

LAKE HELEN PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT  
2019 ANNUAL MEETING  
SATURDAY JUNE 1, 2019 AT CWEC OFFICE BUILDING

The Lake Helen P&R District Annual Meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Pingel at 9:02 am.  
Commissioners Present: Tyne Hoffman, Bill Pingel, Glen Bersie, and Fred Stoeger  
Commissioners Absent: Robin Novak-Nelson (Robin had a family event to attend.)  
Attendees: 36 property owners from 21 properties signed in.  
Guests Present: NONE

The meeting started with a roll call, in which each attendee stated their name, lake address, and their home town if not a full time resident on Lake Helen.

**REGULAR BUSINESS:**

• **MINUTES FROM THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING**

Keith Hoffman made a motion to dispense of reading the meeting minutes from last year's annual meeting and to accept them as written. Seconded by Mike Ubl. Motion carried Unanimously.

**ANNUAL MEETING FINANCIALS**

➤ **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Bill Pingel reviewed the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Robin. The report was mailed to all property owners. The account balances as of April 30, 2019 were:

\$5,432.72 in Checking  
\$9,205.45 in Savings  
\$14,638.17

**\$8,626.94 TOTAL INCOME MAY 1, 2018 – APRIL 30, 2019:**

- The 2018 Tax Levy brought in \$7,235.00
- \$936.88 was received in 2018 from DNR Grants \*DNR advanced grant funds
- \$352.99 was earned in the "Boat Launch Donation" Money box
- \$2.07 in Money Market Interest
- Bill noted that we missed listing an additional \$500 from an anonymous donor on the Treasurer's Report that was mailed out to all residents. That would bring the total income to \$9,126.94. This was an oversight by the Commissioners. However, the total balances listed as of April 30 were accurate.

**\$5,125.35 TOTAL EXPENSES MAY 1, 2018 – APRIL 30, 2019:**

- \$929.10 Office / Administration Expenses; Mailings, meeting ads, Website Membership in WI Lakes Partnership, and Conferences attended.
- \$1,616.00 Electric Expense for Aerators.
- \$648.97 Maintenance Expenses for the rebuild of aerators and buoy chain replacement.
- 1,931.28 Projects: Picnic, Boat Launch money box, Boat landing signs, Clean Boats Clean Water Program, Scuba Divers, and Invasive Species Removal.

➤ **AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

John Delie stated that himself, John Reck, and Jim Dunsirn completed their review on May 27, 2019. He noted that all receipts, checks, and accounts were up to date and matched Robin's records for the twelve months ending April 30, 2019. At the time of the review they noted that the balance of the Checking and Savings Accounts was \$13,776.91. He stated that the Audit Committee recommended that we continue the ½ mil tax rate.

Pat Witkowski made a motion to accept the Treasurer and the Audit Committee Reports. It was amended to say "Subject to correction of the report.", following Mike Ubl's suggestion. Seconded by Craig Forstner. Motion carried Unanimously.

## ➤ REVIEW OF PAST YEAR

Commissioner Fred Stoeger presented a review of this past year's accomplishments and volunteer efforts. He acknowledged Ray Oksuita's time and efforts to rebuild our aerator motor pumps, saving the Lake Helen District a lot of money. Information retained by Joe Weisbrod and Del Anderson, we were able to relocate rebuild kits for \$156.00 each for all four motors. Rebuild was determined after an inspection of our pumps. Steve Cook monitored our aerator pumps all winter long, alternating pumps. At one point Steve found that a switch had failed and within a matter of hours, Ray had the problem solved and fixed. The issue was a bad circuit breaker; cost \$8.00, which was donated by Ray. Jerry Durkee and Bill Unger allowed us dock access summer of 2018, when we had a dive day to remove Eurasian Milfoil. MaryAnn Weisbrod will continue to be our Lake Helen Librarian for our "Little Free Library", located at the Lake Helen Park. UWSP artist Hayley Fahrenbach-Swedowski, (Fred's office assistant), did a great job refreshing the paint on the library. A BIG Thank You to anyone that we may have missed and everyone that has been involved in the Lake Helen District making it a wonderful place to live and or visit.

