



BALSAM LAKE PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT

Annual Meeting Agenda July 16, 2022 8:30 AM Unity PAC

**1) CALL TO ORDER:**

- Commissioner Kelly called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM

**2) COMMISSIONERS AND GUESTS PRESENT**

- Tom Kelly, Gary Schneider, Dale Ulbrich, Andy Wilhoit, Bill Mork, Dave Mariani, Jack Weix
- Patty Kabus (recorder)

**3) APPROVE AGENDA**

- David Kerr motioned to approve the agenda, Ray Sloss seconded, all approved, motion carried

**4) APPROVE MINUTES OF July 17, 2021 ANNUAL MEETING**

- David Kerr motioned to approve the July 17, 2021 meeting minutes, Denny Moll seconded, all approved, motion carried

**5) REPORTS**

- **Opening Comments – Tom Kelly**

- i) Thanks to the Commissioners, all the volunteers, Dave and Amanda from Unity for putting the venue together for us
- ii) Thanks to Dave Mariani and Patty Kabus for getting all the preparation work done
- iii) Thanks to the board members for all their work for the district
- iv) Recognition of Rod Preble for his many efforts on behalf of the district as well as the Village of Balsam Lake – the harvester has been named the USS Preble in recognition of his efforts

- **East Balsam 2022 Alum Treatment – Andy Wilhoit**

- i) To date, we are 60% complete with the recommended dosages. Due to trucker shortages, it took a couple extra days to apply this year's dosage
- ii) All acres deeper than 10 feet (approximately 300 acres)
- iii) Thanks to East Balsam neighbors for allowing the East Balsam landing to be used as a staging station for the treatments
- iv) The first application occurred in 2020 with the second application this year.

- v) 74% phosphorous reduction. In all areas, the alum treatments are proving to be very effective.
- vi) A resident mentioned that the county sheriffs, DNR and water patrol were all seen on the lake at the same time. Commissioner Wilhoit noted that currently there is no coordination between the County, DNR and Water Patrol to prevent this
- **No Wake Zone marina – Gary Schneider**
  - i) In May, there was a public meeting about adding a no wake zone by Sunnyside
  - ii) The primary goal is to reduce fuel spillage, as well as erosion control
  - iii) Commissioner Schneider asked those in the room to please remind your kids and grandkids to follow the no wake zone properly
  - iv) The water ski show and similar events can get a special use permit to allow them to go ahead with those events
  - v) There are now 4 no wake zones on the lake
  - vi) Someone mentioned that the location of the buoys seems to be kind of random
  - vii) This year, buoys were not put in the right place. Not sure if they are floating or moving for some other reason
  - viii) Buoys are not in place yet for the new no wake zone because they are on backorder
  - ix) It was mentioned that lack of enforcement causes most of the issues on the lake
  - x) Our goal is to be a presence and education and verbal warnings are given a lot of the time, with citations when necessary
  - xi) A question was asked as to how we can enforce before the markers are out. Commissioner Schneider said we can't enforce until the buoys are out
- **Aquatic Plant Management/Aquatic Invasive Species – Dale Ulbrich**
  - i) The goal of the invasive species management is to manage invasive species and preserve the natural plant life
  - ii) Zebra Mussel Monitor plates were installed last year. Someone from the DNR checks each plate monthly
  - iii) Past drags have not shown signs of Zebra Mussels
  - iv) A report of an adult Zebra Mussel was reported in Little Balsam in June of this year.
  - v) The following week, a team from the DNR did a drag. No sign of Zebra Mussels were found
  - vi) One additional drag was done and we are still waiting for results. We also took water samples and are waiting for results from that DNA testing
  - vii) Commissioner Ulbrich mentioned that our biggest goal is prevention. It took about 21 months for Zebra Mussels to take over at Deer Lake, so anything we can do to be proactive will help prevent or delay invasion
  - viii) Ray Sloss mentioned that everyone can inspect their docks. Once you get Zebra Mussels, it is very difficult to do anything about it
- **Herbicide / Harvesting Curley Pond Weeds and Navigation – Tom Kelly**
  - i) We did treat a few weed beds for CLP this year, about 30 acres in the north central and south central bed of East Balsam

