

**Boardman River Dams Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 23, 2007; 6:00 – 8:00PM**

Boardman River Dams Committee Statement of Purpose:

“To engage all interests in assessing and recommending the fate of the dams on the main stem of the Boardman River based upon a thorough analysis of options, including long and short-term economic, social, environmental, aesthetic, transportation and ecological impacts upon the community, individuals and riparian owners.”

Attendees:

Tom Aja, Dennis Aloia, Tom Allerton, Ron Alpers, Ed Bailey, Robin Beardsley, Annette Benson, James Bernier, Amy Beyer, Melissa Brown, Larry Burns, Shirley Burns, Bruce Carpenter, Eric Clone, Beverly Cuthbert, Nyal Deems, Michael Donahue, Diane Dusendang, Becky Ewing, Brett Fessell, Edward Flees, Larry Fleis, Marilyn Fleis, Lisa Foster, Jim Galloway, Carol Groves, Gerry Harsch, Bruce Hooper, Meral Jackson, Jennifer Jay, Mark Johnson, Sarah Johnston, Todd Kalish, Joe Kaltenbach, David Kelly, Andy Knott, William Lane, Steve Largent, Herb Lemcool, Mark Lewis, Colleen Masterson, Chris Maxbauer, Jim McIntyre, Al Morse, Jacck Murray, Troy Naperala, John Nelson, Amy Packard, Scott Parker, Jim Pawloski, Peter Payette, Carl Platz, Bill Plough, Craig Poddig, Lydia Pryor, Jim Pryor, Linda Racine, Gerald Rasmussen, Tom Rozich, Thomas Schlehuder, Wayne Schmidt, Gabe Schneider, Tim Schreiner, Roger Send, Mike Slater, Sandra Sroonian, Bruce Stoker, Pat Sullivan, Wayne Swallow, Donald Tilton, Rolf Von Walthausen, Tom Wertz, Sharon Wise, John Wyrwas, David Wright

Please refer to the meeting agenda and supporting documents which were reviewed at this meeting. Minutes, agendas, and supporting documents are located on the website: <http://www.theboardman.org>

I. Introductions:

Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.

II. Review Agenda

III. Approve or Amend October, November and December Minutes

Meeting minutes from October, November and December were approved as written.

III. Review Focus Group Recommendations

Beverly Cuthbert presented the results of the five Focus Group meetings that were held in November. Over 30 people participated in the meetings; input was also received via email. Copies of the minutes were included in the agenda packet, and Beverly gave an overview of the process. Based upon the **Strengths** and **Challenges** identified by the Focus Groups, two recommendations were presented:

**FOCUS GROUP TASK TEAM RECOMMENDATION
RE: Membership of Implementation Team**

“We recommend that the Boardman River Dams Committee request that additional membership be added to the Implementation Team so that neutral, interested citizens may be better represented in the decision making processes associated with making a recommendation as to the fate of the dams.”

- If the BRDC agrees with the above recommendation, the BRDC should form a task team (please see Ideal Membership) to meet once to establish rationale for recommendation, determine ideal number and constituent type to serve, and determine term length.
- Upon finalization of above, an issue statement will be presented for discussion/feedback and then presented to the IT for their action.
- Timeline: Team meets, completes work, presents to the BRDC on February 27th. If accepted, statement goes to IT for action 14 days later.

Discussion: What's the problem being solved? IT Team is made up of representatives from groups and agencies that will all be affected by the fate of the dams. Broader membership equals broader representation. Isn't the IT membership determined by the terms of the Settlement Agreement? Yes, and the IT needed to have members with some stake in the final decision regarding the fate of the dams. But the BRDC was formed to make this a community driven decision process, which is an ongoing, evolving process. The BRDC values people over structure! If the BRDC doesn't trust the IT, then we need to solve the trust issue, not add more members. Yes and the BRDC make recommendations to the IT, who then takes them to the county which makes the BRDC membership the driving force. The trust issue can always be addressed. Trust is the infrastructure to consensus building. Should there be two entities making the recommendation to the dam owners? Is the Implementation Team necessary as a separate entity?

Follow-Up Action:

There was consensus on the recommendation with the additional recommendation that the questions will be explored by Task Team – if recommendation is to add membership to IT, team should decide the “who, why and for how long” questions and explain in their rationale. The Task team should also explore the broader issue of trust-building within the BRDC and IT.

