ASYLUM LAKE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Minutes
September 14, 2023

Members Present: Pete Strazdas, Chair; Sharon Dever, Vice Chair; Kay Chase, Council Secretary; Mark Frever; Duane Hampton; Lauri Holmes; Steve Kienle; John Kreuzer; Keith Pung; Silvia Roederer; Paul Scott; Cybelle Shattuck; Mark Weiss

Members Excused: Tyler Bassett; Lynne Heasley; David Lemberg; Tom Sauber, Tiffany Schriever;

Guests: Mark Kieser, Kieser & Associates; Judy Huxmann;

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WEBEX ROLL CALL.
   - Mr. Strazdas called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

II. EDITING AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 14, 2023.
   - There were no changes to the Agenda, which was approved by voice vote.

III. EDITING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 10, 2023.
   - Add Silvia Roederer under member excused. The amended Minutes were approved by voice vote.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT.
      - Mr. Strazdas submitted a request to the Kalamazoo Community Foundation for funds approved by the Council. Those funds should be available to the Council in the next month or two. That information will be added to the financial report when the money is received.
      - Mr. Frever reported that the daily operational costs for July should be about the same as for the previous month. Those costs include charges for Minutes done by the Recording Secretary and costs for the porta johns in the Preserve.
      - Mr. Kreuzer inquired as to the WMU financial outlay for upkeep and maintenance of Asylum Lake Preserve that is not reimbursed through the Council or the Foundation. No one at the meeting was able to provide that data.

V. OLD BUSINESS.
   a. Project Updates and Project Finances.
      i. Storm Water and Research Project.
         - Mr. Kieser provided the following information about the research portion of the stormwater project:
         - Dr. Reeves was not present, but he should have more data to report next month.
         - Representatives from Kieser & Associates met with Dr. Reeves to get updates on his research. The research team has been doing new experiments, but they have also been diving deeper into the data that was already collected in the Preserve. They discovered that the stormwater treatment process is removing more chloride than was previously reported, which means that the proof of concept is even stronger.
         - Dr. Reeves identified the next steps for testing the stormwater as follows: 1. Find out how long it takes to create the precipitate in the jar and out in the field. 2. Determine the mass and volume of the precipitant.
         - Kieser & Associates is trying to understand the logistics of the stormwater project. They are looking at the engineering calculations and the data from the lab and translating that to the field. They need to know how much water and salt flows through the stormwater treatment system in the wintertime, and what the salt concentrations are.
         - Kieser & Associates is advancing the engineering portion of the application while Dr. Reeves is looking at the specifics of precipitating the road salt. Over the next two months, Kieser & Associates will be communicating with Dr. Reeves and his research staff. They will be taking the research into the field this winter.
Ms. Holmes mentioned the red balloons in Asylum Lake and inquired if they have something to do with the stormwater project.

Mr. Kieser stated that the red balloons (known as drogues) were placed in Asylum Lake by representatives from EGLE (Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy) pursuant to the application reviewed by Dr. Lemberg. There is a cable with sensors that runs from the drogue to the bottom of Asylum Lake to collect data about the salt content in Asylum Lake; they are not testing for phosphorus at this point.

Representatives from the State were at Asylum Lake in August to collect data from the sensors and from other locations at the lake. They are sharing their field data with Kieser & Associates in near real time. The data from the sensors is forthcoming.

Kieser & Associates will be at Asylum Lake next week to look at more intensive field studies than what the State is doing. Dr. Lemberg contacted the Michigan Department of EGLE about what they are testing. The use of drogues has been fairly common over the past 10 years for collecting continuous data about pollution and algal blooms and other conditions.

The following updates were provided about the construction portion of the stormwater project:

Mr. Strazdas stated that the contractor, Hoffman Brothers, has been hired to work on the stormwater project. Kieser & Associates has been monitoring the contractor. A representative from Hoffman Brothers should be invited to the next meeting to answer any questions the Council might have about this project.

Mr. Kreuzer inquired if WMU will provide any public notification about the stormwater project that is taking place in the Preserve. Mr. Frever stated that the narrative has been completed for the site story board to be placed in the Preserve but it still needs the WMU logo. The sign will be installed by the staging area near the old parking lot on Drake Road.

Mr. Frever is working with Paula Davis, the WMU spokesperson, to prepare a public announcement about the stormwater project, in concert with the City of Kalamazoo.

