

CITY OF AURORA
Save Sunny Lake Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 9, 2007

The Save Sunny Lake Park Committee Meeting of the City of Aurora, Ohio, met on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 at Aurora Fire Department #1 for the purpose of holding a regular meeting. Chairman James Kraus called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present:	Justin Czekaj Bill Fellenstein – entered 4:15 p.m. Amy Holsthouse James Fisher Dennis Kovach James Kraus George Mazzaro William Zawiski
Absent:	Mike DeMay George Hettinger John Trew Rich Wehrenberg
Also Present:	Madeleine Marazzi –Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Mazzaro moved to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2007, Save Sunny Lake Committee Meeting. Mr. Czekaj seconded and the motion passed 5-0 – with a voice vote, 2 abstained, Mr. Fisher and Mr. Kovach.

CITIZEN’S COMMENTS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Recommendation report and solutions: Mr. Kraus stated at the last meeting Mr. Zawiski had prepared a preliminary report which was revised and asked Mr. Zawiski to review the changes. Mr. Zawiski stated his original recommendation was to lower the lake. This was not approved by Mr. Trew and the Mayor because they wanted to actively pursue other options before lowering the lake. The revised report does not reflect lowering of the lake level. An addition was made on installing carp barriers to allow native vegetation to re-establish for shoreline stabilization in lieu of the lake being lowered.

Recommendations start on page 11 of the March 2007 Draft Report. Mr. Kraus stated he had met with Mr. Zawiski and Mr. Fellenstein on possible locations of the carp fence barrier to be installed to try and stabilize the shoreline.

Mr. Zawiski stated one of the reasons to lower the lake was to deal with the dam safety requirements which are not being addressed by not lowering the outlet structure. With the structure where it is at the spillway, the volumes and the integrity of the dam itself are still issues that are outstanding with the Department of Natural Resources. By lowering the lake it was going to help the ecology and help address some of the dam safety issues. Discussion was held on when to address the dam safety issues. Mr. Zawiski stated the Ohio Department of Natural Resources can be asked to re-inspect the structure with the improvements that have been made for their evaluation. Mr. Kraus stated this would be added as part of the revision for the final report.

Ms. Holtshouse stated she did not want to lose the discussion points on the possible next step of lowering the lake if all other avenues don't work. Mr. Zawiski stated the matrix table still states total removal as being the best option for the restoration. Mr. Kraus stated to include in the report that potentially the seven recommendations would be tried, once we get to 2012 if the lakes great and the dam safety issues are addressed we won't worry about it, but if we are not then this would be the next step. This should be in the report so this process won't have to be repeated.

Mr. Fisher asked Mr. Zawiski if he felt confident that all these steps could ultimately prevent the city from removing the dam or is this giving every option an opportunity the inevitable happens. Mr. Zawiski stated the easiest and quickest way to restore the water shed is to remove the whole structure right now. If the Chagrin River does not recover than it's not our fault anymore. Because of the way we are working and OPEA does not have regulatory jurisdiction, he is willing to go through the steps, but ultimately the next step if these don't work is partial or total removal. Mr. Zawiski stated if these steps are followed and implemented the best it can be, there is a good strong chance it will work.

Mr. Fisher stated he was glad these steps would be taken to try all the avenues first because it gave the city a chance to put together a small group that will allow to put a contingency plan in place if the process does not work due to the cost involved.

Mr. Kraus suggested doing Recommendation #2 which is to remove carp, grass carp, and bluegill in the lake, to be done starting in September for about four months by lowering the lake temporarily. This would allow the carp to be gathered out of the area. The fish are not healthy and stunted which is not getting rid of anything of significance in wildlife by killing them. The lake is not visited as much at those times which would cause the least problems with the aesthetics at that time. Mr. Zawiski stated this would allow the vegetation to grow in the lake, and not mowing to the edge to allow Mother Nature to create the barriers.

Mr. Mazzaro stated he felt we should have it in writing from the Mayor and Mr. Trew that what they recommend is in direct conflict from the EPA, for documentation purposes. Mr. Mazzaro also stated Recommendation #6 which is evaluation of the restroom facilities should not be part of this committee. If the restrooms are not working they should be corrected. Discussion was held on keeping this separate from the lake issue. Mr. Zawiski stated once activity starts at the lake a test will be done to see if the septic tank is leaking in the lake, and if it is the EPA recommendation will be fix it now or close the restrooms. Mr. Kraus stated this committee will not be proposing a recommendation to fix the septic that will be a separate issue.

Mr. Mazzaro stated 15 years ago there was a report done on the run off of the area industrial sites. If this is what needs to be done the committee should not be part of this. Mr. Kraus stated the tributaries were tested and they are not contributing to the level of the lake problem.

Mr. Mazzaro stated he would like to have the official letter sent to the schools to participate as part of the reports given and is quite appalled that they have not responded to this great educational opportunity.

Mr. Mazzaro stated he would like to know what the costs will be to complete these recommendations. Mr. Kraus stated the costs would be minimal and mostly labor. Mr. Mazzaro stated when this goes to council the cost will be required and recommended having plan A and plan B costs. Mr. Fisher agreed that an expense report would be needed before going to Council.

Ms. Holsthouse stated as a follow up on draining the lake, she recommended taking pictures in increments when the lake is lowered so people know what it will look like at different stages incase it is needed in the future.

Mr. Fisher stated we need to be proactive with communication and develop an informative PR campaign of what we are trying to accomplish. The better informed our residents are about what we are ultimately doing to save sunny lake, will serve the task better than word of mouth. Discussion was held on information release such as putting signs in the kiosks, updating the web site and maybe additional information sent in the mail.

Mr. Kraus stated he would work with Mr. Zawiski and revise the report with additional recommendations for the next meeting. After final adoption from this committee it would go to Council for approval. Mr. Zawiski stated once Council approves the concept, we could possibly use the Mobius Nature Center for public awareness meetings, to answer questions and present the plan.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Kraus stated the next meeting will be to approve the final recommendation. Mr. Kraus stated he would look at the calendar possibly early June and contact everyone.

Mr. Fisher stated each committee chairman should be contacted to let them know what is happening, so that when it does go to Council they are prepared.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Mazzaro moved to adjourn: Mr. Fisher seconded and the meeting adjourned at 5:00p.m.

James Kraus - Chairman

Madeleine Marazzi – Recording Secretary