

The Eagle Lake Communication Committee Charter

Introduction

Eagle Lake located in Texas Township, Kalamazoo County, Michigan is an approximately 250 acre all sports lake. The Eagle Lake Texas Association (ELTA) is comprised of many year-round and seasonal lake residents along with residents who have lake access. The purpose of the association is to protect and improve the environment of Eagle Lake.

Purpose

This charter creates a Communication Committee for ELTA to study and assess the best practices of communications and provide multiple methodologies for the ELTA board of directors to use that will provide consistent, transparent conveyance of the information required and or expected by lake residents. The Committee Membership is open and will consist of volunteers who are dues-paying members of ELTA. Scheduled meetings will be arranged by the committee chair who will be elected by the committee members.

Background

Because the revision to the ELTA By-Laws, which empowers the members to become involved in the management of Eagle Lake, brings along the responsibility for members to be informed of all aspects of lake management; it follows that those chosen to lead that effort must communicate their actions in a transparent way. This committee will provide communication channels to the ELTA Board that, if adopted, will preserve and improve the conveyance of information to all members of the Eagle Lake special assessment district with particular focus on members of ELTA. The committee is aware that good communication is achieved and governed by consistent and well thought-out policies and innovative procedures that create an optimum and sustained environment to convey the information from the Board to the lake residents, the Township governmental representatives and Texas Township residents in general.

Issues

The communication issues to be studied and assessed by the committee include how best to channel the information required to address residents' concerns that are contained in four broad categories:

- Communication on lake water quality issues, navigation issues, and nuisance species issues; which the Board must take steps to control and or manage.
- Communication on lake safety issues, lake access issues, and property value issues; which the Board must take steps to influence, control and or manage.
- Communication on lake financial issues, special assessment district tax and budgeting issues, organizational revenue and expense issues; which the Board must take the steps to control and or manage.
- Communication on lake residents' social interaction, events and activities; which the board must take steps to foster and or support.

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Goals

The goals for the committee are to provide recommendations to the ELTA Board on how to implement sustainable yet cost effective actions that best convey the information pertaining to the issues documented above:

- Maintain a web-site that is best in class in design, timely with information and easily interactive with users, members and the Board of Directors.
- Publish a Newsletter, preferably quarterly, that is best in class in design, timely with information and delivered to the member by his choice of conveyance, either electronically or by the postal service.
- Make use of special writings and or meetings to provide details of critical messages, plans or outcomes.
- Maintain an up to date data base to ensure that all members get the information delivered to their preferred mailing destination or electronic address.
- Regularly solicit member feedback to ensure the desired result is being obtained.
- Listen well to the member responses and or queries, and assist the Board to address all issues in a forthright and timely manner.

Scope

To meet the above goals, the committee will include the following objectives in their deliberations for determining recommendations:

- Achieve a long-term focus by creating and establishing a coherent strategy for the long-term, with the goal of making the lake community better informed now and in the future.
- Identify short-term actions by determining cost efficient actions that implement and fulfill the long-term strategy.
- Provide user awareness by determining activities that educate lake residents on the utilization of communication channels and tools.
- Take into account residents' diversity and demographic spectrum by determining beneficial actions that benefit the majority of the community, especially property owners and members, while also taking steps to ensure no resident is excluded from communications.
- Apply relevant research by evaluating successful activities of other lake associations and other relevant bodies for determining new potential communication practices.
- Creating assessments by identifying and establishing baselines that can be utilized for monitoring and measuring communication effectiveness.
- Being mindful of cost by identifying solutions that deliver the best benefit, while including potential advertising options or other revenue generation tactics that offset the cost.

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Potential Solutions

The committee will research the viability of potential solution sets that meet the goals and objectives discussed above to improve lake communication. They may include but are not limited to the following:

- Explore ways to enhance existing communication channels of the website, newsletter and directory.
- Test out other state of the art social media communication tools and determine applicability for user interface.
- Explore use of independent third party marketing forces to survey residents to further understand their expectations.

Next Steps

To ensure that the committee fulfils its charter, the committee will follow the steps in the figure below to build and provide recommendations to the ELTA:

1. Identify issues – the committee will identify and monitor issues and concerns
2. Identify goals – the committee will identify and update goals as required
3. Review scope – the committee will be mindful of scope to ensure they remain within boundaries
4. Research solution sets – the committee will study and research feasibility and cost effectiveness of various solution sets that improve communications.
5. Determine options – the committee will prioritize and rank the most optimum solution sets
6. Provide recommendations – the committee will document its work and present written recommendations to the ELTA Board