Ms. Holmes stated that she has spoken with people who are concerned about what’s happening in the Preserve. She is hoping there will be clarification soon. Mr. Frever will provide the initial schedule from Hoffman Brothers.

Mr. Kreuzer mentioned that the stormwater project is a positive thing; it is beneficial to the university and the community. As with many things, people make negative assumptions. It is important to let people know there is something positive going on at Asylum Lake.

Mr. Strazdas will communicate with Mark Frever and Paula Davis about the news release. He thought she had prepared a news release to go out tomorrow.

Mr. Kieser stated that WMU is the client to Hoffman Brothers. Kieser & Associates is assisting WMU on the construction observation and making sure the soil erosion and control conditions are in place and as designed. John Jacobson, the Senior Engineer from Kieser & Associates, and Mark Frever, have been in contact with the contractor on a daily basis. The stormwater project started this week, but they haven’t broken ground yet.

There will be a lot of work to get access to the eastern portion of the site. They need to come down the embankment at Drake Rd. Wetland planking is across a section of the wetland to accommodate the construction equipment. Hoffman Brothers might break ground tomorrow on the stormwater system.

They will start at the east end of the site by constructing a 700-foot-long limestone trench that will be two feet wide by two feet deep. They will work their way toward Drake Rd. during the construction process. It will take about a week to finish the trench.

The next step will be construction of the infiltration pond between the mechanical devices by Drake Rd. and the infiltration trench. Kieser & Associates will let the contractor know which trees cannot be disturbed.

Keith Pung has been communicating with the contractor about soil erosion control permitting. Kieser & Associates will work with the university through Keith Pung and the contractor.

There will be about eight sampling tubes installed along the trench to monitor the chloride and phosphorus in the stormwater runoff and sediment.

Mr. Frever stated that he and John Jacobson worked with Hoffman Brothers to make sure they tread lightly along the property line. They have been understanding about that. Hoffman Brothers is four days ahead of schedule with regard to breaking ground.
• The large sign to be placed in the Preserve does not have the right WMU logo at this point. The correct logo will be provided soon.
• Mr. Pung has been in communication with John Jacobson at Kieser & Associates regarding the soil erosion and sediment control permits. They have given the contractor authorization to maintain the weekly site audits than need to happen while they have the permit. The reports will be sent to Mr. Pung.
• Mr. Kieser provided a picture of the large sign to be placed in the Preserve. The sign has a map with information about the stormwater project. The Asylum Lake Policy and Management Council, Western Michigan University, the City of Kalamazoo, Kieser & Associates, and Hoffman Brothers are listed on the sign. Information for the State of Michigan needs to be added to the sign, as well as the WMU logo.
• The brown arrow on the sign represents the untreated stormwater coming into the stormwater filtration system. The green arrows represent the discharge of clean stormwater north of Asylum Lake.
• The QR code will go on the lower right area of the sign. The QR code will link back to the ALPMC website. Mr. Strazdas suggested having a separate page on the ALPMC website with more details about the stormwater project. The sign needs to be installed at the Preserve as soon as possible.
• The following changes were suggested for the sign:
  • The large sign should state that the stormwater project will treat urban stormwater runoff, provide improved water quality, and help protect the Preserve. It would be beneficial to let the public know that the stormwater project will help remove chloride from the stormwater.
  • The Kieser & Associates sign should have increased font size for the project benefits and the map. Wording could be added to state, “for more information, click on the link.”
  • Western Michigan University is serving the community by improving the water quality at Asylum Lake. That information could be placed on the sign because it is reassuring to the community. The sign subcommittee could work on small, yard-type signs to put around the parking lot with those details.
  • The emphasis on the large sign should be about the importance of the stormwater project, rather than the entities that are involved. The stormwater treatment project should be dominant on the large sign, and it should emphasize what the green line is; that is important. It will draw attention to the illustration.
  • The Asylum Lake stormwater treatment project should be in the upper left corner of the large sign since people read from left to right. Mr. Frever stated that the sign is in draft form, the comments will be incorporated.
• Mr. Kreuzer suggested that an image of the updated sign and other relevant information could be e-mailed to the Council members before the next meeting, so people have an opportunity to be more prepared for the discussions at the meeting.
• Mr. Strazdas suggested that Mr. Frever and Mr. Kieser should try to have a representative from Hoffman Brothers at next month’s Council meeting. Kieser & Associates and Hoffman Brothers could provide a written report to the Council one week before the October 12th meeting.
• Mr. Hampton suggested that the sign should be installed in the Preserve before the next Council meeting. He also suggested that the Council should put more money into monitoring salt in the lake because no one else has stepped up to do that.
• Mr. Kieser shared information with Mr. Frever about how Kieser & Associates will continue with the lake monitoring. They have allocations to get through the winter. The run-off volumes are low unless there is a rainstorm or snow melt. Kieser & Associates is looking into additional funding sources, which they will pursue with Matt Reeves. In the short term, they have funding for the monitoring they need.
• Mr. Strazdas stated that there is a Section 319 (of the Clean Water Act) nonpoint source stormwater grant that is available every year. He suggested that Dr. Reeves and other partners apply for more grants.
• **Mr. Kreuzer, supported by Mr. Weiss, moved to have Kieser & Associates and Dr. Reeves and his team pursue additional grant funding for the stormwater project. The motion was approved.**
• Mr. Pung stated that he has access to the Kalamazoo Stormwater Working Group. Information about the stormwater project could be posted on that website. Mr. Strazdas suggested that Mr. Pung and Mr. Frever could work on providing more details to the public through media sources and the ALPMC website.
• Mr. Frever stated that a WMUK reporter is also working on providing a report on the stormwater project.

