

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF ALLEGAN

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – SUPPORT CREATION OF COMMUNITY PROSPERITY GROUP RE: CALKINS DAM

WHEREAS, in a news release dated August 9, 2022, Consumers Energy announced it will “gather opinions from the public about the 13 dams they own and operate on five Michigan rivers to help guide their decisions about the future of those electric generating facilities”; and

WHEREAS, on August 31, 2022, and June 27, 2023, Consumers Energy held public meetings in Allegan County regarding Calkins Bridge Dam; and

WHEREAS, public members and local leaders expressed great concern regarding the potential removal of the hydro facilities/dams and resulting loss of Lake Allegan to the local economy during the meeting and have further expressed concerns in writing to the Board of Commissioners (Board); and

WHEREAS, the Board believes that Lake Allegan is an integral part of our region and a key factor in the viability of local water availability (as a water source impacting a primary aquifer), and other dams and lakes are likely an integral part of their respective regions, the dams and lakes should be preserved; and

WHEREAS, the Board has identified river hydroelectric power as a reliable, stable source of power for both Allegan County and the State of Michigan; and

WHEREAS, the Board hosted a meeting with the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) locally in Allegan County to consider local input, educate stakeholders on the role of the MPSC and impact that may have on the future of the Calkins Dam, and to discuss the unique value proposition the Calkins Dam offers; and

WHEREAS, Consumers Energy is convening a Community Prosperity Group (Group) in consultation with the Lake Allegan Association, and led by the ODC Network; and

WHEREAS, Consumers Energy and the Lake Allegan Association are requesting the participation from the Board and Administration as members of the Group.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Allegan County Board of Commissioners supports the development of an independent Group; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Board hereby appoints Commissioner Beltman to the Group and the County Administrator (or designee) to the Group; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the County Administrator has designated Executive Director of Services Dan Wedge to participate in the Group (and the County Administrator may continue to attend as a resource or in coverage of Mr. Wedge should he be unavailable) and is authorized to assist with meeting space for the Group if necessary; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, Midwest Strategies Group is requested to notify the MPSC and all members of the legislature representing Allegan County, of the creation of the Group.



MEMO

To:	Dan Wedge	
cc:	Chairman James Storey	
From:	Coco Soodek Lake Allegan Association, Inc.	Derek Nofz Consumers Energy
Date:	March 26, 2024	
Re:	Lake Allegan WorkGroup	

We write to jointly report on our discussions about forming a workgroup to explore the future of Lake Allegan.

As you know, Consumers Energy has publicly announced its intention to establish a community led advisory group charged with envisioning a future for Lake Allegan. Similarly, Commissioner Gale Dugan drafted a resolution – as early as 2022 – to form a county-wide task force that would discuss ways to preserve Lake Allegan. And, most recently, the Lake Allegan Association proposed that the County establish a working group to explore the future of Lake Allegan.

After reflection and several discussions with Dan Wedge, we – the Lake Allegan Association and Consumers Energy - believe a single workgroup organized to explore the future of Lake Allegan is currently the most effective and efficient course. Although we may seek to create a separate workgroup under the auspices of Allegan County in the future, we believe that for now we are all ably served by a workgroup led by ODC Network as described below.

Our plan for the workgroup is as follows:

- MISSION.** The goal of this workgroup is to explore options to preserve the lake, ensure the future of the surrounding community, protect county assets, and serve as prudent stewards of the environment and ecology of Lake Allegan as well as the surrounding region.
- CONVENOR.** Consumers Energy has engaged the ODC Network to act as convenor and organizer of the activities of the workgroup. Consumers Energy has committed to fully fund and support the workgroup’s activities. Consumers Energy intends to keep Public Sector Consultants (PSC), its outside public affairs firm, engaged as advisor to the ODC Network. PSC will assist ODC Network in its custodianship of the workgroup.
- INITIAL MEETING.** ODC Network will convene an initial meeting on April 25, 2024 to lay the foundation for structure, membership, meeting schedules, agendas and reporting protocols. We expect the group to meet quarterly at least throughout 2024 and 2025.
- STAKEHOLDERS.** With Dan Wedge, we jointly compiled a list of constituencies and stakeholders who will be invited to participate in the workgroup. We believe these stakeholders will provide the proceedings with broad and diverse perspectives and expertise on Lake Allegan; environmental concerns related to Lake Allegan; opportunities for Lake Allegan; and avenues to preserve the lake as a jewel of Southwest Michigan. That list is attached.
- REPORTING TO COUNTY.** The workgroup will commit to providing the Allegan County Board of Commissioners with periodic activity reports: Written reports will be submitted quarterly, plus an annual live presentation.
- COUNTY LIAISON.** Because we believe the involvement of the Allegan County Commission is essential to the future of Lake Allegan, we request that the Commission designate one commissioner and one administrator to liaison with the workgroup on a regular basis.

- 7. PUBLIC REPORTS.** The workgroup will also commit to making regular reports of its major activities available to the public through Consumers Energy's 'Future of Hydro' microsite or another appropriate webpage.

Planning the future of Lake Allegan involves grappling with numerous complex environmental, economic, regulatory and political issues; it also presents enormous opportunities to build on a valuable, beautiful 100-year old asset. We look forward to continuing our work together to create and implement a shared vision for the future of Lake Allegan that protects and benefits Allegan County.



LAKE ALLEGAN AND THE CALKINS DAM STAKEHOLDERS

PARTNERS SEEKING WORKGROUP

Consumers Energy
Outdoor Discovery Center- Convenor
Public Sector *Consultants* (PSC)
Lake Allegan Association

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Allegan County (Board and/or Staff Representative)
Allegan Township
Valley Township
City of Allegan
Drain Commissioner
Gun Lake Tribe
Public Schools

STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

State of Michigan – Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Matt Diana
State of Michigan – Environment, Great Lake and Energy (EGLE)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
United States Army Corp of Engineers

LEGISLATORS

Rep Rachelle Smit or a member of her staff
Representatives from the staffs of Michigan’s US Senators
United States Army Corp of Engineers
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

AGENCIES

Allegan Chamber of Commerce
Economic Development organizations
US Fish and Wildlife
Kalamazoo River Watershed Council
Kalamazoo River Citizens Advisory Group

ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

Recreation: Angling, Paddling, Camping, Trails
Georgia Pacific (the Responsible Party of the Superfund Site)
A representative from Lakeshore Advantage
Myrene Koch, the Allegan County Prosecuting Attorney