



MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE

NEWSLETTER

May 2007

www.mwai.org

MWA Mission Statement “This corporation is formed to protect, preserve and promote the wise use of inland waters – lakes, streams, rivers, creeks and the waters and bottomlands of the state of Michigan.

Presidents’ Corner

By Bob Frye

Dear Riparians,

Through this newsletter we attempt to keep you aware of what is happening in state government that impacts or may impact your lake or stream. In this communication process we are sometimes lacking speed and efficiency. Good examples are the 2 house bills (HB 4463 and 4464) which would empower local townships to permit marinas at every road ending at a lake shore in their jurisdiction.

The first step for these bills to become law was to be voted out of committee (House Committee on Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources). The committee chair is Joel Sheltron, District 106 from West Branch, and he did not give much notice (about 3 days) for the public hearing that would take place before the bills would be voted on. Fortunately the Michigan Waterfront Alliance lobbyist Scofes and Associates caught the hearing notice on their legislative radar and alerted me and suggested we get as many Riparians to that committee meeting to testify.

As it turned out Don Winnie, Rich Jazcowski, myself and just a few other Riparians showed up and testified. We were out numbered by the back lotters by 8 to 1, especially when you count the number of forms that were turned in by those attending who would just be repeating previous testimony. What we needed was a large contingent of Riparians who live along or near road ends testifying against this destructive legislation.

These bills did eventually get voted out of committee by a wide margin and the next step is for them to be brought for a vote on the house floor. The minimum notice window for that event is only **18 hours**.

Remember the MWA is all volunteer, we pay our own travel expenses and take time off our real jobs to donate to the cause. We need help. We need a volunteer data research person that can use the Internet to locate the addresses of possible Riparians who want to help but do not know that the MWA exists.

We need every Riparian who reads this to sign up on the Riparian Email Hot Line. Please email your email address to: skibones@aol.com In the subject please write: Riparian

Welcome to the 21st century,

Bob Frye - President, Michigan Waterfront Alliance
skibones@aol.com

Michigan Waterfront Alliance -Legislative Update - May 2007

By Nikki McCord

Your Scofes & Associates lobbyists are working hard on your behalf regarding HB 4463 and HB 4464. These bills would allow backlotter to erect marinas at the end of road ends so long as they fit into certain specifications. MWA President, Bob Frye attended committee hearings with myself and Del Chenault from Scofes & Associates to voice our opposition to these bills. Although the bills did pass committee in April, we have been diligently working on keeping these bills from being voted on on the House Floor. The bills were passed out of committee on May 1. To date, there has not been a vote on these bills. We attribute this to the theory that the bill sponsor does not have enough votes yet for these bills to pass. This is due to the numerous meetings Del and I have had with legislators from all districts in the state, letting them know that these bills are both unconstitutional and onerous. I have sent many communications to the members of the MWA urging you to write your legislators and tell them to not support these bills. The more members who contact these legislators, the more these legislators will be educated on the real impact of this legislation.

Apart from our extensive work in defeating these bills, Scofes & Associates has also kept abreast of any other legislative issues that would affect the MWA. Specifically, we have been monitoring the ongoing Nestle water case. Water conservation activists weren't happy with the DEQ's decision to allow Nestle's new well. Terry Swier of Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation said she was very disappointed and said it would be like the Mecosta County case all over again. James Clift from the Michigan Environmental Council said there needs to be close monitoring of what kind of impact the water withdrawal has in the area. Several state environmental groups stressed that the laws surrounding the water withdrawal permits need to be changed. David Holtz of Clean Water Action said his organization will focus on lowering the threshold of how many gallons of water a company needs to pump a day in order to go through a permit process that is tougher.

I accompanied MWA President Bob Frye to a DEQ budget hearing in March. The DEQ was seeking support from the MWA regarding the increase in marina permitting fees. After discussions with the DEQ, we felt that the increased fees would in part help to police lakes and enforce the courts' decisions regarding illegal marinas. With help from the MWA's support, the bill was able to pass out of the House Appropriations Environmental Quality Subcommittee.

