

Beaver Island Association
Supporting Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Monday, JULY 20, 2015 4:30-6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Peter Igoe called the meeting to order at 4:35 and

- Introduced the BIA Board: Ken, Bob Anderson, Taffy, Pam, Mark, Andy (absent), Keith, Jim Jones, Beth, Craig (absent), Bob Tidmore
- Provided an overview of BIA's history and focus, summarized some typical key initiatives such as phragmites, reservation system for municipal piers, active BI birding trail, new waterways trail initiative, made tax rates and related dollars visible, BICS career day and tutoring program, and created collaborative relationships with the Chamber of Commerce (BI, Charlevoix) and other key and nature related organizations.. A complete list is available on the Treasurer's report attached to the minutes.

Business Meeting Agenda Items

1. St. James financial issues – Kitty McNamara
 - a. Kitty's role is to explore what did not work in the past, and work to create and enact the proper procedures that are needed. Many of the issues appear to relate to the harbor district sewer system. Problems began with billing and use of sewer funds that led to problems with operational, street and road funds, which were used to cover sewer system costs. Ordinance that established the system was not followed so money did not come in from users to pay for the system.
 - b. A year ago, problems came to light. Attorney and independent accountant were hired to look into the situation and present reports.
 - c. Board appointed a subcommittee to focus on progress on books and records.
 - d. To date, some were items accomplished but much needs to be done. Final report from independent accountant will be completed in a few weeks and will be presented at a public meeting.
 - e. Accomplishments:
 - a. Board agreed to follow attorney and independent accountants' recommendation.
 - b. A new accountant audited the finances, policy and procedures
 - c. Software is now aligned with the district/state system
 - d. Collection of unpaid and unused fees to pay the road and operating system was discussed.
 - e. A new clerk was hired for professional billing and collection for sewer use.
 - f. Individual user accounts are being created and amounts in arrears, and what can be collected.

- g. Township received state grant for reimbursement of sewer bills in 2013 and some of that can be used to repay the other funds. Township is working with attorney to replay the funds.
- f. Major challenges
 - a. Sound policies and billing procedures must be modeled on best practices from model townships and Michigan chart of accounts.
 - b. Guidelines and job descriptions for township officials must identify their responsibilities are and how they will be accountable. The current members did not seem to understand what they were responsible for collecting.
 - c. A Michigan chart of accounts must be used and made visible
 - d. Townships must have substantial training to maintain the software
 - e. The final report must be read and understood when it comes out in the next few weeks. Board must tackle issues and implications from the report, enact the changes that will be needed.
- 2. Election of Directors & Financial report
 - o Moved and seconded to re-elect Jim Jones, Ken McDonald, and Bob Anderson to the BIA for a subsequent term.
 - o Moved and seconded to elect two additional members for their first term: Patrick McGinnity and Kevin Boyle
 - o Unanimous vote to change the By-Laws for Section 2(a) from current wording to allow additional service of three consecutive terms following a one-year break in service
 - o Bob Anderson reported that our financial situation is strong and stable. See attached Treasurer's Report.
- 3. BI Community School update – Judy Gallagher [size, goals, and what's happening]
 - o Size: For 2015-2016 expecting 50 students, about 20 in K-6 and 30 in 7-12. Lowest has been 53 and highest at 100. Northern Michigan is predicting 30% decline in school attendance given the departure of young couples with school-aged children.
 - o Goals: Adopted Spring 2015 by new board. Envisioned a school with excellence in high standards, each and every student making good progress. New goals focused on academic achievement
 - Move from slightly above average where it has been for the past several years to placement in upper quartile.
 - Have all school offerings in science, math, ELA, and SS align with state goals, curriculum, and better align curriculum from grade to grade.
 - Insure more open exchange about the school with stakeholders, family, community members and taxpayers.
 - o What's happening
 - Administrative and board changes:
 - Current principal did a career change, leaving administration. Announced August 1st so Board sought interim school administrator leader. Judy Gallagher agreed to serve only if no one met the criteria. Eight had applied but only Judy met the criteria. She resigned from Board president and Susie Meier agreed to serve as president. Board meetings are the second Monday of the month. Curriculum meetings are open, as are financial meetings.

