



Two Rivers Coalition

February 11, 2009

Call to order 7:10 p.m.
Geneva Township Hall

Attendance: Tom Howe, Matt Meersman, Marcy Colclough, Chris Bauer, John O'Connell, Nancy Edwards, John Legge, Steve Peterson, Al Baerren, Kevin Haight, Kathy Dorr, Jean Ketchum, Nina Consolatti, Deb Nieboer, Chuck Adams, Mary Adams, John Lerg, Beth Clawson, Deb Berkey, Joe Parman, Erin Fuller

Motion: Deb Berkey made motion to approve agenda as amended, no objections

Motion: Tom Howe made motion to approve December 10, 2008 minutes, Matt Meersman 2nd, all ayes

Discussion: John Legge, Nature Conservancy – Agricultural water quality project in partnership with The Coca Cola Corporation. Coca Cola is looking to reduce “wasting” water in the Paw Paw River Watershed. The Nature Conservancy will be collecting data on species such as mussels, fish, and insects in order to gauge the quality of the Watershed. In addition, they will be looking at reducing sedimentation, restoring wetlands, develop agricultural BMP's, and encourage enrollment in WRP and EQUIP programs. This will be three year project that will help produce a detail map of agricultural BMP's, species, wetlands, and implementation of projects.

Discussion: Freshwater Future Grant Update, Dave Foerster – A report will have to be developed on how TRC plans to use the \$1,500 and the money must be spent by the end of the year. Suggestions on how the money is to be used: Marcy Colclough - fundraising and recruiting new membership should be a main focus in order to ensure the success and sustainability of the TRC group. Several members agreed with this as a focal point for TRC.

Discussion: Incorporation update, Dave Foerster is still working with Roman Plaszczak for incorporation of TRC. A mini grant was received from Freshwater Future for \$320 to cover application fees for incorporation and 501 (c)(3) status.

Treasures Report: Matt Meersman - TRC has a current balance of \$2,166.00, handout was provided.

Discussion: Marcy Colclough spoke on Larry Nielsen's behalf in regards to the Village of Paw Paw. The Village of Paw Paw has their Parks and Recreation plan available for review and would appreciate any comments. The Village website is up and suggestions and comments are encouraged as well. There is going to be a “Lake Study” done on Maple Lake and committee is being formed in order to better understand the lake and how it can be protected and improved.

Discussion: Phosphorus Committee update – The Van Buren County Phosphorus Ban Ordinance will go into effect on January 1, 2010.

Discussion: 319 Grant Proposal Status, Erin Fuller – Nothing new at this time.



Discussion: Black River Watershed Plan Implementation Status, Erin Fuller – Review of the goals, objectives, and projects – handouts

Discussion: Paw Paw River Watershed Management Plan Goals and Objectives, Marcy Colclough – Update and handouts

Discussion: Dave Foerster, Strategic Planning – Find focus and goals for TRC- Formed a new committee consisting of Dave Foerster, Marcy Colclough, Al Baerren, Nancy Edwards, and Jean Ketchum. First meeting is March 1, 2009, 2:00 at Marcy Colclough’s house.

New Business:

Buffer Strip Program: Conservation District and County Drain Office are working on buffer strip programs with farmers and property owners.

TRC needs a centralized data base that board members can access for data and membership. Possible options: “Google Documentation”, “List Serve”, back-up data.

Matt Meersman: TRC may want to endorse the Agriculture Water Enhancement Program, USDA & NRCS - BMP’s for preserving ground and surface water along with water quality. I

Motion: Joe Parman motioned that TRC offer letter of support for the Agriculture Water Enhancement Program and offer time and commitment to meetings and membership participation, 2nd by Deb Berkey, all ayes. Matt Meersman will work on numbers and hours of commitment.

Marcy Colclough: MDNR, City of Watervliet, Nature Conservancy-Berrien County working on removing dam on the Paw Paw River. She would like TRC to support the dam removal efforts; benefit to fisheries and the natural flow of the river.

Motion: Matt Meersman motioned for TRC to offer letter of support for the removal of the dam in Watervliet on the Paw Paw River, 2nd by Kevin Haight, all ayes

Motion to adjourn: 9:07

Respectfully submitted by,

Joe Parman