

**EMERALD LAKES VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
SPRING MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2015
TROY UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA
7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order – Chairman/Vice President John Martin
 - Chairman/Vice President John Martin called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.
2. Establish A Quorum (5% of 550 = 28 homes)
 - It was established that there were 44 homes represented; therefore we have a quorum.
3. Approval of the 2014 Spring Meeting Minutes
 - **Ray Donnelly moved to approve the May13, 2014 Spring Meeting Minutes. Jenny Martin seconded and the assembly approved.**
4. Introduction of the Current ELVHA Board of Directors – President John Martin
 - President Bill Devich (Absent)
 - Recording Secretary Karen Charnawskas
 - Treasurer Megan Marx
 - Corresponding Secretary & Newsletter Editor Kathleen Donovan
 - Lakes Chairman Tom Kuhn
 - Maintenance Chairman Joe Power
 - Membership Chairman Andrea Allemon
 - Restrictions Chairman Jay Reynolds
 - Security Chairman Joe Lowry (Absent)
 - Special Projects Brandon Johnson (Absent)
5. Vice President's Remarks – Vice President John Martin
 - Introductions:
 - i. Vice President Martin introduced the Board, all of whom are listed above.
 - ii. He then introduced the Refreshments Committee members, Yvonne Misuraca and Maureen Frenger; and a hardy thank you was extended to each of them.
 - Phragmites Treatment and Problems:
 - i. The Board is working on controlling the problem of Phragmites. More discussion on that subject will follow during this meeting.
 - Fish Restocking Plan:
 - i. The Board is also working on a plan to restock the lakes with fish to help reduce the Bluegill population, especially those in Sandshores Lake. An article was posted in the May Newsletter giving details about this problem.
 - Association Activities:
 - i. The 2014 Christmas Party was a success with over 100 residents attending.
 - ii. The Halloween Parade was held in October and enjoyed by the children as well as the neighbors who watched them parade through the streets of the Village.
 - iii. The Easter Eggstravaganza was held in March at Walker Beach and had an excellent turn out.

- iv. A special thanks to our committee chairmen Jill Gentner, Emily Lowry, Dorothea Lester, Nicole Johnson, Erica Sollars and Cindy Stewart, who worked very hard on each of these activities.
- Association Dues:
 - i. On the financial end, it should be noted all dues have been collected with the remarkable efforts of Treasurer Marx and Membership Chairman Allemon.
- Willow Tree Issue:
 - i. We have had a successful conclusion on the Willow tree issue on Sandshores Lake. It was recently concluded by a Special Master, who ruled in favor of the Association saying the owner had breached the agreement and as a result must pay the fees of the Special Master and must trim the tree at least twice a year keeping the tree's branches a specific length above the water.
- Paddle Boat Demolition:
 - i. Thanks also to our former president, Doug Haxer, and his committee for continuing to cut up old and unneeded paddle boats.

6. Introduction of **Speaker Bob Williams** on Phragmites – Lakes Chairman Tom Kuhn

- Lakes Chairman Tom Kuhn introduced Speaker Bob Williams by reading his biography.
 - i. Bob graduated from the University of Michigan, School of Architecture in 1970 with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. He is a registered Architect and practices architecture in the State of Michigan. Bob is also the Director of the Stewart Farm Ecology Center on Harsens Island.
 - ii. Bob has been successful at controlling Phragmites in his restoration of Lakeplain Prairie, Wet-mesic Flatwoods and Great Lakes Marsh at Stewart Farm. He is a 2007 graduate of the Michigan State University Conservation Stewards Program and an MSU Extension Service Volunteer. He is the founder and webmaster of www.Phragmites.org and served for three years as the Chairperson of the Clay Township Phragmites Advisory Board. On the topic of Phragmites control, Bob has presented dozens of public workshops for local communities and non-profits as well as organizations such as Wildlife Habitat Council, The Stewardship Network, SEMCOG, MSU Extension Service and The Great Lakes Commission. He has trained more than a thousand individuals in Phragmites control. In 2011 Bob and his wife Sue were named Michiganians of the year by the Detroit News for their work in environmental stewardship.
- More information on Phragmites control can be found on the Internet at www.phragmites.org, on the *Oakland County Resources* sheet (**Attachment #1**) that was distributed tonight or you can contact Bob directly at Bob@phragmites.org.
- Bob Williams' presentation included 36 slides (**Attachment #2**) showing problems with the Phragmites throughout Michigan. He said they are definitely a fire hazard and many are growing near telephone and electrical lines. Bob's slides will be posted on the ELV Website for reference. Some highlights of his presentation are as follows:
 - i. Phragmites reduces native plant and animal habitat population and diversity. They grow taller as they compete with other plants. Animals cannot use them for anything and they may harbor infection mosquitos.
 - ii. Pictures were shown of Phragmites behind Troy Union School, on John R as well as those growing around Kensington Church and its parking lots.
 - iii. Most of the Phragmites in our subdivision are growing along the creek. None have been seen on front lawns of our resident properties.
 - iv. The Phragmites were brought from Europe. However, Europe has animals that eat them; here we do not.

