

**Milfoil Advisory Group Meeting Minutes**  
**December 9, 2020 4 p.m.**  
**Remote/Zoom**

Ken Trester called the meeting to order.

Present: Ken Trester, Scott Dean, Bob Shuchman, Patrick Burroughs, Tim Straker,  
Staff Present: Karen Doyle Homan  
Also Present: Garnet Lewis, Barry Johnson

Public Comment: None

**Discussion:** The committee reviewed the information and recommendations shared by our panel of experts meeting on November 25, 2020.

Discussed were the following possible solutions to control EWM:

- Weevils
- Benthic barriers
- Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH)
- Sonar
- Aeration
- Harvesting
- Herbicide

Based upon our size, flow, and depth, the following are not viable options: weevils, barriers, aeration, sonar, harvesting or cutting without DASH. As for DASH, the owner of Mtt DASH Divers, Mike Smith, said that the Milfoil patches in Kalamazoo Lake were too large for this solution.

Herbicides, at least until we get the EWM under control, were recommended. DASH, when the milfoil is more scattered or less dense, may be a viable long-term option down the road.

The committee reviewed and agreed with our expert panel that herbicide was the most environmentally friendly option. The quicker that the milfoil is destroyed, the quicker the beneficial native plants will return. Herbicide is effective; it is not the herbicide killing the native plants but is the milfoil choking them out; the native plants will come back when the milfoil leaves.

Using herbicide is acceptable to Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, (EGLE), and many other communities are using it with positive results. Our neighbor in Douglas is using it successfully in the same body of water.

Herbicide is the best possible option for Kalamazoo Lake: it is environmentally safe, it is effective, and it is the most cost-effective option for the taxpayers.

Also discussed were the benefits to joining with Douglas and doing one coordinated project. There would be less disruption to our shared body of water, there is confidence in the vendor, Aquatic Doctors, and there would be cost savings to both communities. The City Ordinance does allow for exceptions to competitive bidding, “where the public interest will be best served by purchase from or joint purchase with another unit of government.” Also noted was that in early 2020, the City went through the RFP process and Aquatic Doctors was the low bidder. Their price is the same this year.

Cost sharing was discussed. Options included sharing the costs through special assessment, with the basis being number of boat slips, front footage, or a per unit fee. Another option is that the City might pay for the treatments through its General Fund within its existing millage, or by increasing taxes through a special voted millage, or possibly a Headlee Override.

Because the cost is well under \$30,000 Council Member Trester thought that the City might pay the first-year cost through its general operating fund. Committee Members agreed that a healthy harbor is for everyone’s use and assigning benefit to only a specific few, such as through special assessment, would diminish the importance of the harbor to the vitality of the whole community.

Lastly, the committee discussed riparian owners’ permissions. A clean, safe, healthy, and navigable harbor is at the core of our local economy. Perhaps an Ordinance to the effect that it is the City’s obligation to maintain this public body of water would shift the responsibility from the riparian owners for permissions to the City. Interim manager Doyle will research this.

**Recommendations:**

Motion by Patrick Burroughs that the Committee **recommend herbicides as the treatment of choice** for the eradication of the invasive species weeds that are in our harbor now. Second by Bob Shuchman. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Patrick Burroughs that we **recommend joining with the City of Douglas in the herbicide treatment this year**. Second by Bob Shuchman. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Tim Straker to **recommend the City of Saugatuck fund the first-year treatment cost from its General Fund**. Second by Bob Shuchman. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Tim Straker to **recommend the City of Saugatuck create an Ordinance placing the obligation to maintain a clean, safe, healthy, and navigable Lake Kalamazoo and Harbor upon the City**. Second by Patrick Burroughs. Motion carried unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Karen Doyle Homan*