The last three weeks have been fairly stable with no noticeable change.

Jim Roberts (Crooked Lake) reported that Crooked Lake is 23.5 inches above the highwater mark. Since fall the lake has come up 7 inches and for the past month the level has remained nearly the same.

Tom Wheat commented that Crooked Lake is a little higher than it was last meeting.

Tim Brown inquired why there hasn't been any change in the last month.

Tom Wheat responded some of it is due to the snow melt. The good news is that there isn't a lot of snow left so there shouldn't be a great deal of spring melt. Another reason is all of the precipitation. This clearly is not helping as we had 30% more precipitation last year and 60% greater precipitation this last fall alone.



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Steve Ott asked if the automated process had been installed yet?

Tom Wheat responded that it had not been installed yet. However, it is up to the contractor and they are responsible for the operation of the pumps. We have been fortunate with the mild winter temperatures this winter.

Steve Ott asked if we were still looking every 2 weeks for an increase in the pump rate?

Tom Wheat advised that we are. EGLE has given us increases because downstream has been stable. We have only been at 1600 gpm for 1 ½ weeks but the data is showing the levels have come up some but they are still stable. He advised that a request to increase the pump rate was made yesterday.

3. PUMP RATE DISCUSSION- EAGLE VS CROOKED LAKE

Tom Wheat explained that back in June 2019, we were pumping 2000 gpm from Crooked and 1000 gpm from Eagle. During this time Crooked Lake responded better than Eagle Lake. Prein & Newhof made a recommendation to the Township Board to increase the Eagle Lake pump rate to equalize the benefit from both lakes. Additionally, Crooked Lake would have reached the target first and we would have had to switch the pumps out which would be a big ordeal. We originally recommended to increase the rate to 62.5% from Eagle. Last month, we recommended to increase the rate to 65% from Eagle to the Township Board and this was approved. At 1600 gpm out of Crooked, this is 1040 gpm out of Eagle.

This rate is reviewed at every board meeting. If there is a differential either way, we will recommend a change.

Len Bosma commented that Vineyards is pumping into Eagle Lake as well. Eagle Lake is helping Pine Island and the Vineyards.

4. UPDATE FROM LONG TERM SOLUTION SUBCOMMITTEE

Len Bosma reported that the subcommittee is made up of lake representatives, Tom Wheat, Jeff VanBelle and Township Representatives. At the last meeting we were waiting for the petitions to be verified, which has since occurred. The good news is that we will be on schedule for bid/construction as laid out in the original plan. We have since learned that the lakes do not need to be at the target levels to construct the long term solution, we will just need to dewater and to a certain extent that was needed anyways.

We are on schedule for construction to start in 2021, hopefully in the spring.

Christine Morse commented that she is thrilled to say the first step of a resolution on the survey, has passed the County Commission unanimously. However, we may lose a few votes when it moves to circuit court because of the cost. She stated that she did not know how long the survey will take but she is hopeful it will show how much this long term solution is needed.



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Tom Wheat responded that it is largely a compilation of the information we already have. We need to work with Fisheries and Wildlife and Restorative Lake Sciences to gain some of the required information and then we will need to put together a draft special assessment district.

Jeff VanBelle explained that he provided Tom Wheat with the statute and what is needed. We will be sending out a survey to property owners, which may be confusing, that will ask what level they think the lake should be maintained at. Once the study is completed it is brought to the County Commission for review. During that time there will be opportunity for public comment and there will be time for public comment during the court proceeding.

Jim Roberts commented that both lakes have augmentation wells. We have data and we know what the level should be. If it is too low, Crooked Lake will not support the legal lake level.

Tom Wheat responded that one of the requirements is to review records for past lake levels.

Christine Morse responded that it is up to the Judge to determine the level of the lake based on all the information provided and the public comments.

Len Bosma asked if the level will need to be more than just a number?

Tom Wheat affirmed that there needs to be a benchmark and a detailed explanation.

Greg DeWald stated that we need to keep in mind that what you do with Eagle and Crooked Lakes has a direct impact on the other lakes, Pine, Duck and Pretty. You need to use USGS levels and data because many houses were built to those levels. If you don't there will be great impacts to those other properties.

John Hinkle inquired about how long will it take to complete the study?

Tom Wheat advised that he can't commit an exact time but believes a few months.

Christine Morse advised that the County Commission will need 45 days to get it on the agenda.

Dian Latora asked if the short term pumping will go on until April?

Tom Wheat responded that the permit allows pumping until Sept 31, 2020. We can get a one year extension per the permit.

Dian Latora asked if there was any way the long term could start before April?

Tom Wheat responded that it is not likely due to the building and construction season.

John Hinkle commented that he wanted to throw out Kudos to everyone that helped at the County Commission meeting to provide comment. We need to celebrate the success.



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5. FEMA GRANT APPLICATION/HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Tom Wheat advised that the Hazard Mitigation Plan has been approved and adopted by the Township. The FEMA Grant has been submitted. We expect to hear back from FEMA in June whether or not the grant will be awarded. The grant will be for 75% of the cost of construction of the project.

Tom Wheat further explained that if we get the FEMA grant, we will need to stay on the Township path as the Township will have to construct the project. If the grant is not awarded it will stay as a Drain Office project.

Derek Haroldson commented that 2 weeks ago EGLE staff met with Jeff VanBelle, Tom Wheat and Julie VanderWiere to review on a high level the overview of the long term project. We discussed timeline and the permitting process. He advised that we will continue to stay in touch as this project progresses.

Tom Wheat responded that we did get valuable feedback about the permitting process during the meeting.

7. COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Derek Haroldson advised that yesterday he received a request from the Township to increase the pumping rate. He stated that EGLE is comfortable approving another increase at this time to 1800 gpm. He will put the approval in writing for Julie. They have not seen large changes in the levels. Right now the scope they are looking at is fairly narrow as we are not in the growing season. This will change as we move into spring.

He commented further that the NOAA graph that was submitted does not show a prediction of 40% greater than average rainfall for the spring, it shows that we are 40% more likely to have greater than average rainfall for the spring.

Christine Morse commented at the last County Commission COTW meeting, we talked about presenting a resolution in support of the FEMA Grant. Due to time constraints, she and Commission Chair Rogers decided to write a letter of support instead. She also thanked everyone who shared their personal stories to the commission. She found them to be very helpful.

Greg DeWald commented that it is critical to start working on a permit extension now. We need to have a backup plan if there is an issue extending the easements.

Steve Ott thanked the Board members that presented at the County Commission Meeting specifically, Tim Brown, Trish Roberts, Linda Kerr and Christine Morse. He also encouraged regular evaluations of the pumping rate.

Len Bosma commented that he knows we have said the lake levels are the same but if we weren't pumping they would be much worse. He directed a statement to Keisha Dickason, advising that they have asked Governor Whitmer to come here to see the flooding first hand and she has not. He is asking for Senator McCann to help get her here.



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Keisha Dickason responded that Governor Whitmer did submit a new budget that has 40 million dollars for infrastructure to deal with climate control. She will advise Senator McCann of the request for assistance with Governor Whitmer and the request for her to visit.

Dian Latora thanked Christine Morse. Stating that we are fortunate to have you on the County Commission, as she can tell that the Commission members hold what she has to say with respect.

Jim Roberts echoed what Len said. He too was surprised that the Governor has not come here yet. The 40 million dollars will go to the lake shore. He also thanked Tim Brown, Linda Kerr and Trish Roberts for presenting at the County Commission and also thanked Christine Morse and Julie VanderWiere.

Travis Bartholomew commented that this has been a light winter so far but they still have O Ave and 8th Street (Oshtemo) closed. He also expects seasonal weight restrictions to go into effect on Monday but he hopes it will be short lived.

Dan Moyle asked Tom Wheat what is the timeline for the extension request so that it is seamless.

Derek Haroldson responded that the permit already has it built in. It is pretty simple, we will need a couple of weeks or a month to process the request.

Jeff VanBelle stated that because the decisions are data driven, we can't apply now for the extension.

Tom Wheat commented that if we got the extension we could pump while constructing the long term solution. We will need to upsize the pipe from Crooked to Bass Lake anyways. He also commented that the presentations to the County Commission were good and helped them make a decision.

Tim Brown inquired if the goals are met in November, will the permit expire or can we leave it open?

Derek Haroldson responded that he did not think it was spelled out in the permit and we will need to work through that.

The next Task Force Meeting has been scheduled for Thursday March 26, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by Superintendent Julie VanderWiere
February 24, 2020