ii. Ecological Maintenance – Continue Discussion on Part-Time Consultant.
iv. Trails Management Committee.

- No report.


- Ms. Shattuck advised that this project has been paused over the summer. She will restart this process soon.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

a. Application for Preserve Use.

- Mr. Frever has not received any new applications for use of the Preserve.


- Ms. Dever was advised that the three parcels (former Vermeulen property) by the northwest corner of the Preserve appear to have been combined into one parcel. The Planning Commission did approve the zoning code updates, which will now proceed to the City Commission for review and approval.

- There was some question as to whether or not those parcels had been rezoned to multi-family residential. It was suggested that those parcels would need to go through a rezoning process with the Planning Commission. Those parcels were removed from the commercial zoning updates the Planning Commission recently approved for the City of Kalamazoo. The manufacturing zoning codes are scheduled to be updated in the future.

- The zoning code updates addressed what makes sense for where commercial zoning codes can be approved, such as on properties near main roads and what the zoning is for adjacent properties. There have been discussions about green space zoning, which would make sense for protecting land around the Preserve.
Someone from the Oakwood Neighborhood Association mentioned, at a meeting Ms. Holmes attended, that the park owned by the neighborhood association has been changed to a multi-family zoning category. This is an upsetting development for people who are advocating for green spaces.

Ms. Dever was advised that the previous zoning of the park was nonconforming and that is why the zoning change was made. That was part of a discussion on why greenspace zoning is needed.

Ms. Holmes commented that the current zoning might remain until green space zoning is developed. It is important to watch what is happening with the zoning since it will have an impact on the greenspace issues in the community.

Mr. Scott stated that the three parcels by the Preserve were taken out of the recent zoning updates. There should be no change in the zoning of those parcels at this point. It is still RS-5 residential. It was unclear if changes to those parcels (combining the parcels) would require Planning Commission approval or if there was a public process regarding those parcels.

Mr. Kienle mentioned that the former Vermeulen parcels are on the Imagine Kalamazoo website as one parcel but are still designated as RS-5 zoning. The Planning Commission had something on their website about updating the Master Plan. The link went to a non-existing webpage.

The 2035 Imagine Kalamazoo Master Plan process is scheduled to start in 2024, and that might provide an opportunity for people to voice an opinion on zoning issues.

Mr. Scott mentioned that the City Neighborhood Activator will speak about the Master Plan next Wednesday at 7 p.m., at the church next to the Winchell school. Ms. Dever will try to attend that meeting.

VII. NEXT ONLINE MEETING.
- The next Council meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.

VIII. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS.
- Please note that the Webex link is different every time, which is different than dealing with a Zoom link.
- Mr. Kieser has a commitment from Paula Davis to do the public service announcement next week about the stormwater project.
- Mr. Frever will e-mail information about the large sign to be placed in the Preserve. The Council would like to see the final version of the sign before it is installed in the Preserve.
- Mr. Hampton will not be at the October meeting.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS.
- None

X. ADJOURNMENT.
- The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.