## ➤ LAKE MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

- **EURASIAN MILFOIL-** Fred Stoeger presented a review of the growing Eurasian Water Milfoil problem in our lake. He passed out a review that included a map on the expanding E.M. On the map, the pink line showed the results of the 2018 Plant Survey, showing the spread of the E.M. The black line was E.M. from the 2017 Plant Survey. Tom Brown inquired as to what the green circles on the map are. The green circles are Spiny Niads, which according to Chris Hamerla are not a problem. Per Fred, we need to focus on the Eurasian Milfoil and having another plant survey done from Golden Sands. In the summer of 2018, our "dive day", 7 trailer loads of E.M. were removed. Bill stated that the Commissioners are trying to stay proactive, following the 2014 chemical treatment to control the Eurasian Milfoil. Three dive days have been planned: Friday's June 7, June 14, and June 21. Meet at the park at 11 am. The commissioners will be seeking volunteers to help with Upcoming Dive Days.

- **CLEAN BOATS CLEAN WATER-** The past few years the commissioners have adopted a position to have a stronger presence at the boat landing to provide monitoring to protect the lake from invasive species. We have partnered with Golden Sands Natural Resources and the Wisconsin DNR to research grants and submit an application for 2/3rds funding for more extensive monitoring. We were the only lake in Portage County to receive a grant towards this project!! The Total Project Cost \$4,996.65; Grant Request Amount \$3,747.49; Our Local Share is \$1,249.16.

**New Hire:** Please Welcome Sam Coates, a student at the UWSP Natural Resources. Sam was hired to monitor our boat landing by Golden Sands.

- **JAPANESE KNOTWEED-** Commissioner Glen Bersie discussed the status of the Japanese Knotweed. At the Weisbrod residence, 3082 E. Lake Helen Drive, it's almost eliminated after the treatments performed in 2018. At 3002 and 3004 E. Lake Helen Drive, the JKW has grown in size and is capable of reaching heights 6'-7' tall. The Lake District Commissioners are looking to be more aggressive in treatments and will be looking to treat 2 to 3 times this year. Glen has researched and looked into the possibility of digging the plant. What he has learned is that you would need a professional crew, this would be a last resort if chemical treatment is not successful. The commissioners will be looking for volunteers to help in the upcoming treatment. June 1<sup>st</sup> is the first potential date. Then we would look to treat again in July and August.

- **BOAT LAUNCH SIGNS-** Glen discussed the placement of the new Signs located at the Lake Helen Park and the Boat Launch. A new 4' x 8' Clean Boats Clean Water sign was installed with new treated plywood as a backer to the sign and new hardware. The cost of this sign was \$250.00. The sign should last many, many years as it's made out of ¼" Alupalite with vinyl layout. Two new "No Wake" signs were placed at the park. One is posted on the Boat Launch board with all important lake information and the other is located on a post near the "No Dogs" and "Park Hours" signs. The layout of the signs and bold red / white coloring was added to help them stand out. These signs were \$50.00 each, (\$100.00 total). Lastly a new "Boat Launch Donation" sign was put up with a new money box. The District's previous donation sign had seen better days and was hand painted, requesting a \$2 donation to launch. The new sign has a Donation request amount of \$5 to launch. The Donation increase was a suggestion made by district members in 2018, the \$5 price reflects market pricing and received approval from Portage County Park Systems. Donation sign cost \$50.00. The new money box was a great addition also. It's an outdoor secure payment locking drop box. Commissioner Robin Novak-Nelson had expressed concern about the old box, due to the money being "Soggy" and "Moldy" when she pulled it out. The new money box cost \$259.99. The new money box and signs were put up on Aril 27, 2019 with the help of Commissioners and volunteers: Tyne & Keith Hoffman, Robin and Cory Nelson, Chris Nelson, Glen Bersie, and Fred Stoeger.

