

Friends of Silver Lake Board Meeting

December 12, 2013

Ed DeJong called the meeting to order at 4PM. Members present: Bill DeJong, Ed DeJong, Bob Henry, Jean Adams, Sue Sharp, Bob Busscher. Absent: Tom Rickhoff, Marty Hayden, and Nancy Pechar. Ed thanked everyone for attending.

1. Bill gave a USGS project update. The steering committee met in November. USGS & GVSU continue to collect data. The USGS does not want to make preliminary conclusions. We need to have patience. They now have one year of data. This year was unusual, (cold weather, water was clearer, less algae and weeds), but the water samples still show high phosphorus and nitrogen levels. They are looking at wells and tributaries as well as the lake. They have to figure out where the phosphorus and nitrogen is coming from. For example, if they find nutrients are coming from a stream but the stream only accounts for 5% of the input into the lake it is not really much. If nutrients are coming from the groundwater and which represents 80% of what is going in to the lake, this would be important. Test results show the nitrogen and phosphorus levels continue to go up. These levels are significantly higher than 5 – 10 years ago. This would indicate that the lake is becoming more eutrophic meaning the lake is dying.

On behalf of the Silver Lake Improvement Board, Tony Groves from Progressive AE has put together a newsletter that will be sent to property owners in the lake assessment district. The newsletter recaps the testing and evaluation from the past year.

Grand Valley just received a \$32,000 grant to do more testing on invasive algae, specifically Gleotricia, an algae causing trouble throughout the state.

The USGS has improved their website. You can now go to specific areas of the lake and see test results for that spot. Bill DJ will send out the link when he sends out a copy of the newsletter to the FoSL email list.

2. Bill gave the treasurers report. We currently have \$8,447.46. Last year at this time our balance was \$10,277.28. Our biggest expense last year was for 3 sets of water testing we did. This cost about \$2,000.00. We also donated \$500.00 to the fireworks. We received about \$800.00 in donations. Bob Henry asked if we would need the same amount for testing next year. Bill did not think so. We did the testing next to the USGS to learn from them. We will have to do some testing after the diagnostic evaluation is completed, but for now we should not have to do any. When Bill DJ sends out the newsletter, he will include a request for donations to help fund activities during the 2014 year.

3. Marty has been working on the Date Base Management Program. He has a user name, password, and permission to use Chimp Mail. He said he would have it up and running in the first quarter of 2014.

We are starting to get more and more undeliverable emails. We have 400-500 -property owners on the list and another 400 -500 friends and family that -may not be property owners but are interested in the lake. The total list is about 900. We have email addresses for about 500 people.

Sue volunteered to contact people that have an email that comes back as undeliverable. Bill will send her the list after the newsletter goes out next week. Sue will call or send a snail mail letter asking for their current email.

We may want to do one more mailing to the addresses that have never given us an email. Bob will contact the Golden Township to see if we could get a printout of all the properties that have changed ownership in the past 2 years so we can contact new owners. We may need to go door-to-door again next year to try to add more persons to our list. Sue suggested we hire a couple high school or college students to go door to door.

5. Bob reported on the Silver Lake Downtown Park. The committee has put in a great deal of time this fall to determine priorities. Harry Wieringa made a proposal to start phase 1. The committee divided up what they would work on. They are hoping to buy supplies and get volunteers to do the work. First they will be working to prepare the site

before construction can start. Hallack Contracting took down some of the marginal trees. Hallack removed the stumps and some volunteers burned the brush. An entrance off Silver Lake road has been cut out. The committee met with Great Lakes Energy to talk about putting in electricity. GL Energy was very cooperative and willing to do the work at a reasonable cost. The committee is also working to get a sprinkling system put in so they can get grass growing in 2014.

The committee will be submitting grant applications for various parts of the park project. These grant requests include:

- DEQ Coastal Zone Management Grant for parking, walkways and a nature walk is a 50/50 matching grant for \$50,000. This means 25,000 will need to be raised to get 25,000 from the grant.
- DNR Trust Fund Grant – for the pavilion, restrooms and well. This is a 30/70 matching grant for about \$265,000. This means that means about \$90,000 will need to be raised to get \$175,000 from the grant.
- DNR Passport Program Grant for playground equipment is also being considered.

The committee would need to raise the local matching portions of these grants (about \$115,000) over the next several years. The committee is taking donations now. Bill DJ will include the information about the park proposal(s) in our email along with a form to make a donation.

6. Tom Rickhoff is chairing the committee to work on the bike path. This fall Tom and Bill met with Rep Bumstead, the DNR, the bike path people, and Charlotte at the state park. They got a very positive response. Charlotte has met with the state park architect/planner from Cadillac. In October Bill went to Sleeping Bear Dunes and met with National Parks contact who also works with the DNR who specializes in bike paths. Bill & Tom hiked the area located between the West end of W. Silver Lake Rd and the light house with Chuck Newman (architect from Naperville, IL) and his son who is a civil engineering student at Purdue. They discovered it will be more difficult to go through the state park land than they first thought. The park is planning to move ahead with a feasibility study. There may be grant funds available for the study. There is no specific timeline for the bike path project.

The bike path project will be a long process, but it looks favorable.

7. Sue reported last years educational programs still did not have as many participants as desired. The midweek time was more successful than the weekend. Educational programs do not seem to be as popular as ones with more of an entertainment factor. The program by Bev Woods was very successful with a standing room only crowd. Next year we hope to have Dale Lathers for one of the programs.

8. Jean gave a local news update.

Golden Township has made a proposal regarding the fire department. All 4 fire departments have the proposal for consideration. The percentages would be: Golden Township 46%, Hart Township 25%, Hart City 16% and Wier Township 13%. There are a couple other areas they need to work out. All 4 departments seem to be positive at this time.

9. Tom, Jean and Bill comprise the nominating committee. Jean will contact Tom and schedule a meeting to discuss starting the process for making recommendations for nominations for next year's board. Jean, Marty and Nancy's positions are up next year.

10. In the next few days, Bill will send out an email. The first will include the USGS information and the information on the Gold/Silver Park. Ed will send one out the next week with bullet points of things going on including the information about the fire department.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Sharp Secretary