

MINUTES OF THE GYPSY MOTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

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Present:

Agness Schmidt, Sandy Webb, Dick Somalski, Paul Begick, Bob Hubert, Alicia Wallace, Pat Bilbrey, and Cyndi Gaul. **Excused:** Laura Ogar, Tom Putt and Howard Wetters.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Sandy Webb.

Approval of the December 1, 2009 Meeting Minutes:

There being no additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes of the December 1, 2009 meeting minutes, a motion was made by Agness Schmidt, seconded by Dick Somalski, to approve the minutes as printed. Motion Passed.

Coordinator's Report

Education Blitz:

Alicia provided committee members with a handouts of a draft outline for the proposed educational video and a draft calendar of communication events. Alicia pointed out on the calendar that for the first time in a long time Earth Day (April 22nd) and Arbor Day (April 30th) will be celebrated a week apart. The video outline showed what information would be important to get across in the educational video. Alicia discussed what was happening with the 2.1 wooded acres by the Wastewater Treatment Plant and how trees were being cut down to 3' stumps because the area was declared a wetland. It's a very upsetting situation.

Dick advised the committee that, while at the Nursery Association Conference, he heard that the city of Milwaukee is going to war with the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and plans to do some aggressive treatment to save valuable trees. When you look at the cost to treat a tree versus having to pay to get a tree cut down, it's much cheaper to treat. It's important to get that message out to the community, and to the city and county commissioners. The cost to cut down and replant trees in the downtown area and places like the fairgrounds will cost more than treating ash trees. Many of the county trees were planted under grants. Such grants only cover the first 5 years of the life of the tree, after that the tree is basically on it's own. Unfortunately, many of the county trees are over the 5 year grant maintenance and therefore there are no real funds to treat the trees.

Alicia said that the educational video would help to promote this idea of treatment over cutting down trees where possible. It would be part of the educational message that the group could make sure was included. Alicia mentioned that Michigan State University has some newer videos that we can review. Sandy said we should review the videos to see if we'd like to use them for our educational blitz. Sandy further stated that she'd hate to see the committee re-invent the wheel (so to speak) if there are videos out there that can be used "it wouldn't make sense to spend money or time to make another

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educational video". Alicia said she would get some current videos together so the committee could review them and make a determination about creating an educational video after the review. In this way the committee can determine if they need to finance and support the creation of a new educational video.

Alicia and Dick reminded everyone that ash trees make up a large percentage of the trees in Bay County, so education is very important. Sandy felt the message that needed to get out to the community is the cost of cutting down an ash tree versus the cost to treat an ash tree. Alicia reminded the group that homeowners can do some treatment on their ash trees, however, they need to licensed applicator if they want to use "TREE-age" which is more effective for larger ash trees. Alicia said that she has a list of licensed treatment applicators for Ash trees and that she would put together this information. Paul thought the cost to treat a single Ash tree was around \$62. Alicia commented that she believed the cost to cut a larger tree was upward of \$300 to \$500 (depending on the size and location of the tree). Alicia said that in areas where the ash trees have died off from EAB infestations, they are finding no ash seeds in the soil.

The group felt it was very important to get together facts and figures of the cost to treat individual trees and the cost to have trees cut down. In this way the homeowner can make a better determination about how they would like to take care of their Ash trees. Homeowners need to know what they can do and when they need to contact a professional. Alicia said she thought there was a freeware program online called *iTree* that you can plug different variables into and it would give you your options for treatment. Alicia will look into this program and see if it's something that would be useful.

Year End Report - Draft:

Alicia provided committee members with a draft copy of the 2009 Year End Report for the Gypsy Moth Suppression Program. Alicia said that she's working on the tree inventory. Alicia reminded everyone that the millage was be levied again in 2009 with the Winter Taxes. Paul said that he was concerned about getting too much money in the fund balance. Agness said that people really notice when the millage is levied and they start to wonder why we need so much money.

New Business

2010 Election of Officers:

A Motion was made by Paul Begick, seconded by Dick Somalski, to keep Sandy Webb as the Chair and Dick Somalski as the Vice-Chair of the Gypsy Moth Advisory Committee. Motion Passed.

Old Business

There was no old business brought before the committee.

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Public Comment

There was no public comment brought before the committee.

Other

Gypsy Moth Advisory Committee:

Dick felt that there should be more people on the Gypsy Moth Advisory Committee. He would like to see someone from the Lone Tree Counsel and Soil Conservation on the committee. Alicia said she'd be happy to make contact with organizations or individuals that the group feels should be represented on the committee. Alicia said that if anyone knew of a person that they felt should be on the committee she can send them a 2010 Gypsy Moth Advisory Committee Renewal Letter request form. The person requesting to be on the committee would have to be approved by Tom Hickner.

Next Meeting:

The date for the next meeting was scheduled for **Tuesday, June 22, 2010** at 10:00 a.m. in the Finance Department's Conference Room located on the 7th floor of the Bay County Building, 515 Center Avenue, Bay City, Michigan.

The meeting of the Gypsy Moth Advisory Committee was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alicia Wallace
Gypsy Moth Program Coordinator

Transcribed by: C. Gaul 01/19/2010