- Ongoing contract negotiations using terms of the state, which identified prohibited subjects. Cannot address teacher qualifications, hiring, lay-off, and recall. Now these subjects must be part of local school policy and practices, which are currently being written.
 - Board has opened all board meetings and scheduled at times when teachers can participate, and community members are welcome to attend.
 - Student learning and teachers teaching is the focus – Board expects administration and teachers to meet higher goals, taking advantage of lower numbers and refocusing expenditures to support teaching and learning. Reduced administrative personnel to one leader, one associate, and one secretary. Counselor is half-time. Can use funds for teacher learning in ELA. Consultant was hired to conduct needs assessment, current board summarized support and obtained public input. Subsequently hired SchoolRise (founded by Taffy Raphael: www.SchoolRiseUSA.com). Must increase time for teacher learning and collaboration – like the rest of the US, insufficient time is spent on teacher learning. Required reorganization to allow for collaborative work time.
 - Hired a new ELA teacher and a part time math teacher to help with alignment in math curriculum.
 - Moving to team structure across age groups.
 - State requires 2 years of foreign language learning. Have been doing this via Internet. Exploring possibility of language immersion schools. More effective and less costly than hiring a foreign language teacher.
4. Birding Trail Update – Beth Leuck
- Second BIBT event May 22-24 May, 2015 (see attached report)
 - Piping Plovers (federal endangered species) at Greene’s Bay, couple that laid eggs, hatched, and are raising the young
5. Waterways Trail initiative – Pam Grassmick
- Key development in Michigan Paddle community – outlined in purple on attached PP
 - 2014 Michigan developed Pure Michigan water trail criteria. State is still working on the final version
 - A recreational trail on public land, providing conservation and recreational opportunities. Provide education on best practices, insure that invasives aren’t introduced. Non-motorized water craft (kayaks, canoes, paddle boards). Proposed route will circumnavigate the island.
 - 1.7 millions participate, generating over a billion in income for Michigan
 - State of Michigan sees BI as one of the last opportunities for expansion of the water trails. MichiganWaterTrails.org has trip planners, put in and takeout points, etc. Michigan is the only Great Lake without a waterways trail around an island.
 - Funding is needed, working on logo, web development, dedication event, etc., and are using the successful BIBT template.
 - Liability is protected unless clear negligence
6. Phragmites treatment plans – Cindy Ricksgers

- Donation letters sent to 450 property owners, income raised was \$7270.00 for treatment. Handled by Conservation Resource Alliance. Wildlife and Wetlands Group are doing the treatments.
 - Clear maps and permissions obtained prior to treatment.
 - Treatments are going on currently (July) and will happen again in late August for those items treatable in the fall.
 - Supporting treatment of the outer islands.
7. Roadwork update – Bob Anderson
- Advocated and completed paving of south end of King’s Hwy
 - Have full-time grader now on the island.
 - Roads are in good shape, crown remains in the center which controls water runoff from rains.
 - Need a road commission building as ours is completely inadequate.
 - Three areas of need: sheriff’s office, transportation authority (buses must be stored outside), and road commission. Have been looking for sites for three years. Road Commission met here last month and additional sites have been identified. Agree that there is a need on BI. Tri-use building could also include residence for sheriff’s deputy to offset current rent of \$12,000/year.
8. Input from the membership regarding future initiatives
- Pipeline at Mackinaw Bridge – 2 20” pipelines. Recommended site: “oilandwaterdontmix” that lays out the dangers of oil spill for Lake Michigan and specifically Beaver Island. Also issues about horizontal fracking in Michigan. Segment available by Elizabeth Brackett on WTTW, available on the website.
 - Museum Week: Sandy Birdsall listed the House Party as a capital improvement event. Tickets are \$50.00 that include 2 free drinks and appetizers at the Beachcomber. Ed Palmer, Miranda Rooi, John McCafferty, etc. will be playing.
 - Ann Glendon – announcing Friday and Saturday opening night of Baroque on Beaver, 14th year of the festival, with 2 nights of Jazz and 10 days of classical music. Beaver Island Jazz Fest in middle of August to help build cultural tourism. Tickets to paid performance are available at Community Center.
 - Question: Why we have two Townships?
 - Question: Is there a list of flowers that should not be planted on Beaver Island? Handout is available and Ed Leuck is willing to come to your property to look and provide personal recommendations.

Thanks to our speakers for their time and thoughtful presentations.

Meeting adjourned at 6:07