

CROOKED RIVER (ALANSON) LOCK CONSORTIUM

December 1, 2010

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order in the Controller's Office Conference Room by Emmet County Commissioner Plasencia at 4:02 p.m.

Roll Call: (completed silently by Recording Secretary)

Present: Dan Plasencia, Emmet County Commissioner; Art Shaw, Springvale Township Supervisor; Dennis Keiser, Bear Creek Township Supervisor; William Dohm, Little Traverse Township Supervisor; Richard Weidenhamer, Village of Alanson President; Dave Droste, Pickerel-Crooked Lakes Association (PCLA)

Support Staff: Lyn Johnson, Controller; Laurie Gaetano-Mier, Director Emmet County Parks and Recreation; Vickie Carpentier, Recording Secretary.

Absent: Damien Henning, Littlefield Township Supervisor.

Guests: Gary Ellenwood, MDNRE; Wayne Schloop, US Army Corps of Engineers; Alice Conrad, Springvale Township.

Agenda:

It was the consensus of the Consortium to accept the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes for the October 27, 2010 meeting were presented and reviewed.

Motion by Dohm to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2010 meeting as presented.

Supported by Weidenhamer.

Motion carried in a unanimous voice vote.

Introductions were made.

Communications:

None.

Unfinished business:

Plasencia suggested using the Emmet County website to help promote the Lock. He also suggested a Friends of the Lock organization be started to raise funds for the upkeep of the lock and to provide other services. Plasencia to contact the Pickerel-Crooked Lakes Association about being "Friends of the Lock."

Gary Ellenwood, MDRNE, provided an update on the three-phase motor recently installed and indicated that it was his feeling the USACOE will have everything updated by next spring. He also advised that the Lock schedule had not been changed.

Wayne Schloop, US Army Corps of Engineers, Chief, Operations, advised the ACOE is pushing to have the electrical done before the end of the calendar year, which will leave only a few things that will need to be done next year.

Plasencia advised the intent of the Consortium was for the County, Townships and Village of Alanson to work in partnership with the MDNRE and the USACOE. He then asked what could be done to assist to stabilize and insure continued funding and maintenance.

Wayne Schloop, US Army Corps of Engineers, advised that the ACOE has assessed the Lock, but he was not aware of any co-assessment. He also explained the ACOE budget and how the ACOE obtained funding for projects through legislative action. The ACOE has no long term plans for noncommercial (Crooked River (Alanson) Lock) facilities. Schloop responded to questions on what the Consortium could do. Schloop advised that funding is project specific and recommended that the most important thing is for the Consortium to make its needs known to its Congressional Representative. He stated he would not have an issue with an independent study of the Lock being done. He also mentioned the Great Lakes/Small Harbors Coalition which is trying to unify all the needs throughout the Great Lakes. The contact person would be Chuck May from Onekama

His response to the question of what would it take to get the Lock reclassified from recreational to commercial was that anything under one million tons of commerce is considered low commercial - basically recreational and a low priority. ACOE has a license agreement with the MDNRE to operate the lock. The Federal Government would not walk away from the Lock, but it just would not provide funding for it.

Dohm asked if there was a major failure next summer, what would they be faced with? Wait for Congress to appropriate money to open them back up?

Garry Ellenwood, MDNRE, explained that what has happened in the past is if the ACOE has not been able to provide immediate funding to make the repairs, the DNR Waterways Commission has authorized the DNR to step up with some money to make immediate repairs and work it out later how that funding gets replaced or doesn't get replaced.

Discussion on the condition and status of the Lock and if an independent inspection should be done. Wayne Schloop, ACOE, indicated ACOE may allow technical staff to assist with an inspection.

Discussion of what the State of Michigan would need to take over control of the Lock from the ACOE. Also discussed where funding would come from and if a district could be created to capture tax revenue funding.

New business:

A site visit to be scheduled for the spring of 2011.

Discussed if the Consortium should, at this time, contact other groups to participate.

Discussed using volunteers to operate the Lock. Gary Ellenwood, MDNRE, advised that the staff that works there consists of union employees and using volunteers may be considered erosion of their agreement.

Other:

None.

Public Comment:

None.

Announcements:

The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 26, 2011 at 4:00 p.m..

Adjournment:

There being no further business Chairperson Plasencia adjourned the meeting at 5.25 p.m.

Approved: 02-23-2011