

SYNOPSIS OF TT FLOODING TASK FORCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING - January 7, 2020

ATTENDEES: Jeff VanBelle; County Drain Commissioners Office, Tom Wheat; Prine&Newhof, Nick Loeks, Julie VanderWere; Texas Township, Christine Morse; Kalamazoo County Board, Russ Walters, Jim Roberts; Crooked Lake, Len Bosma, Amy Coon, Phil DeYoung, Steve Ott & Tom Rogers; Eagle Lake, Mark Rose; Vineyards

AGENDA:

- 1 - Welcome
- 2 - Update on Short Term Project/ FEMA Grant
- 3 - Drain Office perspective
 - Petition status
 - Next steps/timeline
 - County role
 - LLL study
 - Court decision
 - Assessment district
 - Appeals/hearings
 - EGLE permit
 - Construction begins
- 4 - Engineering perspective
 - Easement status
 - Impact of current high water
 - Next steps/timeline
 - Short term extensions (EGLE permit/easements)
 - Schedule
 - Route
 - LLL study
 - Construction begins
- 5 – Other actions
 - What do you need from us?
 - Joint news interview?

1. Welcome and intro of agenda – Len

2. Tom Wheat explained the hazard mitigation plan is still being worked on. This is needed for the FEMA grant. Once the HMP is approved, the FEMA grant can be applied for. FEMA grant decision is expected by June, would bring in \$1M if approved. If the FEMA grant is approved, next step would be the Drain Office. If the FEMA grant is denied, then the County Board becomes involved. Under FEMA, it will be a Texas Township project, If no FEMA, it becomes a County Board project.

3 – Jeff indicated the process to get on Judge Lipsey’s court docket takes 4-5 weeks, Christine reports it takes about 45 days to get on the County Board agenda for discussion.

Petition verification process has started in the Drain Office. GIS map driven verification, will also use the spread sheets from the lake associations. The Drain Office will hold the original petitions, which will be put in book form, and later shared with the County Board.

The Court decides what the numbers are and the SAD district. Court order requires the Drain Office to manage the LLL.

SAD would also be established by the Court for Long-term Project maintenance/operation funds.

If it is a FEMA project, we would lose the portion of the project funding that would have been apportioned to the County Road Commission. The Road Commission would be part of the funding for the maintenance of the Long-term solution plan.

Waiting for the FEMA decision will not change the overall timeline.

Tom Wheat believes the petition signatures can be verified within 10 days to 2 weeks.

Christine will contact Julie Rogers to have the project put on the County Board agenda.

The Township Assessor is currently working on the adjustments of property values, a major revenue cut is anticipated due to decreased values, which will have some impact on the township, but significantly more on the county.

We will be currently working on two paths toward the same goal – one is pursuing the FEMA grant, which will provide funding and make the long-term solution a township project, the second to pursue the project with the petitions through the County Board, and making the long-term solution a county project.

PETITION STATUS: Jeff has (and will keep) the original petitions. Spread sheets and any additional petitions will go to Jeff as the point person. Russ reports that Crooked Lake is now 4 to 6 petitions above the 66% goal, though there have been some property sales, which may bring some signatures into question. The petitions will be presented to the County Board after verification, at which time the County Board will be asked to approve the project.

Once the project is put on the County Board agenda, we will meet to decide who will represent the associations to speak at the County Board meeting.

If approved by the County Board, authority will be delegated to the Drain Office to start the LLL study. Drain Office would then contact Prine/Newhof to begin the LLL study. The study will include historical data, seawalls constructed, topographical data etc. to establish a LLL.

Drain Office presents the information to the Court, decision expected to be rendered the day of the hearing, then 20-day appeal period.

Project will require an EGLE permit. Prine/Newhof and Drain Office will work with EGLE to talk about the long-term plan as the design process continues so EGLE is constantly aware of what is happening, soliciting comments to prevent surprises. Timeline calls for design done by December, EGLE permit by March.

4- If the short-term drawdown is not complete by the start date of long-term construction, there will be price increases due to the need for additional de-watering, cofferdams, etc. Some of these costs were built into the original project estimates, design accommodations may be needed due to excessive high water at start of construction.

If the short-term easements can't be or aren't extended, the water depth would increase until the long-term project is operational, more de-watering will be required.

It is better for the long-term solution if Eagle Lake in particular starts out as close as possible to the short-term target level, as there would be less impact on the long-term construction. Additionally, the short-term piping needs to be available for use in the long-term construction.

It is important to continue to lobby for increased pump rates to decrease levels as much as possible. The next EGLE decision for pump rate change will likely occur in a couple of weeks, around the time of the next Flooding Task Force meeting. At this time, the two monitoring wells do not seem to show any negative impact with the current pumping rate. Jeff reports that to date, there has been only one person registering a concern over the amount of water being sent down-stream.

Long-term solution easement discussions have been positive so far, though apparently some residents near the Crooked Lake outlet easement have encouraged the property owner not to grant an easement. Efforts will be made to secure easement "options" now, in preparation of project approval. Once approved, the "options" would be exercised, and the actual easements signed over.

Short-term solution permit extensions will be pursued with EGLE to allow pumping at least as long as the easements are in place, to allow for continued drawdown until long-term construction can begin.

The projected timeline can stay as it is, the long-term route can stay as planned, the LLL study can proceed as planned.

There may actually be two SAD's, one for the actual construction phase, and a second to cover operational and maintenance costs.

5- The decision was made not to pursue an interview with the news media at this time.

The next meeting date for this committee will be established once we are aware that project discussion is on the County Board agenda, at which time we will meet to develop a plan for comments to be presented to the County Board, and who the representatives will be.

Respectfully submitted by Phil DeYoung. Please let me know if you spot errors in the above, and/or if corrections are required.