- v. Phragmites have been in the United States since at least 1972. They grow along rail road tracks, highways and even on hills and utility lines. They spread by seeds and root systems. The seeds aren't great in spreading the plant; but on a rainy day, they can travel.
- vi. The following can help contain them:
 - 1. Cut them down
 - 2. Early detection
 - 3. Rapid response
- vii. Bob's slide presentation (**Attachment #2**) offered the following information:
 - 1. Can you dig them out? – No, that only helps them spread.
 - 2. Can you cut or burn them? – Yes, but it will not totally eliminate them.
 - 3. One way is to cut them below the waterline when the stocks get 3-4 feet tall. That won't eradicate them, but will help maintain them.
 - 4. What could control them? – Landscape fabric but they can spread outside the covered area. Flooding is the best plan.
 - 5. Herbicides work best because they kill the roots. Do this by using...
 - a. Foliar Spraying
 - b. Cut-and-dab method
 - c. Glove of death – invented by the nature conservatory using a rubber glove, dipping your hand into the stuff and rub it on the plant.
 - d. Wipe it
 - 6. Burning stresses the plant, allows soil exposure blackening to encourage germination and allows chemicals to reach the live plant herbicides easier.
 - 7. What do you do with the cuttings? – Just read our handout for that information.
 - 8. Equipment to use – Garden sprayers ATV mounted sprayer, gas powered, etc.
 - 9. **DO NOT put these plants in the compost. Put them in the TRASH!**
- viii. Chemicals:
 - 1. Round-up – but don't spray below or near water.
 - 2. DEQ approved Glyphosates and surfactant can only be used near water. For a list of DEQ approved chemicals, go to:
http://www.Michigan.gov/documents/deq/wb-sw-as-anc-approvedherbicides_261935_7.pdf.
- ix. Permits are needed only for certain things. For further information, contact Jeff Fisher – MI DEQ 517-335-4188.
- x. Bob suggested that it would be wise to encourage the City of Troy to obtain a city-wide permit for treating Phragmites.

7. Treasurer's Report/Half-year Budget and Revenue Discussion – Treasurer Megan Marx

- All dues were collected at least six weeks earlier this year than last. In 2014 an additional \$8,000 was brought in compared to 2013, which will allow for extra projects such as fish restocking, adding new benches where needed and providing Phragmites control and extra weed treatments. We remain on budget and have paid all bills. Also, we have changed over to a local company for maintenance even though the cost was slightly higher.
- Question – A resident asked if there was money in the budget for Phragmites treatment in the Creek; not just in the lakes.
 - i. Answers and Comments –
 - 1. Vice President Martin said “no” because we have no liability for the creek.

2. All our water comes from the Clinton River Water Shed and ends up in the Clinton River.
3. One resident was concerned that there was money to take care of the lakes, but there is nothing to take care of the Creek. Vice President Martin replied that the Association has no control over the drain. It only has control over the lakes.
4. Former President Haxer said the only way to possibly get around this would be to go to the Oakland County Drain Commission and get them to treat the drain.
5. Corresponding Secretary Donovan has talked to the Water Commissioner, who said residents have permission to treat the Phragmites through a contractor who has a permit; but the Commission will NOT PAY FOR IT.

