

**MICHIGAMME RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY
279 KLOMAN AVE.
REPUBLIC, MI 49879**

The **Oct 1, 2013 meeting** was called to order by the Chairperson, Norine, at 6:00 p.m.

The record will show that Chairperson Norine M., John J., Laura M., Todd R. Tina A. and Secretary Gary J. were **in attendance**. Chuck H. was absent and excused.

The **agenda was approved** after a motion by John J., which was supported by Todd R.

The motion to **approve the minutes** was made by John J., supported by Todd R.. Motion carried.

The **Treasurer's report** was given. With all corrections on the county level made, the balance in the TIFA account is \$1,902.63. Todd R. made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented, John J. supported the motion. Carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Gary J. gave a brief report on the opening of the gates for winter maintenance. Due to publication dates available at the Mining Journal, October 7, 2013 would be the date opening date.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board reviewed the report given by Laura M., who drafted the report with Tom Fitzpatrick, after and interview with Ken Saari from the Lake Michigamme Property Owners Association. That report will be attached to and made a part of the official meeting minutes.

Secretary Gary J. gave the Board a very large packet containing all of the known data on both the current cement dam, and the proposed rock crib dam. The Board will review all of the documents, and meet on October 10, 2013 at 6:00 P.M., to decide which direction they would choose for the dam repair/replacement.

PUBLIC COMMENT: One member of the audience provided public comment.

Todd made the motion to adjourn, with Tina supporting. Carried. Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Gary Johnson, Sup Assess
Republic Township
906-376-8139

Attachment 1.

Report concerning the Lake Michigamme Rock Dam

The discussion that took place on September 25, 2013 between Ken Saari who is a resident of Ely Township and has a cabin on Michigamme Lake, along with Tom Fitzpatrick and myself, Laura Maze. Report prepared by: Laura Maze.

Ken began the discussion, and with the information that Ken had and questions Tom and I had for him concerning the rock dam, the facts are as follows:

There is a 2 ½ - 3' level difference between the river and the lake in Michigamme.

Money was an issue to determine whether the existing dam gates would be repaired/modernized, or if a rock dam would be constructed. The answer was a "no brainer." The rock dam would be cheaper in the long run. The past dam with the gates was broken up when the concrete was deteriorating due to ice and spring run-off. Concrete eroded under the cement and pillars. When considering the cost of repairing the concrete and the gates, residents decided on a rock dam.

The dam was purchased for \$1.00, and the owner was happy to transfer the deed over to the residents, the association, so he would not have to pay for the repair himself.

The association or lake-front owners pay dues of \$25.00 a year to cover inspections costs every 5 years. Dues are paid by 180 residents out of the 320 lake frontage owners. The dues cover(ed) the cost of constructing the dam, and the inspection that takes place once every 5 years.

On an average the association has a balance of between 5 and 8 thousand dollars in the account.

It is not an easy access to the dam. Gary Laitala) hauled rock from the Republic Mine (the rock was donated to Michigamme at that time, and Gary charged only \$1,200.00 to haul the rock. Everyone volunteered their equipment for the construction.

The initial inspection was done by James Coughlin, P.C., 6457 Forest Park Trail, Gaylord, MI 49735. James worked for the DEQ as an engineer with the DEQ, and he knows all there is to know about the dams; what is needed prior to construction, and what is needed to pass inspections. James charged \$2,250.00 for the initial inspection, and \$1,500.00 for the following inspections. James inspects several dams in the Upper Peninsula, so he does them all at one time. James also submits the inspection to the DEQ.

Local Engineers were contacted in the past for the inspection purpose, but they were much higher in price; up to \$3,500.00, and did not qualify as well as James Coughlin.

Coughlin has done inspections every 5 years for \$1,500.00 each time. There has been no change in the dam since 2007, and it has stated that in the DEQ report that Coughlin submits to them.

There was about 300 feet of rock on each side of the dam, plus the dam itself.

The dam was constructed by all volunteers, equipment, and labor. A skid steer was rented to bring the rock to an even level across the dam. The locks are still there. Rock is stacked 8 feet in front of the old dam.

Hydroelectric dams are too expensive to build, run, and repair. The electric companies are ridding themselves of hydro dams.

Branches and other materials; moss and leaves, filled in the crevices between the rocks over time and stabilized the water level to where it is now. The first year there was seepage between the rocks, but now that the cracks between the rocks are filled in, the water is stabilized.

The biggest complaint was liability. It is such a remote area and signs are posted in the area stating "Danger" and the association has filled their responsibility to avoid criminal action if someone was hurt in the area.

The continued maintenance is only to clear brush after told to do so by Coughlin. There are no other expenses to maintain the rock dam. Coughlin has to report some complaint to satisfy the DEQ each time, and clearing the brush has been the only one. After the association is told to clear the brush, association volunteers do that, and the inspection is satisfied.

There are no health concerns. One man complained about his water where he lives a location nearest to the dam. The man said that the water was discolored from the iron ore on the rocks. The volunteer fire department went out to the rocks with the fire equipment and sprayed the rocks to clean them. The ore settled and the man was satisfied with no other complaints. Some people say that the water level is too high, but now at the meetings there are no comments about the water level or the dam.

The rock level was up to meet the static water level of the lake.

The application process for the rock dam takes about 2 years. When the association went through the application process they dealt with Coughlin to know exactly what was needed to get things through the DEQ. Coughlin is a dam specialist.

For Michigamme Lake, the process took 5 years, and there is 3 more years before the next inspection and started with a detailed map and diagram of the existing dam and location.

The association has a board of directors.

There is no insurance for the dam. It is rock, and there are danger signs posted. The board of directors is usually the ones that cut the brush away every 5 years.

If Republic Township is going to buy the dam, they should include the rock cost in the deal.