
**Board Meeting 4PM, September 11, 2023 at Detroit Lakes Police Dept.**

Board Members Present: Dick Hecock, Brian Korbel, Leon Senn, Cheryl Chivers, Craig Caulfield, John Cox,

Board Members Absent: Kate Busker, Patty Mollberg, Ross Goritzke, Melissa Kalberer, Brad Wimmer, Jamie Skarie, Carol Lee, John Flynn, Aaron Tait

Also present: Tera Guetter

A quorum being present, President Senn called the Board Meeting to order at 4:08 PM

**Guest Speaker – Tera Guetter, Administrator of PRWD.**She reviewed the Detroit/Rice Spring 2023 report, originally intended for distribution at the LDA’s annual meeting in June, calling attention to the work/accomplishments of PRWD during 2022/23, 2022 monitoring, climate, and AIS treatments, and specifically focusing on the importance of the Rice Lake project to Detroit Lake. She also mentioned the reports summary of stream monitoring, rules and permit enforcement, and environmental education grants.

She also commented on Chinese Mystery Snails and the PRWD’s proposal to state decision-makers to consider new methods of control.

A suggestion was made that PRWD offer a tour of various sites that exemplify the District’s role in protecting Detroit’s water quality.

But the main task for her presentation today was to brief the board on the E-coli incidents discharging to Detroit Lake. With the aid of a map and table of sample results, she noted that the district has deployed an array of monitoring sites, three at storm sewer discharge points along the public beach area on Little Detroit, and a half dozen more at various points along the Pelican River leading to Big Detroit. Measurements have been made at some of these sites since 2019, and reports of e-coli concentrations in excess of “standards” has been growing. Many these high readings have occurred during runoff incidents during dry periods, or during low-flow situations. (It is well to keep in mind the difference between “concentrations” and “amounts”. A high concentration of E-coli during low flows doesn’t mean much in terms of safety risk to the public.)

Research on the E-coli situation will continue; the District will seek help from state agencies that have expertise and experience on the pollutant’s presence in stormwater, its possible sources, and measures needed to reduce the problem.

After the E-Coli discussion, Ms. Guetter discussed some of the difficulties facing the PRWD. She noted the existence of significant disagreement among the seven PRWD Managers, particularly over the matter of whether the District should continue with its rules and permitting programs. She explained what the PRWD rules attempt to accomplish and how they supplement and increase water quality protections to lakes, in excess of what county or city rules/permitting programs accomplish. The District approach to dealing with nutrients and sediment issues accounts for much of the progress made during the over fifty years of its existence.

She notes that the City and PRWD especially now have a close and interactive relationship, with the District helping the city with calculations that are key to implement city rules, especially those that relate to runoff buffer establishment. Also discussed were the links between special PCA stormwater management rules imposed on cities encircling lakes, and the declaration of St. Clair as an “impaired water” subject to special rules, had also increased the need for the District and City to work closely to ensure that care is taken to control runoff and other pollutants, some of which contribute to excessive aquatic plant growth in lakes. .

Guetter invited LDA officials to attend Managers meetings, or otherwise voice their preferences for the value of current District practice.

**President Senn thanked Ms. Guetter for her information.**

There was a short discussion after Administrator Guetter left; some Directors expressed concerns about harsh or inconsiderate treatment they had received from PRWD staff. No further action was taken.

President Senn mentioned difficulties associated with scheduling a meeting on Roadside Pickup project with LDA attorney and City officials.

Responding to Brian’s inquiry, there was brief discussion of the status of the Convenience Store approval by the County Planning Commission. It was agreed that information should be distributed via FB regarding the Planning Commission’s special September 18th meeting about the decision.

**There being no other business before the board, adjournment took place at 5:20 PM.**

**Next Meeting: 9-Sept 23 @ 4:00 PM Location TBD**

**Prepared and distributed by Secretary, Dick Hecock 9-12-23**