- ii) Objective criteria, established by the DNR, tells us when to treat with herbicide. This year, these two beds met the criteria this year, so we did treat them. This year's treatment came in at just over \$24000. We budget \$37000 each year. The bed sizes have been lowered due to annual harvesting and chemical treatment when needed
- iii) We have treated 2 of the last 5 years
- iv) Last year, we ran into some mechanical difficulties with the harvester. This year, the harvester has been out, but the amount of CLP is significantly less this year so it hasn't been needed a whole lot yet. We had some harvesting done in Stumps Bay, Raskin Bay, and Forest Circle.
- v) We have not done any navigation harvesting yet this year
- vi) It has been a slow year for CLP due to the late spring, cool weather, and previous efforts. We will see more of the harvester as the season goes on
- **Clean Boats Clean Waters – Bill Mork**
  - i) We have the same lead, Terry Morton back again this year
  - ii) Town Beach – 2066 people contacted
  - iii) 46 store – 1961 people contacted
  - iv) Little Balsam – 521 people contacted
  - v) East Balsam - 377 people contacted
  - vi) Most of the people using the launch are not from around the lake
  - vii) There are sizeable holes at 46 and Town Bay, due to power loading
  - viii) Today's fishing tournament has 57 boats. These tend to be the boats that are going to many lakes
  - ix) A question was asked as to how they inspect. Commissioner Mork said the CBCW program monitors do a visual inspection of the boats, looking for milfoil and zebra mussels on the exterior of each boat
  - x) Some lakes have cleaning stations so the boats can be cleaned
  - xi) Dave Herr asked if there is a possibility to require permits with inspection the day before the tournament to make sure they are clean. Commissioner Mork mentioned that this would need to be done in coordination with the Homeowner's Association and the Village, as they are in charge of the launches
  - xii) We need to step up the steps we take to prevent zebra mussels and other invasive species from entering the lake
  - xiii) Commissioner Kelly mentioned that the CBCW program does a super job. Our consultant mentioned that Balsam Lake is considered the gold standard for the program, and thanked Commissioner Mork for his leadership of the program
- **Healthy Lakes – Tom Kelly**
  - i) There is still money available for healthy lakes plantings
  - ii) These plantings are designed to mitigate and to divert runoff
  - iii) The Healthy Lakes program is made up of Native Plantings, rain gardens and runoff diversion as the main types of runoff mitigation
  - iv) This will be the last year of the current program. We are not sure what we will do moving forward

- v) To apply for a grant, please call Commissioner Kelly. He will have the environmental consultant, Cheryl Clemmens, come out and do a site inspection. She will develop a plan and recommend the type of planting or mitigation. There are 4 or 5 local landscaping companies who can do the work, or you can do it yourself.
- **Watercraft Cleaning Stations / Dale Ulbrich**
  - i) We are looking at what we can do to help boats be cleaned before they are put in or come out of the lake
  - ii) Infested lakes decrease property values by 13%
  - iii) We are looking at installing cleaning stations at each launch, to allow boaters to clean their boats when they go in and when they come out of the lake
  - iv) A new Polk County Ordinance that if cleaning stations are installed, they are required to be used
  - v) The cleaning station would allow boaters to clean and dry their boats. Drying boats kills 'villagers' (young zebra mussels)
  - vi) Federal boat launches are now using cleaning stations
  - vii) We are proposing adding cleaning stations to all launches (6 in total)
  - viii) The cost of this program is \$130,000
  - ix) A DNR grant would pay 40-60% of the cost
  - x) There is a \$3500 annual maintenance fee for the stations. This includes monitoring software and physical maintenance, winterizing, spring setup, battery maintenance, weed disposal, bait, etc
  - xi) The stations work using solar power
  - xii) The County has no oversight of our launches, other than the ordinance
  - xiii) It takes 5-10 minutes per boat to use the cleaning station
  - xiv) This program is being proposed to be budgeted for 2023
  - xv) Commissioner Kelly noted that under new business, we will be taking a vote for the program. If it is passed, it will be added as an amendment to the budget. We do have 100% of the funds in our conservancy funds. When grant money is received, it will replenish the conservancy funds

## 6) TREASURER REPORT

- **2021 Annual Report and 2022 YTD / 2023 Budget – Gary Schneider**
  - i) YTD, we are on budget
  - ii) The proposed 2023 budget was included in the Dockside
  - iii) Major expenses this year have been the herbicide treatment, the harvester payment, and the alum treatment
  - iv) The tax appropriation of \$231,000.00 for 2023. 2022 was \$209,000.00
  - v) Part of the increase for this year is labor costs (\$16,000.00)
  - vi) The surplus from last year was put back into the operating budget
  - vii) Loans – we have \$92,500.00 budgeted for the first-year payment for the 2022 alum treatment
  - viii) We paid off the harvesting equipment this year

- ix) For next year, we will have the remainder of the alum treatment plus interest as our only loan payment
- x) Commissioner Schneider went through and pointed out specific items from the budget and explained what they are
- xi) A question was asked how we are handling the excess income. Commissioner Kelly mentioned that we are putting excess back into the operating budget for the next year. We will be discussing with the board, how much to keep as a cushion. Ray Sloss mentioned that the purpose was to keep a cushion for projects but was not intended to be overfunded and suggested we use the overfunding to pay for the alum treatment project. Commissioner Kelly noted that the Alum treatment funding is already in place, per the approval given last year by the constituency
- xii) The loan we got for the alum treatment was at 3.125%, for \$385,000 contingent on getting a \$200,000 DNR grant which we did get
- xiii) Dave Kerr motioned to approve the budget as presented, Fran Launstein seconded, all approved, motion carried