- **DONATION BOX:** Glen reviewed on behalf of Robin the money collected so far since the Donation increase. On April 27, 2019 the new box / signs were installed, on May 7, 2019 \$30 was collected in the box since "Opening Fishing" weekend on May 4, 2019. To date, a total of \$140.00 has been Donated for boat launch use. The 2017 – 2018 Season, only saw a total of \$350.00 in Earned Income from the Donation Box.

- **LITTLE FREE LIBRARY:** The library was installed on April 27, 2019 by Fred Stoeger and Glen Bersie. MaryAnn Weisbrod will continue to be our Lake Resident Librarian. The Library is a community library and all are welcome to use it, feel free to take a book or leave / donate a book. UWSP artist, and also Fred's office assistant Haley Fahrenbach-Swedowski spent some time this winter putting a fresh coat of paint and stain on the library. It looks amazing!

➤ **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** Clip boards with volunteer forms were passed around the room.

- **PICNIC TEAM:** Robin Novak-Nelson and fellow Commissioners are seeking help for our Annual Family Picnic. This team would help plan and prepare our Picnic.
- **WATER QUALITY TESTING TEAM:** Monitoring the water quality in the lake; The University of Wisconsin Stevens Point and Portage County will assist. Bill Pingel is leading this team.
- **FISHING MANAGEMENT TEAM:** To monitor and maintain a healthy fish population. Fred Stoeger is leading this team.
- **JAPANESE KNOTWEED:** Work with Glen Bersie on chemically treating JKW; 4-wheeler with trailer, and safe place to dry JKW then burn, a few people to cut stalks and others to treat roots with chemical.
- **EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL:** Volunteers needed to assist divers in the removal of the EWM with the use snorkelers, kayakers, skimming nets, pontoons, row boats, etc.

➤ **2019 – 2020 BUDGET REVIEW**

**\$10,417.86 PROPOSED BUDGET INCOME MAY 1, 2019 – APRIL 30, 2020:**

- \$500.00 Boat Launch
- \$2.00 Money Market Interest
- \$7,300.00 2019 Tax Levy \*\*Full payment on the 2019 tax levy should be received February 2020 per Town of Alban Clerk
- \$2,615.86 Remainder of the DNR Grant

**\$11,887.00 PROPOSED BUDGET EXPENSES MAY 1, 2019 – APRIL**

- \$1,000.00 Office / Administration Expenses: Annual meeting mailings, meeting ads, Website Membership in WI Lakes Partnership, and Conferences.
- \$1,800.00 Electric
- \$500.00 Maintenance
- \$8,587.00 Projects: Picnic \$250.00, Invasive Species Removal \$3,100.00 (includes Eurasian Water Milfoil & Japanese Knotweed), Clean Boat Clean Waters Program \*\*\$5,237.00 (CBCW expense is offset by total DNR grant of \$3,553.00 with an expected net cost to the district of \$1,684.00)
- Chairman Bill Pingel reviewed the Budget Income and Expenses for the next 12 months.

✓ Mike Ubl was concerned about having a surplus in our bank account following the tax levy. He noted that in his past government experience that the state does not allow taxing to result in a surplus. The exception is that if you have a special account where you "Ear Mark" the money saying we are using it toward a special project, such as a potential chemical treatment

✓ **Rick Witman** asked the Commissioners "What is our ideal surplus in the bank account?" Bill stated that our ideal surplus would be \$10,000.00 to handle a future chemical treatment.

✓ Jo Seiser stated that she supports being proactive.

✓ Beth Ubl inquired as to whether the tax levy comes from Portage County or the Town of Alban? Bill stated that the tax levy comes from the Town of Alban. Portage County collects the taxes and Town of Alban writes us the check.

