



Draft to be approved at next Commissioner's Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners' meeting  
Lake Helen Protection & Rehabilitation District  
Date: 9.27.2023  
Time: 5:30pm  
Location: Zoom

Commissioners Present: David Peterson, Glen Bersie, Kara Boghossian, Bill Pingel, Justin Ehlenbeck, Jeff Rasmussen

Guests: Rick Wittmann, Tracy Arnold

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Bill Pingel at 5:30 pm.

REGULAR REPORTS

- Minutes from last meeting
  - Kara shared minutes from meetings to review.
  - Glen Bersie motioned to approve the 7.15.2023 meeting minutes. Motion was passed unanimously
- Rick is a guest and is interested in picking up the additional year left on Bill Pingel's term. And then potentially run another term.
- Treasurer's Report
  - Glen presented and reviewed the balances and the checks that were written. Glen needs Jeff to meet up with him to get some signatures. After checks out for fish stocking, aquatic plant management, and the fish farm. Tax release comes out in January.
  - Bill Pingel shared the EWM tools can be reimbursed through the grant.
  - Current Balances as of September 25, 2023

▪ Checking	\$494.57
▪ Savings	\$850.19
▪ Non Lapsable Fund EWM	\$104.31
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▪ TOTAL	\$1,449.07
  - Justin Ehlenbeck motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Motion was passed unanimously.
  - Venmo account – Glen shared we can have one. But we can't run raffles or ask for money. Rick shared that anything in excess of \$600 may require additional reporting. It may be raised to \$20,000. We are going to table this for now and continue to think about it.

OLD BUSINESS

- Current AIS Grant Review.
  - Glen Bersie shared: Extension has been approved until Dec, 31, 2024. & Labor Rate will increase next year to \$15 instead of \$12.
  - 2023 year-end filing (volunteer tracking, financial, DNR summary). Glen shared that he and Justin Ehlenbeck have been working on this. The form is a little challenging to complete. Can have electronic signature by capturing name, phone number, email address, and the date. Still a few outstanding people to submit hours.

- Bill Pingel shared need to write a DNR summary. Write a report that goes to the biologist summarizing all the activity that we did this past year. Glen will ask Scott P. what he wants.
- Potential New Grants
  - Electrical Grant for aerator costs due to BGA. Glen noted that Bill helped him fill out the preliminary document. We will ask for a \$10,000 3 year grant. Our amount would be 25%. Aerator Repair/replacement/and the electric. Must be in by November 15<sup>th</sup>. The next step is for Scott P. to review the application and make comments.
  - AIS Grant for 2025-2028. Glen shared that we must get started on this. Scott recommends starting January through spring. A preliminary application must be completed by September 15, 2024 with the final application submitted by November 15, 2024. Justin Ehlenbeck would like to learn how to do this. Can use the framework Bill Pingel has. We would like someone to teach about EWM in the Rosholt schools and possibly have them come out to the lake for a portion of the teaching.
  - Bill Pingel shared that the invasive species grant is competitive. Divided into large scale and small scale. We were able to get into the small scale. Glen shared that is likely in the new grant we will need to put in poisoning the lake again. We did 6 events but we need more in the deeper areas. Scott said, then ask for more money to do that. Bill believes the maximum goes up to \$75,000 so we can get more professional pulls. We may need to do poisoning, more professional dives and pulls, or both.
- Current Projects
  - Blue Green Algae: Glen Bersie shared
    - Culvert – elevation Survey is not done yet. Scott told Glen that if the culvert heights are not right, the Alum treatment will not be approved. We need the bottom level of each culvert, the road height levels. About 5 points. Tracy shared that she just got a new GPS unit that can measure this. If Scott wants it official, then a professional survey will be needed. The 5 points will be shared from Glen to Tracy. Glen and Tracy will connect.
    - Flow gate update to seal it up where it had been leaking. Glen shared that the bentonite is down (3 bags). Looks good and it is hardening up.
  - EWM control
    - EWM control activity since last meeting. Justin updated the Lake Helen Management Plan on page 40, adding the DASH, diving, and manual pulling activity from this summer
      - Lake Management Plan:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Pa9oo5cwlU6yVxzI7FEZcYOQfN27b16B/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116147744061091288444&rtpof=true&sd=true>
  - Boat Landing monitoring/CBCW
    - Year-end summary. Glen shared the final report will come in with the final bill. We are still waiting for this. Glen will share the report with all the commissioners when it comes out. Bill shared they will summarize their encounters and we can ask further questions if we want to. Colton said traffic was very slow. On weekends, sometimes only 4 boats over 2 days. Fisherman came on at different times, but it wasn't during Colton's hours.
    - Glen Bersie shared that CD3 is a cleanup station. Clean, drain, dry, and dispose process/equipment. Not recommended by Glen due to our low volume and the high cost.
  - Fishing Committee –
    - Justin Ehlenbeck shared the following:



- The team investigated many fish hatcheries to try and find the appropriate recommended Walleye Lake Michigan strain. However, after being unsuccessful we got approval from Lucas Koenig from the DNR to use a Wisconsin strain of walleye, due to the lack of availability.
- The Original Plan detail below was the anticipated information from 8/23/23.
- Stocking was done on Monday, 9/18/23 around 10 am. Mark Lynaugh and Glen Bersie were present for this event. The walleyes were on target at 6-7".
- Since the anticipated crappie size was slightly shorter on average from 3-4" to actually on average 2.5", Tim from Gollon's reduced the cost/fish from \$1.15 to \$1.
- The final cost for this year's stocking was \$4762.00 with the price reduction.
- The Fishing Committee is still moving forward with a 2024 plan to stock 1,000 perch (due to the lack of availability in 2023 and allow for further fundraising)

**Actual Fish Stocking**

	Cost/Fish	Count	Total	Info
Walleye	\$ 2.60	870	\$ 2,262.00	Wisconsin Strain - Range 5-8" with 6-7" average
Crappie	\$ 1.00	2500	\$ 2,500.00	2.5" average size
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 4,762.00</b>	

**Original Plan**

Here is what I had set up with Tim from Gollon Bait and Fish Farm Dodgeville, I was trying to stay close to \$5k.

	Cost/Fish	Count	Total	Info
Walleye	\$ 2.60	870	\$ 2,262.00	Wisconsin Strain - Range 5-8" with 6-7" average
Crappie	\$ 1.15	2500	\$ 2,875.00	3-4" range
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 5,137.00</b>	

Additional Notes from Justin Ehlenbeck's conversation with Tim from Gollon's:

- His recommendation for Walleyes per acre is roughly 10 so he was comfortable with 870.
  - His recommendation for Crappies per acre is 20 at the low end and 40 near the high end so I went with 2,500 which is roughly 29.
  - No delivery fee because our order is over \$2,500
- Healthy Lakes Grant (this year and next)
    - Fish Sticks for next year. Tracy shared that the DNR approved the fish stick permit.
    - Lake Helen property owners applied for six fish stick structures. All were approved and will be installed in 2024. Dylan Abler is championing the coordination.
    - Native Plantings. Tracy shared 2024 application there are 2 native plantings going in. Tracy still has a couple she can add on. Needs to know by November 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - Several ash trees will be cut down in the park and replaced with a tree that won't get the emerald ash borer beetle. They will not take down all the ash trees. The trees that are cut down will be used for the fish stick structures
  - Lake Management Plan

- Update & next steps – Approved by the town and county. Now we are waiting on the DNR. Scott may want a couple edits; Tracy has connected with Scott and we are just waiting for a response.
- Lake Management Plan: All commissioners can input information and Tracy Arnold will review and approve to update it. These updates will be shared at future commissioner meetings.
- Bill will put the Google link to it on the website.  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Pa9oo5cwlU6yVxzI7FEZcYOQfN27b16B/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116147744061091288444&rtpof=true&sd=true>
- Social Event Plans
  - Nitrate screening – Good opportunity for those that wanted it. Tracy stated that they also did it at the Rosholt and Amherst Fairs. Portage County Lakes & Rivers Events are posted on the Portage County Lakes and Rivers Facebook page.
- Communication Teams (Annual Meeting follow-up)
  - Kara to schedule a Zoom meeting with Bill Pingel, Jeremy DeForge, and Michael Ubl regarding website management.
- 2024 Projects
  - Blue Green Algae
    - ALUM Treatment possibility. Glen stated that an alum treatment could be considered, but needs further investigation.
  - EWM control plans. Glen will get together with Justin to put a plan together including hand pulling. Justin Ehlenbeck shared the visibility changed dramatically. Big change in water clarity to be able to make a difference – start earlier. Glen shared it went fine with the company that we used for DASH and divers this year.
  - Boat landing monitoring/CBCW plans – Glen will fill out the new applications for CBCW. Due November 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - Fishing Committee. Justin Ehlenbeck shared that the fishing committee is still trying to get funding for 1,000 perch for next year (Fall 2024). We didn't have the funding or availability for this year.
    - Bill Pingel suggested that the Fishing Committee consider finding ways to encourage those fishing in Lake Helen to catch and keep Northern pike, so we can reduce the population and help the stocked fish to survive.
  - Healthy Lakes Grant
    - Native Plantings – Tracy Arnold needs to know which property owners are interested by mid-October. Tracy will put a posting on the Facebook page.

#### NEW BUSINESS

- New property owners – Kara suggested that we make the welcome binder electronic and put a link on the website. This is a good first project for the new website volunteers.
- Lakes Convention April 10-12<sup>th</sup>: Glen Bersie highly recommends it for all Commissioners. Tracy Arnold shared the itinerary should be available November 1<sup>st</sup>. New commissioner training is usually the first Wednesday. Tracy Arnold will find out if and what training are available online.
- SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING: Bill will email the group in January to schedule a February meeting.
  - Must have one meeting each quarter:
    - Q1: May, June, July
    - Q2: Aug, Sept, Oct
    - Q3: Nov, Dec, Jan



- Q4: Feb March, April

Adjournment

Glen motioned to adjourn and was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:04PM.