**FOCUS GROUP TASK TEAM RECOMMENDATION
RE: New Standing Team to deal with Process**

“We recommend that a standing team be established which would be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the BRDC progress, project coordinator, events, trainings, etc. The team will make timely recommendations that will maintain integrity and momentum of the work of the BRDC and will report recommendation/findings to the Project Coordinator or to the Chair of the Implementation team, as appropriate. It may be beneficial for members to have experience with Human Resources, Project Management and/or Web development and maintenance.”

Discussion: Are we duplicating efforts? As this is a dynamic, community driven process we must always strive to be sure all concerns are met. The facilitators are trained...aren't they already doing this? Couldn't the meeting evaluation process be used for this purpose?

Follow-Up Action:

Send this recommendation back to the Focus Group Task Team to address concerns: Is this a duplication of effort? Should the meeting evaluation address issues instead of process team? The Focus Group Task Team will meet and discuss.

There was also a recommendation made to change the terminology in “ideal team membership” description to reflect change in understanding of pond ownership. Jennifer will change “riparian pond owner” to “property owner on Boardman Pond” in all instances.

“Ideal Membership of BRDC Task Teams”:
 1 Implementation Team member
 1 Riparian Pond Owner (change to Property Owner for Boardman Pond)
 1 Riparian River Owner
 1 Conservation Organization
 1 Recreational User Group
 1 At Large Member

V. Communication Team Report

Sandra Sroonian reported that the team met on December 12th. At that meeting, Jennifer Jay announced that the BRDC had been chosen by the NMC Visual Communications students as their semester project. The students will meet with the Communications Team once they have had an opportunity to gather background data and review the website. They will then be available to brainstorm with the Team and develop projects for the semester. Sandra also reported that a PowerPoint presentation for outreach and education has been updated and can be reviewed on the website. As always, feedback is welcome. A draft newsletter has also been developed, and will be reviewed by the VC students. As requested by the BRDC, a list of acronyms has been developed and included in the agenda packet. Additions can be given to Jennifer Jay to update. The next meeting date will be listed on the web once established.

VI. Finance Team Report

Brett Fessell reported that the Finance Team met on January 15th. Mike Donahue has been added as a support member of the Finance Team. Mike will be involved in fund development and in helping to coordinate the contract with ECT. Brett also reported that an extensive progress report has been presented to the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust and Finance Team is working to help clarify any questions that were referred back to the BRDC. Tim Ervin has arranged a funders meeting in Lansing on February 20th; the BRDC will be represented. There is also a Fundraising Workshop with Andy Robinson being offered on March 8th. Brett also presented the monthly spreadsheet and reported that the Team is working with NMC to refine the entries and to add grants and to detail grant action. The Team is also working to develop a “job description” for membership on the Finance Team. The Team is looking for members with an eye toward efficiency and fundraising expertise. Recommendations can be made to the Finance Team. They meet one week before the monthly BRDC meeting on the third Monday of the month. The next meeting will take place on Monday, February 19th, in room 112 at the Great Lakes Campus.

VII. Scoping Team Report

Michael Donahue reported that, with the Finance Team, he is focused on identifying and pursuing funding options. Michael mentioned a number of funding opportunities already identified that are consistent with the BRDC mission. Grant writing is moving aggressively. The Scoping Team is pleased to report that the contract with ECT has been fully signed and delivered. Scoping Team’s role is now two-fold: 1. To work with ECT and the development of work orders, providing oversight and guidance and 2. To focus on broader issues within the E and F study beyond the fate of the dams.

VIII. Consultant Team Report

Scott Parker of ECT extended his appreciation to all who have worked so diligently to get to this point. He will look forward to presenting updates at each monthly BRDC meeting. Scott also reported that ECT has begun work with the Tribe, and Brett Fessell, for the collection and evaluation of existing data. They will work with the Scoping Team to develop work order options.

