

# Drain commissioner reports on area's high groundwater

*By Paul Garrod*

*news4garrod@vineyardpress.biz*

**PAW PAW** - On Tuesday afternoon, during the Van Buren County Commissioners' Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting, Van Buren County Drain Commissioner Joe Parman presented rain and precipitation data from Feb. 18 to Sept. 13, as well as groundwater table data in his annual 2018 Drain and Lakes Assessments Report.

Parman said in the Mattawan area, a pump that was installed to relieve flooding on June 1, has seen a total of over 200 million gallons, roughly over 2 million gallons a day, of water pumped to the Cook Drain, one-half mile to the west, on Main Street, Mattawan.

Parman said three different pumps are currently in use, draining water into the Cook Drain.

Parman told COW members the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality is permitting for out-letting into the Cook Drain, while planning, research, survey and collection of data for a long-term solution is developed.

According to Parman, the bidding out of the Branch of Bob-O-Links Estates Drain to Cook Drain project and construction cannot start until ease-

ments are obtained. He also said the start of construction or portions of construction could also be contingent upon MDEQ permitting. He estimated the start of construction would be late fall/early winter 2018.

From Feb. 18 to Sept. 13, of this year, the Paw Paw-Mattawan area received 33.72 inches of rain, while in the same period a year earlier, a total of 19.71 inches of rain was recorded. To date, more than 14 inches of rain has been recorded this year over 2017, so far.

The yearly average is 39 inches.

Parman said groundwater table data for Kalamazoo County, in the same area, just east of Mattawan, reported that it was up three feet since 2017, and up four feet from 2015 and 2016.

Also, Kalamazoo County data reported in 2009, the groundwater table was at a 50-year high, and in 2018, the groundwater table was two feet higher than in 2009.

Parman said the information was based on USGS groundwater Data, Kalamazoo wells, as there is no current data for Mattawan, specifically.

Commissioners are scheduled to formally accept the report at their next regular board meeting.