✓ Beth Ubl suggested that Lake Helen District set the money aside into a "Lake Treatment Fund" to protect our Lake District. Mike Ubl stated that a surplus would be allowed if designated for a special project like a "Lake Treatment Fund".

✓ Janeen Gerlikovski stated as a reminder, "Without the tax levy, we wouldn't have any funds in our accounts for the projects that need to be done."

- ✓ Paul Seymour added to the conversation, that “after dredging the lake a few years back, the Lake District bank accounts dwindled, and little money was left.”
- ✓ Mike Ubl made a motion to accept the new budget & tax levy. Seconded by Bob Kaiser. Motion carried unanimously.

➤ **NOMINATION & ELECTION:**

- Bill stated that the terms of two current commissioners are expiring, the terms are three year terms each. Bill stated that his term is up for re-election / nomination and he'd like to run again. Fred Stoeger's term is up, and that he would like to step down, but would continue to help the Commissioners with the Lake Projects and answer any questions that they might have.
- Ray Oksuita nominated Tom Gerlikovski and Bill Pingel.
- Ray Oksuita, Keith Hoffman, and Barb Bersie walked table to table to collect the ballots. After counting the ballots, each Nominee had 34 Votes each. Tyne Hoffman read the voting results.
- Congratulations New Commissioner Tom Gerlikovski and Bill Pingel.

➤ **2019 LHP&R DISTRICT FAMILY PICNIC:**

- A reminder that the Family Picnic is Saturday, August 10, 2019 Noon to 3:00pm; If you would like to attend please RSVP and you may bring guests. Volunteers are needed also to help set up and plan.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **CULVERT:** Bill introduced our new Town Chairman, Ray Oksuita to discuss the Town of Alban's plans. Ray advised that if anyone has questions or concerns that they are more than welcome to attend the Town of Alban Meetings which are the First Tuesday of the month. Ray explained that the Town of Alban has quite a few projects going on and that it costs about \$100,000 per mile to re-pave a road and about \$50,000.00 to chip-seal a road. Currently the Town of Alban is working on a bridge replacement that will cost \$250,000.00 and the Fire Department is in need of new trucks. Lake Helen Road entrance is where the culvert is located with wet land on both sides, just before the park entrance. This past spring the current culvert that is in place collapsed after severe flooding that took place. The roadway had 11" of water. Nathan Czeck and the Portage County Emergency Department came out to inspect. After a few days, sand bags were brought in and it was determined that the bags be placed on the East side of the road; within five hours the water started to recede. A BIG THANK YOU to Ben, Brett, and Fred Stoeger, and Lisa and Ray Oksuita for their hard work in moving these heavy sandbags in place to stop the water from rising. The rising water caused concerns to many of our Residents who reside here full time. The long-term plan is to grind up the the road and raise it 12" using a clay and gravel material. And to also raise the culvert so that the water is not constantly flowing through and entering our Lake. It's been discussed and researched that the Natural Filtration from the swamps is the best filtration process. This roadway project has not yet been approved and we need to wait to see if there are any funds left over for this project.
- Glen Boedecker asked Ray “why do we need the culvert?” Ray stated that without the culvert in place, the water that sits on both sides of the road will cause the road to crumble and cave in.
  - Commissioner Fred spoke of the importance of the culvert and why a retention pond is not a good idea and has been turned down before. The area where a retention pond would be built is owned by Dick Ferg who owns a farm on HWY 49. In order to have a retention pond the Lake Helen District would have to purchase that acreage of land from Dick Ferg and Portage County would not be willing to assist in that purchase. It was also stated again, that the swamp and wetland area are the best possible filtration source we can have to filter out the runoff and other contaminants that come from the farm fields and from the roadways.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

➤ **WATER QUALITY TESTING:**

Bill has reached out to Jen McNally with UWSP to partner with them and have their assistance in performing Water Quality Testing. Volunteers will be needed for this.