IX. Update- status of license at Boardman Dam, Maintenance Agreement, DEQ consent agreement, and permit process for drawdown

Dennis Aloia reported that the County approved a maintenance agreement and consent decree outlining actions required to come into compliance with the DEQ. FERC has relinquished the license at Boardman Dam and the dam now belongs to the County and is regulated by the Michigan DEQ. Jim Pawloski discussed the Permit process for the drawdown. The Public Notice was dated January 23, 2007. Individuals interested in making comment, question or requesting a public hearing need to do so in writing within 20 days of the date of notice. These comments and requests should be directed to Jim Pawloski, Michigan DEQ, 2100 M-32 W, Gaylord, MI 49735. Jim will work with Jennifer Jay to be sure that the BRDC is well informed of any public hearing or other opportunity to share any concerns about the drawdown with the DEQ.

Discussion: Now that the county controls the dams, does that change the BRDC and its mission? NO. We are simply moving to the next phase with the Engineering and Feasibility Study. Does this change the relationship with the Property Owners Issue Team? No, meetings are ongoing and there is greater focus now. Did the TCLP develop the drawdown plan? No. The specifics will be forthcoming, but it looks like the drawdown could begin with a 6" to 12" drop per day with the goal of reaching the maximum level of 17 feet by the end of August. Who is requiring the drawdown? DEQ only. Can you explain the compliance issue? Was the dam in compliance before? The point is that it is not in compliance now. Can you give a detailed explanation of why it was and now it's not? We are looking into it. There is background information available. Could be that with an agency change there came a requirement change. It was suggested that www.tclp.org has some great history on their site. Will there be a presentation in layman's terms of the drawdown process and safety issues? Who applied for the drawdown permit? TCLP originally, but as the county is now the owner operator, the county is now the applicant. What will be the impact of the drawdown upstream? There shouldn't be any impact upstream. There will be some sand and sediment shift at the river and the pond. Will the drawdown at Keystone effect Sabin? There will be some additional flow, though Sabin has a solid spillway.

Follow-Up Action: The DEQ and Jennifer Jay will work to develop a straightforward and easily understood presentation for BRDC.

X. Property Owners Issues Team Report

Jim McIntyre explained that POIT, made up of property owners on Boardman Pond, had hired an attorney to determine legal title of the land bordering the pond. Nyal Deems, of Varnum Law in Grand Rapids, presented his findings to a meeting of the Property Owners Issues Team earlier in the day, January 23, 4-5:00 pm, and gave a recap for the BRDC. Varnum tentatively identified the county as owners of the bottomlands.

For full minutes of that meeting, please see www.theboardman.org.

XI. Determine next steps for exposed bottomlands after Boardman Pond drawdown

Todd Kalish began by sincerely thanking all attendees for their input and involvement. He then went on to give an overview of the issues that could appear as a result of the drawdown. He then asked for thoughts on a BRDC determined Task Team to address bottomland issues.

Discussion: Should the BRDC form a task team to look at bottomland issues? **Yes.** The team should include representation from Grand Traverse County. Look at using an expert in this area and for other cases in the state. We need to remember that bottoms land management may be temporary, if dams are not removed. We need to include organizations that have an interest, such as: Grand Traverse Conservation District, Nature Education Center, etc. The consultant team has experience with bottom lands and this is included in ECT scope of work. POIT should have representation on the team. Is there a governmental body with oversight/responsibility? Governmental entities will weigh in during the permit process. There is a sense of urgency.

Follow-Up Action: The following members volunteered to for the Bottom Lands Task team: Jack Murray, Jim McIntyre, Steve Largent, Christine Maxbauer, Mike Slater, Mark Johnson, Tom Wertz, Scott Parker, Andy Knott, Ross Powers, Jeff Hanel, Gerry Harsch, Tim Schreiner, Bill Plough, and Eric Clone. Todd kalish will coordinate to establish meeting dates and time.

XII. Presentation: Consideration of whitewater park option

Eric Clone, interested citizen, gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining new paddling opportunities that could be created along the Boardman River corridor. Paddle sports are the number one fastest growing recreational opportunity. Eric presented an overview of existing opportunities along the Boardman and how a white water park could work in the area and enhance the community further.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

Agenda items for February meeting

1. Committee reports
2. Presentation on dam safety – if available
3. ECT report
4. USACE update on PMP

Next meeting: February 27th, 2007, Civic Center, 6 pm

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Submitted: January 24, 2007
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