HB 4143 was signed into law by the Governor on May 11. This law will reduce a number of boating violations, including having an unregistered boat or not having the registration visible, to civil infractions. [Rep. Steve Bieda](#) (D-Warren), sponsor of the bill, said the goal was to make the boating infractions, now misdemeanors, equal in punishment to similar motor vehicle infractions. The law also increased the bail for out-of-state violators to \$200 from the current \$25.

Again, regarding the Road Ends bills, I urge all of you to contact your legislators and let them know that these bills are unconstitutional. During our meetings with several legislators, they have expressed to us that they have heard from their constituents asking them to not support these bills. These legislators are very receptive to the feedback that they receive from their constituents. Please keep those letters pouring in.

Nikki R. McCord
Scofes & Associates Consulting, Inc.
Director for Communications
and Research
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Boating Law Changes

Gov Signs Watercraft Bill Gov. Jennifer **GRANHOLM** today (May 2007) signed HB 4143, which would decriminalize minor boating and water recreation violations.

The bill downgrades certain violations from criminal misdemeanors to state civil infractions. The bill was introduced to reduce processing time and free up an overburdened court system.

"By streamlining the way minor infractions are handled, this law frees up the courts to handle serious cases," said the bill sponsor, Rep. Steve **BIEDA** (D-Warren). "This law improves our court system and saves taxpayers money. Our court system shouldn't be hindered by unnecessary casework for minor violations. Individuals who violate rules will still be held accountable."

The changes allow for a civil fine of up to \$500. The following violations would be considered a civil infraction:

- Failing to follow an established speed limit
- Not properly displaying a vessel's "certificate number"
- Towing a person on water skis in the evening or night, specifically one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise



SUMMARY MWA MEETING(S)

MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE, INC.
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
April 21, 2007 – Boyne Mountain, MI

Minutes (unapproved)

1. Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm by President Frye. B. Frye introduced all the

Board Members and Nicki McCord to all present. Present were Bonnell, Brown, R. Carey, Frye, Highfield, Tynning, Sipes and a number of interested people.

2. Minutes of 4/29/06 Annual Membership meeting were reviewed and were accepted as presented.
3. The Financial Report was reviewed – P. Bonnell reported that the membership was about 214 with 20 Association Members. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.
4. B. Frye gave his President's report. Accomplishments over the past year were reviewed: Selecting a Lobbyist, had several guest speakers at the board meetings (Rod Stokes, C. Radcliff, P. Berkholtz and others) Bob indicated that one of our goals for the upcoming year should be membership growth. He is looking for someone to work on this project.
5. MWA Legislative Report was given by N. McCord. A written summary was handed out and discussed. She stress that members need to contact their Legislators and let the know they do not support HB 4463 and HB 4464 as they are bad bills. (see related article by Cliff Bloom on MWA web site)
6. Election results were reported. Members Frye, Sipes, Sharp, W. Carey and B. Carey re-elected to the MWA Board.
7. Open floor discussion- D. Zimmerman named several bills that were felt should be supported by MWA. N. McCord will look into these listed bills.
8. Meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

SPECIAL MWA MEETING on 4/21/07 Boyne Mountain, MI

Minutes (Unapproved)

Special meeting to elect MWA Officers was called to order at 5:40pm. Present were P. Bonnell, R. Brown, R. Carey, B. Frye, D. Sipes, E. Highfield, P. Tynning. Also present were S. Scofes, G. Scofes and R. Harms. Absent were B. Sharp and W. Carey.

1. Motion to retain existing slate of Officers was seconded & carried unanimously.
2. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm

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For more information, contact Editor Richard Brown

**MICHIGAN WATERFRONT
ALLIANCE, ONLY THROUGH
YOUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT,
IS YOUR LAKE PROTECTED**

Your Support

Does

Make a difference!

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Membership Application

**The minimum annual dues for individual membership In Michigan Waterfront Alliance are \$25.
Commercial and Individual Donations Are Appreciated**

Please Print:

_____ () _____ - _____ () _____ - _____
Last Name First Name Day Phone Evening Phone

_____ City State Zip Code
Street Address

_____ Township Lake or Stream Association if established
County

**Make Checks payable to: Michigan Waterfront Alliance
Mail to: MWA, P.O. Box 204
Long Lake, MI 48743**

May 2007