

August 27, 2024, Public Hearing for Robinson Lake SAD Minutes

The Public Hearing of the Sherman Township Board was held on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at 7:00 pm, in the meeting room of the township hall. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor-Smalligan at 7:03pm. After the pledge of allegiance, roll call was made and members present were Karen Berens, Doug Berens, Stan Stroven, Ken Smalligan and Jamie Kukal.

For public comment on any non-agenda item, there was none.

Supervisor-Smalligan explained the purpose of the public hearing was to re-establish a special assessment for Robinson Lake Weed Control and whether to continue with the project or not. If it is decided to continue a second hearing will take place to discuss the details. A motion was made by S Stroven and 2nd by D Berens to open the public hearing. All approved, motion passed.

For public comment related to the topic, Gary Fetterley proposed that the SAD be stopped. He claimed that there is a conflict of interest with the manager and applicator. He also claimed that Robinson was the only lake in Newaygo County with a state funded boat launch.

Tammy Gillette, who is new to the area, asked if a petition was needed to start the process of a SAD. Smalligan responded that one was not needed, due to the original SAD already being established and the board approved the re-establishment was a priority.

Mary Dunhoff would like to see the SAD stopped since it does no good.

Greg Braspeninx is in support of the SAD and believes if left untreated the lake will get worse fast.

Dave Koster read his letter (Exhibit 1) of support for the continuance of the SAD.

Steve McQueen asked why the SAD expired, who is on the committee, how do you know about all of this. Smalligan responded that it was a missed expiration by the committee and the board. The meetings are open, and minutes are available along with a list of current committee members, if he would like to see him personally after the meeting to obtain copies.

Michelle Klompstra asked if it is a public lake, does the state pay for a portion of the SAD and do all lakes get treated for weeds? Smalligan responded that not all lakes get treated, and he is not sure if the state gets assessed for the SAD or if they are exempt from it.

Emily Corley objects to the way the current SAD has been handled and feels it is not equitable in its current form. She claims the deed weeds collect on her banks in the creek area and require a great deal of clean up.

Genie Bopp objects to the current SAD and the way it has been handled and feels this is a perfect time for a reassessment of the project.

Shelby Vandermate can remember growing up and not being able to swim in the lake due to the weeds. She claims her family spent one summer cleaning out weeds and she still takes her child to Crystal Lake to play because the weed situation is still a problem. She can not see where the current SAD is effective.

Dick Chenard commented that the muscles that are in the lake are evasive and seem to naturally be and flow in their cycle of life. Also, the treatments do not target the lily pads and those are being killed by motorboats.

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Louie Koprołces confirmed that the mess of the floating weeds are caused by the motorboats not the weed treatments and he is in support of the SAD continuing.

Karen Koprołces commented that unfortunately this hearing is not for questions and answers, this is only to consider moving forward with the project and she supports doing so.

Tammy Gillette asked what the proposed cost is? Smalligan responded up to \$25,000.

Betty Chenard commented that the applicator is limited on what weeds they can treat for due to the presence of a Pug-nosed Shinner in the lake years ago. She approves of the SAD, however, feels there may be need to reevaluate the limitations due to the Pug-nosed Shinner.

Butch Duer said he has really enjoyed the last 3 years on the lake and would like to see new options in applicator companies and treatments.

Gary Fetterley commented that if people are so concerned about weed, then let them hire a new biologist.

Emily Corley said she is not against the concept of the SAD and weed control, she is just disappointed with the handling of it since 2007.

Tim Davis, a member of the current committee, said one misconception is that the management and applicator have a conflict of interest. He wants everyone to be aware that every 3 years there are open bids, and that combination just happens to be the most cost effective.

Tammy Gillette asked if a FOIA request could be made for copies of the committee minutes and if the SAD assessment could be raised without another public hearing. Smalligan once again confirmed that copies of the minutes can be obtained and that the wording states an increase of up to 10% without having to have a public hearing.

Dave Koster commented that the cost of everything keeps increasing and the estimated \$25,000 is the lowest of the lakes in the area. He reminded everyone that when the Robinson Lake Association disbanded and sold the property, that money was the start up of the SAD fund and that has been off setting the cost. For many years the assessed value that has been collected has not covered the expenditures and the cushion from that start up has slowly dwindled. For the project to continue the assessment needs to increase to be sustainable.

Mary Denhof commented that PLM may be the cheapest, but they don't do a good job.

Greg Braspenninx reminded everyone that only the evasive species are treated with weed control treatments.

A motion was made by K Berens and 2nd by D Berens to close the public hearing. All approved, motion passed.

For board deliberations, J Kukal started by reminding everyone that the purpose of this hearing is only to consider the continuance of the project by re-establishing the special assessments for Robinson Lake Weed Control. She feels that it is important to continue with the project and is hoping that the committee and the community can come together in agreement on how to best handle the management. She would hate to see the project and all discussions stop.

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S Stroven commented that Robinson Lake is not the only lake in Newaygo County with a state funded public access. He is in favor of continuing the pursuit of the project. He reminded everyone that if it is dropped for a year, it is much more difficult to get back on track both logistically and for the health of the lake.

K Berens agrees we need to move forward with the project.

D Berens believes we need to continue.

K Smalligan commented that he has lived on Ryerson Lake for years and has been involved with the management of that lake. He is concerned with the health of Robinson Lake if the project does not continue.

Supervisor-Smalligan read Resolution No.2024-6 for consideration. A motion was made by K Berens and 2nd by D Berens to adopt Resolution No. 2024-6 as presented. Roll call vote was taken. Yes: K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan, and J Kukal No: None

Supervisor-Smalligan read Resolution No.2024-7 for consideration. A motion was made by D Berens and 2nd by J Kukal to adopt Resolution No. 2024-7 as presented. Roll call vote was taken. Yes: K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan, and J Kukal No: None

Meeting Adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Presented by: Jamie Kukal, Clerk

Visitors present: See Exhibit 2