

REV 1 March 27, 2023

**Summary of Pipke Pond Restoration Committee (PPRC) Meeting of March 21, 2023
Held in the Presque Isle Town Board Meeting Room**

The meeting was “Noticed” as the Pipke Pond Restoration Committee (PPRC), with a published agenda prepared by Chair and Town Supervisor Cathy Logan Weber.

Attending were members Cathy Weber, Eric Benn and Al Drum, and Town Chair John MacLean, Town supervisor Carl Wolter and Clerk Lorine Walters. Members of the public, Bill and Peggy Wiessner, Rich Schmalzer and Paul Miller also attended. In addition, Minal Hahm and Greg Neville of MSquared (M2), the Town’s engineering consultant, attended remotely by Microsoft Teams.

The meeting began at 1:05 P.M.

Cathy began by stating that the Committee is gathering information required eventually for submittal of the Municipal Dam Grant application. In the moderate future, after required hydrology and hydraulic studies, and the dam failure analysis (DFA), have been completed, M2 will share data resulting from these studies to Presque Isle (PI) for inclusion in several sections of the application.

Committee members asked what is the relationship between M2 and PI as the application data is collected. PI will continue to gather as much data and answers as possible from our information sources, thereby taking the lead on the application preparation while M2 works on the studies mentioned above. Minal Hahm suggested that the final draft of the application could be reviewed by an editorial consultant prior to submittal.

Members then referred to the proposed conceptual design configuration for the dam restoration that M2 furnished to PI about December 2, 2022, consisting of conceptual sketches, brief written system descriptions and rough preliminary cost estimates. Members asked about progress of this conceptual plan. Minal answered that M2 has continued to discuss this December 2 concept with DNR water management engineering staff, including a discussion on that same day, March 21. The DNR and M2 are in agreement with this concept development so far. Minal will provide graphics and conceptual details to PI within five to ten days for our information. The DNR staff working on our dam restoration are Forrest Van Asten, “Connie” and Uriah Monday.

Members then asked when the preliminary conceptual design work likely would be finalized with acceptance of the *concept* having been granted by DNR staff? Would the DFA follow at that point, and when would the DFA be completed? Minal felt that all conceptual work, the DFA and finalized detailed plans would be complete by year’s end. Minal felt that completing the DFA would take 2 to three months (*Ed. Note: presumably after the **concept elements** were finalized and accepted by all parties*), followed by 2 to 3 months for DNR approval review of the DFA. (*Ed. Note: Again, presumably, there still needs to be a time span during which final detailed plans are completed, and made ready for the bidding process*) Members then asked if the DFA was the most complex part of the work?

Greg, from M2, commented about preliminary data from FEMA_ Greg then followed by informing the group that M2 is trying to use simpler DFA parameters, meaning that M2 wants to get the DNR to okay

an easier DFA methodology. Members suggested that Vilas County Mapping might have data to help in the DFA.

Members then asked if the conceptual phase now underway should be looking at alternatives beyond what has been looked at, a “what-if” type of conceptual exploration?

Minal asked if PI had an overall guiding plan for the Town, which, when looking to future expectations for Town developments, might guide current efforts in Pipke Park while we’re already in a creative mode for the Park pond system? In answer, Eric felt that, no, the Town does not really have any such detailed specific future planned amenities. Minal continued this line of inquiry, suggesting the future electrical transmission and distribution lines and substation, the possible bike trail in the electrical line easement and the Pipke Park bandshell investigation, might affect what we plan to do with the Pipke ponds? Cathy pointed out that the bandshell proposed for the Pipke Park grounds was no longer under consideration.

Members asked how all of these just-mentioned projects had any bearing on the pond dam system restoration efforts?

Members did explain that the pontoon boat/pier project being planned by the Lions for Pipke Park, using the south pond, was a substitute for the bandshell structure referenced above.

Greg added that the new structures for dam remediation might serve also as a component of park amenities that citizens may want to see in the Park.

Minal then pointed out that anything we do with the north pond needs to be discussed thoroughly with the DNR, since much of the north pond resides within the Northern Highlands/American Legion (NHAL) State Forest. Cathy stated that the north pond has been considered as a “wild” or natural area, and that the Town has not considered any constructed amenities there.

Members then suggested that concrete remnants from the old sawmill structures still residing in the Park might be useful somehow as Park amenities, such as foundations or bases for historic signage.

Members then referred to the two large culverts carrying the waters of Crab Creek (aka Little Horsehead Creek) under the short driveway joining County Highway W with the Legion building and with the trail surrounding the south pond. These culverts frequently appear fully loaded with the flow of the creek, perhaps threatening to fail suddenly, releasing the entire creek flow into Pipke Park lands and into the south pond. Should we consider this threat from an inadvertent failure of these two culverts to be a part of this dam restoration design project? Greg replied that M2 and the DNR already are discussing these culverts. They are subject to a large drainage area, and this flow needs to be accounted for. The culverts therefore will be considered along with the other dam remediation design efforts. There was further back-and-forth discussion on the culverts.

Members then asked about the auxiliary spillway that needs to be part of the remediation. The auxiliary spillway is a designated emergency overflow trough located at the lowest region of the pond berm system. An unanticipated large flow into the pond system that overtops the berms will flow over the berm at this lowest point. The surface of this engineered trough will consist of an armored erosion-resistant material such as asphalt or reinforced concrete, thus carrying the temporary floodwater without destroying the berm structure and into a predetermined region where the floodwaters will disperse safely. Members asked about snowplow operation whereby the plow blade, when

transitioning from the softer trail surface and onto the harder trough material might catch on the edge of the trough and wear it away or damage it.

Greg answered that this transition from softer trail surface to harder spillway trough material will be incorporated in the design. A suitable area for the auxiliary spillway is being explored. One thing we don't want to do is to try to use the piping transferring flow from pond to pond during normal pond operations to serve also as the emergency auxiliary spillway. The auxiliary spillway needs to be separate.

Members then pointed out that buried utilities need to be located. Members will take care of this, and furnish resultant information to M2. Members will contact Diggers Hotline, who will furnish information for members to contact owners of buried systems. Members will request mapping showing the various buried system locations in Pipke Park to aid in planning and engineering decisions. (During construction, the Hotline will then furnish exact positioning on the ground to guide contractors.) Members also will contact the PI Broadband Committee to determine if the new Broadband buried fiber optic lines are expected to be implanted in Pipke Park in the future.

Minal then pointed out that the DNR requires qualified contractors to bid this project. There will need to be an engineer on site during construction to verify the work.

There was a short back-and-forth about the nature of plans and specifications that M2 will prepare for the project.

Greg pointed out that M2 will help select the successful bidder.

Questions from the public? One public member asked if placing fish habitat in the ponds, such as "fish sticks", etc. will still be possible ultimately? Greg indicated in the affirmative, and added that some mechanism is needed to collect viable fish during any planned drainage of the pond to keep from destroying them. More discussion followed about fish retention, water movement between ponds, and times of the year that are best for pond emptying.

Members then asked if PI can expect conceptual plans soon from M2 reflecting their concepts so far. Greg followed that M2 will now focus on the DFA and design analyses. Minal will send concepts, some sketches, cost estimates and her summary of this meeting.

As a parting comment, PI needs to tell M2 as soon as possible about any amenities we would like incorporated in this dam restoration design project.

Meeting adjourned approximately at 2:30 P.M.

Alan Drum, Member, Pipke Park Pond Restoration Committee
Transcribed March 25, 2023