- Janeen Gerlikovski asked “Will we be monitoring the water quality by the culvert, before it enters the lake to look for the contamination caused by run off?” Commissioner Bill talked about the natural filtration process and the importance of setting up a Water Quality Monitoring Group and having the UWSP assist us in testing for the pollutants / run off from the roadways and fields.
- Paul Seymour stated “Water Quality Testing has been done in previous years and the Tamarack Trees causes some discoloration and has showed up on testing.”

- Jo Seiser expressed concern that she believes our main source of contamination is the residents on the Lake with our septic systems, garden poisons, grass treatments, etc and that we are adding too much fertilizer to the lake.
- Bill Pingel stated that a Grant from the Portage County Planning and Zoning is available to homeowners, they can apply on their own for Shoreline Restoration. This is a process where you plant native flowers and trees along your shoreline to help stop erosion and to also attract different forms of wildlife and insects.

➤ **NEWSLETTER / BOATER SAFETY AND REMINDERS:** Bill discussed, on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am a group of Commissioners and their family members met at the Lake Helen Park. We split up into groups for the East Side and the West Side and walked the neighborhood handing out or hanging on door knobs a Summer Newsletter with important information as a reminder to ourselves and guests / visitors that we may have on the Safety of Boating and Swimming on the lake. We need to keep our eyes open for swimmers and please caution swimmers about the safety of trying to swim across the lake, especially in Heavy Boating traffic. We have a NO WAKE from 4pm to 10am, If you are under 30 you are required to take the Wisconsin boaters safety course, and the distance from docks and other boaters when on a personal water craft or a boat.

- Tom Jashinsky wanted to thank the resident who drove their jet ski across the lake to remind another jet skier about the NO WAKE rule. Tyne Hoffman stated that she was the one who spoke with the young man reminding him that it was 4:30 and after No Wake hours. If we are polite and respectful most people will Thank you for not reporting them and will be compliant.
- If you need assistance on the Lake for any sort of Violation or Non-Compliance you can call the Portage County Sheriff Non-Emergency Number 715-346-1400 or the DNR Violation Hotline 800-847-9367.
- Keith Hoffman stated that we need to remind our guests and visitors that ALL Boat Traffic should follow the COUNTER-CLOCKWISE motion to keep our tubers, knee-board / wake board, skiers, etc SAFE. Our Lake gets so busy sometimes it's hard to watch every boat.

➤ **OTHER NEW BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:** The microphone was passed around so all attendees got a chance to ask any questions / concerns they might have or add additional input or ideas.

- Gerry Sannes asked if anyone would be interested in having a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Boat Parade. She stated it's been done every year but not many boats participate, limited to about 3-5 boats. She would be putting up signs and times of the event. On Thursday July 4 meet at the boat landing at 4:30 for a boat lineup. Bill suggested that she move forward with her suggestion.

It was recommended by other guests that maybe we try to do another one on Saturday July 6<sup>th</sup> when more residents would be up and if interested Friday July 5<sup>th</sup>.

- Commissioner Fred was looking for a disposal site for the Eurasian Water Milfoil and reminded the guests that it's great for gardens and decomposes pretty quickly.
- Paul Seymor asked if we could burn the Japanese Knot Weed right away. Fred advised that we have to put it on a tarp and dry it before it can be burned.
- \*\*After the meeting Bobby Desai approached Tyne Hoffman and stated that his daughter Maya would love it if we could start a Facebook group for Lake Helen and his wife Lisa would be an administrator of the Facebook group with Tyne. This would be a fun page to post your adventure pics of Lake Helen on. Maya would also like to help to bring back life to the "FROG WALK". Maya is also interested in helping to coordinate some sort of "FUN RUN" around the lake.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Pat Witkowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 am. Mark Brandenburg Seconded. Motion carried Unanimously.