

Buffalo Lake P&R District Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting, Saturday, July 15 2023, Packwaukee Town Hall

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM by District Chair Bernie Sosinsky. Sosinsky thanked Grim Outdoors for their donation from the proceeds of the recent fishing tournament on the lake.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Present - Bernie Sosinsky, Larry Hagwood, Karyn Niin Kitigade, Dwight Fenderson, Vikki Trimble, Judi Nigbor. Commissioners Absent - Jon Vote.
4. **Accept minutes from April 21, 2023:** The minutes were accepted with a correction of the meeting date to April 21, 2023 on the draft minutes.
5. **Changes or Additions to Agenda:** None
6. **Treasury Report:** Larry Hagwood presented the District Operating Fund report as of June 30, 2023, noting that the Operating Fund checking account balance stood at \$22,398.58
7. **Harvest Committee Update:** Harvest Supervisor Bob Fohey presented the report for Harvest Chair Darrell Unsinn, noting that cutting overall was lower than normal on the North side, while higher to the South. He advised that one machine had a leaking pontoon from a deteriorating weld, which he said was common on older, stainless steel pontoons, and that this had been repaired. Sosinsky advised that the #4 cutter is no longer needed now that the harvest crew is keeping to the DNR cutting plan as required, and could now be sold. Fohey agreed with this assessment, saying that he had, in fact, a potential offer to purchase, along with the surplus truck already offered for sale. Sosinsky stated that he would call a special meeting to approve this sale if a serious offer to purchase was made.

Fohey also noted his concern with fishermen parking on the bridge as a safety issue for the trucks traversing it, and that he was still waiting for the well point at the district site to be installed. He was concerned that, although a deposit check had already been issued, it had not been cashed, and it appeared that the contractor did not intend to do the job.

Fohey reported that, regarding the stainless steel cutter, it was worth the cost to rebuild it, as they are considered very desirable in the industry. The cost to do so would be in the 80 - 90K dollar range, but there is a potential DNR grant that could cover 50% of this expense, as opposed to the 240K dollars needed for the purchase of a new one of this

quality. The grant application date is 9/1/2023, and applying for the grant does not lock in a commitment to move forward with the upgrade. He advised that a new cutter is currently on order. Vicki Trimble cautioned that, with 109K to spend in the equipment budget, we need to be mindful of our expenditures. It was agreed that the DNR grant would be pursued.

Sosinsky reported that our application for a permit for chemical application where cutters cannot reach was denied, but it was apparently because of a defective permit application, not the merit of the request. He noted that our chemical treatment contractor had submitted the application on our behalf. Karyn Kitigade asked if the individual pier chemical application had yielded any results; several audience members said they believed it had. Kitengade proposed taking a survey of those who participated to get a better assessment.

- 8. Fish Committee Update:** Sosinsky reported that fish stocking went well, while fundraising for next season will begin. A fish survey by the DNR was done, but the results are not yet available.
- 9. Lake Level Committee Update:** Sosinsky reported that the Governor's office has approved a \$100,000 grant from DNR funds for the study required by the DNR prior to an application to change current lake level protocols. State Representatives Ballweg and Plomer have agreed to sponsor a bill to allow the lake to remain at its seasonal high from April 1 through October. Apparently, if the DNR study turns out not to be required, the District will still be able to use the grant funds for other purposes. He noted that there isn't a lot of lake level room to work with, as the dam's maximum water level is 8.5', and the lake is at 8.16' as of today. A question was raised about the possible use of concrete sediment containment basins to control the amount of silt entering the waterway, as is done on other river systems. It was the consensus of the Board that the issue deserves further investigation.
- 10. Ecology Update:** Karyn Kitigade reported on the program to eradicate invasive "purple loose strife" vegetation, which uses resident-nurtured beetles to consume the plant, and asked that all residents remove this plant from their property. She also said that there are promising results in using beetles to consume eurasian milfoil as well, which she will be monitoring.
- 11. Marquette Lake Group Update:** Larry Hagwood reported that the group had awarded three \$500.00 grants. However, the District's application was not among the three funded. He noted that the Group's annual meeting would be held in August.
- 12. County/ Township Reports:** Vikki Trimble reported that the Township audit had been completed, but work on the District's Hollenbach boat landing has not. She also reported that the entry road to the town dump is to be paved, which may affect operations at the site. She also reported that the rebuilding of the causeway is

scheduled to begin on or after June 15 of 2024. There is a one million dollar grant in place for this work, but it is estimated to cost two million. An additional "80/20" grant is available from the State of Wisconsin to help fund the balance, but it is a more involved application process. Sosinski noted that a permit from the Township was needed to place additional "no wake" buoys at Dredge Island; Larry Hagwood agreed to work on this process.

13. Unfinished Business: None

14. New Business: Karyn Kitigade noted that a native plant garden was underway at Freedom landing. A question was raised regarding a certified audit of the District finances; Larry Hagwood replied that such an audit would cost about 16K dollars, placing it out of reach in his estimation. A second question concerned the low lake level, which made boat launching difficult. Bernie Sosinsky replied that the District has been engaged with the issue since the lake was lowered in 2019 to comply with legislation enacted in 1976. A third resident asked about applying for a dump permit, and was referred to the issuing agency.

15. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by District Chair Bernie Sosinsky at 9:14 AM. The next Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the District is scheduled for September 14, 2023, at Packwaukee Town Hall, starting at 8:00 AM.