8. Review of the Lake Treatment Plan for the Year – Lakes Chairman Tom Kuhn

- The Board has been concerned about Phragmites in the area for several years. As far as the problem on the Creek, we have also put in a lot of time trying to get the City to obtain a city-wide permit; but since they don't feel it is a city-wide problem, they don't want any liability for it. I met with them in November and will continue to keep on top of this.
- The other alternative is the fact that we have talked to LakePro. They can pull a permit for treating the Creek (one permit for all affected residences on the creek), but the issue is the cost. LakePro has quoted treatment at \$400 per household but agreed to cut the cost to \$300 and possibly less depending on how many homeowners sign up. However, we cannot treat the creek if all do not participate because that would not be wise. LakePro would do multiple sprayings, but residents would have to cut up and discard the plants themselves.
- Question – Are you saying that each resident must pay for treating their portion themselves?
 - i. Answer – The Board is working on this. There are 85 homes on the Creek. Our first step is to see what the interest is; then the Board will move forward.
- Question – One resident said she is tired of hearing all the time about the lakes and nothing about the creek; tired of hearing that everything is about the lakes even though her fee is exactly the same as those who live on the lakes while she does not.
 - i. Answer – The Board understands your frustration on this and will try to move forward on this as quickly as possible.
- Question – What would the per-house cost be per season?
 - i. Answer – LakePro's quotes are: 10 or fewer: \$300, 11-30: \$275
- Question – When John R Road construction begins, will the City provide funding to fight any Phragmites that might come across to our area?
 - i. Answer – This is something that we will need to check out.
- Question – What about Phragmites owned by someone who is not in the sub? Is there any way we can get them to treat their plants?
 - i. Answer – That was an issue raised by our Board. Lakes Chairman Kuhn has met with the City, but they don't feel it is a City problem. Restrictions Chairman Reynolds commented that our Lakes Chairman needs the support of all members of the subdivision to get the City to help us.
- Question – The Lakes Chairman put an article in the newsletter last fall asking members to write a letter to the City. How many people did that?
 - i. Answer – None.
- Question – A resident suggested we set up a committee to get ideas on what to do.
 - i. Answer – Vice President Martin said that was the purpose of this meeting.

9. Closing Remarks and Q&As – Vice President John Martin

- Vice President Martin fielded the following additional questions from the assembly:
- Question – Will the speaker’s presentation be on the ELV website?
 - i. Answer – Yes.
- Question – Is it just a matter of time before the Phragmites jump across John R?
 - i. Answer – Former President Haxer said that after obtaining a permit, LakePro has identified all patches in the lakes. They have treated those patches and it has helped. More scary is the Renshaw Drain and the trouble these weeds cause because the waters travel into our lakes. The Lakes Chairman has addressed that issue over the winter where the residents on the drain will be able to spray those weeds. Speaker Bob Williams said you can’t get rid of them in one year by spraying them throughout that year.
- Question – What about the residents in the new subdivision behind the creek who are not part of ELV?
 - i. Answer – They would have to treat their own.
- Question – Corresponding Secretary Kathleen Donovan asked if there is a plan.
 - i. Answer – The plan would be to begin cutting down the Phragmites in January through the first of June. Cutting after June, would not allow enough growth to get the chemical on. Spraying should begin in August; wait 30 days and then re-spray. Two weeks later spray it again and then again in October. Wait at least two weeks after the last spraying before cutting again, but will usually wait until January.
- Comment – Membership Chairman Andrea Allemon announced that we now have a good idea; but asked everyone, especially those on the creek, to sign up for more information. The Board can’t do everything, but it needs the support of all residents.

10. Distribution of the New 2015 ELV Directory – Membership Chairman Andrea Allemon

- Copies of the new directory are available for pick up before, during and after tonight’s meeting.

11. Adjournment - Vice President John Martin

- **Juanita Pez moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm; Ken Grand seconded and the assembly approved.**

Karen L. Charnawskas
ELV Recording Secretary

APPROVED as amended/presented on _____ (Date)

Attachment #1 – Contacts for Oakland County Area (Hard Copy)

Attachment #2 – Phragmites PowerPoint Handouts (Hard Copy)