**7) Registered commissioner candidates eligible for 2022 election - vote for one**

- **Tom Kelly**
  - i) All votes were in favor of electing Tom Kelly as Commissioner, so he has been elected for another 3-year term

**8) OLD BUSINESS**

- **Long Range Lake Management Plan / Member Survey - Dale Ulbrich**
  - i) We are currently covered for up to 2 more years under our long-range plan
  - ii) Over the winter months, we did a survey to see what constituents have to say about the work being done on the lake
  - iii) Commissioner Ulbrich presented the survey results (also included in the Dockside)
  - iv) Satisfaction on our efforts showed that water safety is ranked lower and needs attention
  - v) As far as water clarity, people were happy with the work being done but suggested we do more to prevent phosphorous from entering the lake
  - vi) Also suggested was to mitigate wetlands around the lake to keep them clean
  - vii) Education was also mentioned
  - viii) Keep up the good work on harvesting and boat inspections
  - ix) Request for cleaning stations
  - x) Find a way to reduce weeds caused by the harvester from floating to the shoreline
  - xi) Wildlife and fish – some people suggested no spraying. Also suggested is to stock the lake with walleye and other desirable fish
  - xii) Suggestion to find a way to improve spawning grounds. Commissioner Ulbrich noted that we are just starting to explore a system to ‘bubble’ the lake to break down weed decay formation, which adds to phosphorous problems
  - xiii) Shoreline erosion – it is up to homeowners to reduce grass clippings and weeds out of the lake on their shores, to also help control phosphorous

- xiv) 2 new focus areas are water safety, and recreation and navigation. We have been looking at studies to find out how other lakes are managing wake boats, including possibly increasing the distance between boats and distance from the shore
- xv) On the recreation and navigation, increasing the dam height was suggested. The village is responsible to maintain this level, this suggestion should be made to them
- xvi) 45% were neutral or dissatisfied with the progress we are making. The board will be focusing on the survey results moving forward, to determine what else we can do, particularly with wake boats
- xvii) A question was asked as to what is being done about the geese. Commissioner Kelly explained that the village is responsible for the goose roundup. The geese may be migrating rather than native. The goose count determines what needs to be done each year. They did not do a goose roundup this year
- xviii) A mention was made about a couple of issues in regards to wake boats – since the average depth of East Balsam is 10 feet, it doesn't make sense to allow wake boats in East Balsam or in Little Balsam either. Commissioner Kelly mentioned that the studies we are looking at in regards to wake boats is on our website. The wake boat issue is definitely on our radar, but the state is in charge of the rules for wake boats. We are looking to see what other lakes have done, including restricting hours and location for wake boats. This will help us determine what can be done in Balsam Lake. Commissioner Kelly noted that the wake boats and other agitation does not detract from the alum treatment, but can cause non-bonded phosphorous to be stirred up
- xix) A question was asked about the 10-year plan, whether it is complete now. Commissioner Ulbrich noted that we are working to update the 10-year plan. It was asked to put a copy of the updated plan in the library as the current copy is old

## **9) ELECTION RESULTS**

- i) See item 7 above for election results
- ii) Commissioner Kelly recognized the election judges for their work in handling the election

## **10) NEW BUSINESS**

### **• Watercraft Cleaning Stations – Dale Ulbrich**

- i) Commissioner Kelly noted that the board is in favor of adding cleaning stations, and proposed a vote for the addition of 7 cleaning stations, one at each launch site at an ultimate cost of \$50,000-\$80,000, subject to the approval of a plan. We would like to have these in place for next year's boating season
- ii) Ray Sloss suggested doing this process in a stepped method, instead of all at once. Commissioner Ulbrich mentioned that the board discussed this, and because of some limiting factors, decided that doing it all at once is a better approach. One of those factors is the potential for people to go to the launches that don't have the cleaning stations, and those launches are not set up for additional boat pressure
- iii) Ray Sloss noted that these stations are not budgeted. Commissioner Kelly re-iterated the note made earlier, that if this program is approved, it would be an amendment to the budget

- iv) A district member asked if the people who live around the launches will have input into where the stations are placed. Commissioner Ulbrich noted we could show them where the launches will be located and will listen to input (this is someone who lives near one of the smaller launches)
- v) Commissioner Kelly asked for a motion to approve cleaning stations at a cost of \$131000 plus \$3500 in annual maintenance costs and maximum cost to district of \$80,000.00 net of DNR grant. Dave Kerr motioned to approve the installation of cleaning stations at the above noted cost, Fran Launstein seconded. Commissioner Kelly asked for a voice vote. With one person opposed and the rest in favor, the motion passed.

**11) ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM