



## Two Rivers Coalition Meeting Minutes August 12, 2009

Geneva Township Hall  
Call to order: 7:08 p.m.

Attendance: Dave Foerster, Matt Meersman, Joe Parman, Al Baerren, Tom Swiat, Frank Jureka, Kevin Haight, Marcy Colclough, Sam Ewbank, Nancy Edwards, Jamie McCarthy, John Mitchell. Board member names are underlined.

**Agenda** approved as amended.

**Motion** by Joe Parman, seconded by Frank Jurenka to approve minutes of the July 8 meeting as amended, all ayes.

**Treasures Report**, Matt Meersman: Hand-out provided. Expenses: Paddle event fundraiser, \$155.50. As of August 12, 2009 net income for TRC is \$4,003.77.

**319 Grant Proposal Status**, Marcy Colclough: Grant was awarded for \$800,000 to protect and restore wetlands, land preservation, education, and municipal outreach. The majority of the grant match will be met by land preservation rights. Dave Foerster signed up for the grant and is offering over 300 acres of land for preservation. Dave addressed the possible conflict with his property and the grant and asked the board to discuss the issue. Matt Meersman stated that he did not think there would be a conflict of interest, but he was afraid there may be an "image management" issue for Dave and/or TRC. Matt felt that the Board should be aware of the way some people will view Dave's financial gain from the project. The TRC Board did not see this as a major conflict and will address the issue if and when it comes up. TRC will assist in education and awareness of this project but will not be making any formal decisions.

**AWEP (Agricultural Water Enhancement Program) Grant**, Matt Meersman: The MDA funded through the Farm Bill 27 million dollars to the St. Joseph (includes Paw Paw), Black, and Kalamazoo Rivers for the AWEP grant. The funding will target water conservation and water quality improvements on agricultural working land within the watersheds. TRC will be participating in public awareness and education of the program.

### **Project Committees and Reviews:**

**Incorporation**, Dave Foerster: 501 (c) (3) Status was awarded to Two Rivers Coalition and is retro back to its inception. Dave submitted a report to Fresh Water Future to close out the grant covering application fees for incorporation and IRS tax exemption.



**Fundraising**, Sam Ewbanks: Paddle event fundraiser went well and attendance was good.

**Membership**, Tom Howe: TRC has a new electronic membership form available on the website. The Membership and Fund Raising committees will be working with Jill Ryan from Fresh Water Future on a \$1,500 grant that will help promote the organization and membership. **The committees are looking for ideas or suggestion on improving membership and awareness.**

**Communications**: Deb Berkey was not present but she is looking for volunteers for the committee.

**Annual Meeting**: Deb Berkey was not present but is looking for volunteers for the committee.

**Community Connections**, Al Baerren: The PowerPoint presentation/slideshow is ready for public meetings and events. The slideshow shows TRC's goals and accomplishment and promotes membership.

**P-Ban Outreach**, Joe Parman: Informational pamphlets went out with summer tax bills. Additionally, letters went out to retailers, applicators, and golf courses informing them of the new Phosphorus Ordinance in Van Buren County.

**Septic System Outreach**, Jean Ketchum/Deb Berkey: Nothing new at this time.

**Buffers**, Joe Parman: The Drain Office buffer strip standards are ready for implementation this fall. Joe will be meeting with the new Soil Conservation District director for partnership in the program.

**Website**: October 31, 2009 is the deadline the committee set for the new website design and outline. Press release set to announce the new website.

**Meeting Adjourned**: 9:12 p.m.