



Two Rivers Coalition  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Geneva Twp. Hall  
Tuesday April 17, 2018 6:00 p.m.

**1. Call to order 6:08 p.m.**

**Attendees:** Kenneth Nesbitt, Bette Pierman, Joe Parman, Kevin Haight, Paul Vanden Bosch, Joe vonWahlde, Kyle Boone: Pokagon Band (board members underlined)

**2. Minutes of March 14, 2018: Motion** by Paul Vanden Bosch, seconded by Kyle Boone to approve minutes as presented, all in favor, motion approved.

**3. Announcements, events, deadlines, etc.:**

- Apr 19, 20 and 21- VBCD tree sale in S. Haven and Paw Paw
- Apr 20- Sustainability Issues Legislative Forum 11:30-1:30 at Wightman and Assoc
- Apr 21- Earth Day at PPD 11-2. Anyone available to attend and take TRC trifold?
- Apr 22 – The Age of Consequences – Climate Change, 5:00 pm Westminster Presbyterian Church, Portage, MI
- Apr 26- Salmon Release at Maple Lake Dam. Anyone available to present re TRC and macro sampling?
- May 6- Spring macro collection (VSMP) on Sunday; I.D. on Monday
- May 11- SJRBC event at Fernwood
- May 22-23- Michigan Water School at WMU, 2 day workshop
- June 14- PPR paddle and Pint Night; 3:00 paddle, Livery at 5:00
- Aug 4-River Rescue w/ VBCD
- Sept 15- Community paddle on Black River w/ SWMLC and B/SH HWTA
- Sept 30-VSMP
- Nov 14- TRC 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

**4. Treasurer's Report: Nesbitt:** Hand-out provided, TRC has \$11,199 in Resources Available, \$168 in Receipts, and \$777 in Total Disbursed. **Motion** by Joe Parman, second by Bette Pierman to accept Treasurers Report, all in favor, motion carries

**5. Old Business:**

- A) Distribute rack cards, **available upon request.**
- B) Report from Bette Pierman: Sierra Club, BCCD, and/or MSEF:
  - May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sierra Club, Great
  - Lakes/Farm/CAFO's, 6-6:45, 508 Dener Street.
  - April 30<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm, Wendy Walker, MSUE: Pollinators & Wildlife Habitat
- D) Haight to continue working on by-law changes.



## 6. New Business/Projects/Funded Grants

A] On-going grant projects: CISMA, PPR Riparian/Ox Creek, Mill/Pine Creeks 319: **No new updates**

B] New grant projects: PPR/BR Watershed Management Plans Update, Ox Creek 319:

Hall Park Invasives: **TRC Provided Letter of Support, attached**

Haight talked w/Marcy re watershed update plans and nothing will happen until late summer or fall.

C] Non grant projects: VSMP, PPRWT, E. coli monitoring, River Rescue:

**PPRWT:** Paw Paw River Group, Rick Rasmusson – Funding Issues/disagreement on use of

- Need Models for Funding – Each Municipality/Townships own monies for their section?

Kevin continuing series of meetings w/ municipalities. Kevin and Kenneth planning to organize series of community paddles involving trailhead towns. Possible dates: Jul 14,15; 21,22; 28,29; Aug 18,19. Third Coast could do a weekday evening paddle from Watervliet to Coloma but cost would be \$30-40. Kevin to also talk to PPR Campground.

**VSMP-** who can be a team leader on May 6?

**E. coli monitoring-** Haight submitted grant application to Freshwater Future asking for \$2,985. Basically 2 rounds of testing similar to last year, then a 3rd round focusing on streams with high levels during dry event. 2 samples from each location, one to lab and duplicate sent to Environmental Canine Services in Maine. Use data to advocate for T.O.S.T. ordinance in VB County.

**River Rescue event** (boat only) on Sat Aug. 4th with TRC supplying some leaders for different river segments (Haight, Nesbitt, ???).

- Board member mentioned possible **grant monies** from **North Face** – Board to research

D] Speakers:

- AJ Brucks to speak on VSMP data, possibly June/July

**Annual Meeting**, Lawrence Conference Center, November 14<sup>th</sup>: Board discussed possible date change, will decide by next meeting if needed?

Possible Speakers:

- Ryan Postema of COL agreed to speak on date TBD

- Bette has suggested WMU prof David Karowe, climate change and lakes, possibly at LMC/SH

**7. Adjourn, 7:04 pm**, Motion by Joe vonWahlde, second by Joe Parman, all in favor, motion carries.



*An alliance of the Black River  
and Paw Paw River Watersheds*

---

---

**Board of Directors**

Kevin Haight  
*President*

Bette Pierman  
*Vice-President*

Kenneth Nesbitt  
*Treasurer*

Joe Parman  
*Secretary*

Dave Foerster

Colleen Forestieri

Sam Ewbank

Kyle Boone

Joe Von Wahlde

Paul VandenBosch

January 24, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Two Rivers Coalition (TRC) is a volunteer environmental group in SW Michigan with a focus on water quality and the overall environmental health of the Black River and Paw Paw River watersheds. I am writing to express our support of the grant application being submitted by the Berrien County Conservation District for the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program Grant. This project develops a strong community partnership to restore an urban public landscape and will sustain Ox Creek (a tributary of the Paw Paw River) and its wetlands and riparian habitat for future generations.

The proposed property for restoration and outreach stewardship is Hall Park, which is located in downtown Benton Harbor, Michigan. Hall Park is the oldest of the City of Benton Harbor parks, established in the early 1900's. Ox Creek is a warmwater stream that flows through Benton Harbor where it joins the Paw Paw River. Ox Creek flows through Hall Park. The park's wetlands and riparian habitat areas are degraded by invasive species and litter.

The proposal to the Urban Waters Restoration Program is to clean up the riparian area, remove invasive species, and restore the wetland and riparian habitat in Hall Park, and this portion of Ox Creek. In doing so, the conservation needs of important species and habitats will be addressed, measurable and meaningful conservation and education outcomes through community volunteers will be accomplished and stronger partnerships within the watershed, the surrounding communities and the region will be forged.

This project in downtown Benton Harbor complements the current and on-going extensive Ox Creek watershed restoration efforts upstream focusing on the installation of agricultural and stormwater best management practices to improve water quality. This project also supplements the work of the SW x SW Corner Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties. TRC is already a partner in both the Ox Creek project and the SW x SW Corner CISMA.

Our organization believes this is an important project and is willing to support it any way we can. TRC will help publicize the project on our website, on social media, and in communications to our members. TRC will also help publicize stewardship work days and provide volunteers to help with the work.

Sincerely,

Kevin Haight

***Two Rivers Coalition is a citizen-based group working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw River watersheds through conservation, education, and advocacy.***