OTTAWA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Your Land, Your Water, Your Michigan

Minutes

Special Meeting, Zoom, Grand Haven MI
7pm, Tuesday February 16th, 2021

Attendance:

Megan Boos, Executive Director
Lexie Kasper, Administrative Specialist
Benjamin Jordan, Conservation Technician
David Pyle, Chair
Douglas Grotenrath, Treasurer
Callie Melton, Director
Lester Langeland, Director
Tim VanDyke, Public Attendee

CALL TO ORDER Time: 7:02 PM

- Invocation: Dave Pyle

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment

NEW BUSINESS

• Sand Creek Fish passage project: (Review & Vote)

Background: After surveying Sand Creek and Pigeon River with road-stream crossings, perched culverts were identified. The goal of identifying these culverts was to then find funding to address them. These perched culverts create hydrologic issues with high density water outpur and the development of scour pools. In addition these culverts block fish habitat. This is a minimally invasive, cost effective project. Currently in discussions with potential partners to find best options for fish structures.

Board Discussion:
Langeland: Brings up an old dam, saying that it used to block trout and therefore the Sand Creek wasn't historically a trout stream and is not necessary to restore. He feels it isn't a good option for tax payers money. Response from Ben Jordan: Sand Creek is a historical trout stream. A dam in the past does not change that. A dam may degrade habitat but it does not

change the type of habitat that it is. Concerning the funding of this project, it is not funded by tax payers. It is not funded by those who live in the township where this project would be taking place. The grant is paid for by an endowment that was won in a lawsuit. It is believed that a large company had to pay this endowment to help recoup the damage their business caused. In addition, this project benefits those who live nearby by reconnecting miles of trout stream. It would require relatively little work by us and would be an easy win for the district.
Langeland: Reports from the road stream crossing say there were many impaired culverts so is this going to fix the whole thing or is it just a small fix? Jordan Response: Yes, in an ideal world we would address all of the culverts but we chose this location for the grant because it has the most benefit for one project. These 2 sites are on tributaries to the Sand Creek and are therefore part of the Sand Creek watershed. Cost estimates are included in report distributed to board.
Pyle: The time estimate is 5 hours a week for 2 years. That seems like a lot of time and is a concerning addition to workload. Jordan Response: That is the way labor is budgeted for grants but it will not necessarily look that way in real life. It'd be 5-10 hours a week during heavy work time like engineering and construction phases. Then there will be quiet phases of the grant where n hours are spent on it in a week. The goal is to have it balance out to meet the grant requirements.
Pyle: When do we get to a stage when the road commission or drain commission takes care of their culverts? Jordan Response: That's a good question but there is no good answer. Any town has old culverts with old designs that are undersized. They struggle with budgets and manpower and this can keep these culverts from getting taken care of. We can do it on a smaller scale for now.
Van Dyke: If one end is scouring won't it wash it out eventually? Will this project help? Jordan Response: Yes, the fish ladders will be anchored in some way and that would help reduce erosion and extend the life of the culvert.
Grotenrath: Have we ever seen this plastic fish ladder work? Jordan Response: Not personally but many professional contacts have seen them work and be very successful for the fish. This is why we are discussing options with partners, to find the best design for this area.
Pyle: If we get the grant who decides on design for the project and what input does the district have? Response: This would be permitted and then designed by EGLE and others. We would need actual engineers to design this, which would be part of the grant.
Pyle: Is this project on private land? Response: No. It's in the stream bed. Have had preliminary talks with the one homeowner it coud potentially impact and he thought it was a cool project and would support the project.

- **Motion to hear about the project:** Doug Grotenrath **Second:** Lester Langeland
- **Motion to vote to apply for the grant:** Callie Melton **Second:** Doug Grotenrath
- **Roll Call Vote:** Callie Melton: Nay Doug Grotenrath: Yay Lester Langeland: Nay Dave Pyle: Nay **Vote:** Does not pass

• COVID travel policy: (Review & Vote)

Board Discussion:

Langeland: Would it be easier to have meetings if we all have our shots? Response: We're a long way from that as shots are not readily available. In addition, Megan cannot require anyone get vaccinated. So we still need these policies in place. Megan will review policy this every month to update and adapt to current CDC guidelines. Currently planning on the March meeting being a small, in-person meeting.

Motion to adopt policy: Lester Langeland **Second:** Doug Grotenrath

Roll Call Vote: Callie Melton: Yay Doug Grotenrath: Yay Lester Langeland: Yay Dave Pyle:

Yay **Vote:** Passes

ADJOURN – **Time:** 7: pm

- **Motion:** Lester Langeland **Second:** Dave Pyle **Vote:** Passes

Next meeting: 7:00 pm, March 2nd 2021

Sign: Date: