



BALSAM LAKE PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT

Board Meeting December 21, 2024 8:30 AM Central Time

Call in phone number 612-508-0879

Online at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82287258252>

1) CALL TO ORDER:

- Commissioner Kelly called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM

2) COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- Tom Kelly, Dave Wagner, Terry Palmberg, Dale Ulbrich, Jack Weix, Dave Mariani, Bill Mork (teleconference)

3) OTHERS PRESENT:

- Marisa Wieder, Lake District Manager
- Patty Kabus, Recorder

4) APPROVE AGENDA:

- Commissioner Palmberg motioned to approve the agenda, Commissioner Weix seconded, all approved. Motion carried.

5) APPROVE MINUTES: November 2024

- Commissioner Palmberg motioned to approve the November Meeting Minutes, Commissioner Mariani seconded, all approved. Motion carried.

6) PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Commissioner Kelly noted that he got a response from the one person who wanted to trap, and he wasn't happy. The board agrees that this is private conservancy land and even if we allowed trapping, beaver would not be included.
- Commissioner Weix received communication from a resident that he wants the nano-bubbler put in front of his house.

7) TREASURER REPORT:

- Financials / Kelly & Wagner
 - a) Dave Wagner presented the November Financials. Commissioner Mariani motioned to approve the November financials, Commissioner Mork seconded, all approved. Motion carried.

8) Water Quality

- Alum / Wieder & Kelly
 - a) Commissioner Kelly noted that the 2024 monitoring summary was sent to the board. It noted that water quality continues to meet the expectations. We received a comment from Bill James, expressing some concern that after the 2021 and 2023, he noted there were some blooms in the off years, if we see a recurrence this year, we may want to consider a larger dose in our final treatment in 2026. Possibly 30% instead of 20%, but this would be based on how 2025 goes. There would be a cost impact to this, and we will need to include it in the budget for 2026 in case it is needed.

9) Aquatic Plant Management and Invasive species

- CBCW / Mork
 - a) Commissioner Mork noted that we may want to pursue adding beetles again in 2025. Marisa noted that there is still sign of significant beetle damage and purple loosestrife does not seem to have spread.
 - b) Matt Berg is concerned about the spread of yellow iris and it is time we need to think about active management.
- Herbicide / Harvesting CLP & Navigation / Weix
 - a) Commissioner Weix reported that per Matt Berg, we had an issue with herbicide being treated too late this year and this impacted the effectiveness of the treatment. Next year, we will start the permitting process in March as it takes longer than expected to get approval. We also need to notify the newspaper as everyone needs to be notified. Marisa noted she thought we had to wait until we hear back from Matt, but that is not the case. Next year, we will move it up a month rather than waiting to hear from Matt.
 - b) Commissioner Wagner, noted that when he was on the board in the past, we treated the whole lake. He asked about getting into Dixie Bay. Commissioner Weix noted that there is a resistance to using chemicals, including from our lake biologist. Commissioner Weix says we could try if we wanted to, but it may open a lot of controversy if we start looking at other places on the lake. Commissioner Kelly noted that our supplier recommended that we don't treat other places in the lake due to water flow. He noted that we now use harvesting to remove weeds. Commissioner Ulbrich said East Balsam turns over every 2 years. The rest of the lake turns over every 30 or 90 days. Because of this, overtreating or diluting is a concern in the rest of Balsam Lake. Commissioner Kelly asked if CLP beds are growing in other parts of the lake. Marisa noted that there is a lot of growth in other parts of the lake. We are in the process of updating the aquatic plant management plan, so

this would be the time to consider other areas of the lake. Commissioner Weix noted that this year was a banner year for CLP as well as native weeds, both in our lake as well as in other lakes. Marisa showed a graph showing how the CLP expanded this year. Commissioner Weix noted that we can also focus on the harvesting this year. Marisa noted that we will now rely more on the GPS technology to determine where to focus the harvesting.

- c) Marisa asked whether the added surveys (\$7100.00) we have requested are contingent on the grant, or whether we would do it anyway. We have requested a whole leaf PI instead of CLP instead only.
- d) Commissioner Kelly said we have the discretion to approve it regardless of the grant. All board members were supportive of this, so Commissioner Kelly asked Marisa to let Matt know that we will commit regardless of grant funding.
- e) Commissioner Weix noted that every year, there are always something (weather, wind, or other impacts) that affects the effectiveness of chemical treatments.
- 2024 Aquatic plant survey results / Weix & Wieder
 - a) Already discussed under CBCW

10) Water Patrol

- 2024 water patrol / Kelly
 - a) Chief Thompson is preparing to apply for the grant. Commissioner Kelly asked if we can make sure that he has everything he needs.
 - b) At the last county meeting, we discussed that we asked for 120 hours for a county deputy, and are hoping for at least 100 hours. The county is finalizing the approval process and will hopefully post by February if it is approved. We have not formally committed to it, but they needed to know before they could make a final decision. We do not yet know how many lakes will be looking to use this resource.
 - c) We would be billed only for hours that are spent on our lake.

11) OLD BUSINESS

- Nanno Technology / Ulbrich
 - a) Commissioner Ulbrich received questions from Alex Smith, and Commissioner Ulbrich responded to him that the bubbler that we have does not use chemicals. Some Molear systems do use gases to control algae, but ours does not. Commissioner Ulbrich noted that there is not a permitting process for aerators and sent this to Alex. Commissioner Ulbrich also contacted Lake Restore as well as Molear for additional information. He noted that permitting is not required if we are using existing structures rather than structures on the bottom of the lake. We are using docks. Lake Restore is going to set up a meeting for a permitting process if we have to ask for a permit, but it should not be required. Commissioner Kelly stated that we did our due diligence and discovered that it is not based on the technology we are using. Commissioner Ulbrich said that last year, he applied for a grant, the DNR replied back, and we then submitted additional information. Alex was the reviewer of the grant request. Commissioner Ulbrich gave him the specifics he

requested. We were denied the grant. Alex then asked more questions about our plan, what we were doing. Commissioner Ulbrich referred him back to all the information already provided, but also provided the information we had submitted before. It is unclear why he is asking questions already provided, but we will continue to engage with them and provide information as requested. Commissioner Ulbrich noted that the meeting with Lake Restore will help us communicate more effectively with him.

- b) Commissioner Mork noted that this clearly does not require a permit, so we should not apply for a permit, especially since it may mean we would need to reapply every time we want to move the unit. Commissioner Ulbrich noted that this is just an aerator and has no chemicals, and he has confirmed once more that there is not permit required for aeration. Commissioner Kelly asked Marisa if she was aware of any permitting requirement. Marisa stated that aerators are exempted as long as they are not mounted on the lakebed and are not used during the winter.
- c) Commissioner Kelly asked if there are other lakes in Wisconsin. Commissioner Ulbrich said there is, and he went to visit one last year. They bought 32 of the systems that we have as well as one other model. The other lake built a frame on the lake so they did have to apply for a permit. Their pipes are about 3 times larger than ours and are stationary because of the lake structure.
- d) Commissioner Ulbrich noted there is not even a process for aerator permitting currently.
- e) Commissioner Ulbrich will forward some data to the board, showing the progress made while the bubbler was running. The process appeared to work very well.
- Fall Dockside / Kelly
 - a) Commissioner Kelly thanked everyone for their timely responses. The Dockside has been mailed. Our printing costs went down by about \$600.00, which also included list scrubbing.
- Updating web design / Palmberg & Wieder
 - a) Marisa is working on it. Some things have been added already, but it is a process.
 - b) Commissioner Weix said we got an email from JJ Webb, saying we need to pay them another \$500.00 for a different 3rd party to monitor ADA compliance. It will be checked into but we don't believe we need this.
- Water Runoff / Wieder
 - a) Marisa will be working on this over the winter and will get back to us in February. Commissioner Ulbrich asked if the county has any suggestion for those properties that are causing the most negative impact. The county did ask for us to cost share with them on one high impact property.
 - b) Commissioner Kelly suggested that we should develop criteria for cost sharing. The landowner needs to be willing to participate. In the past, they have not been willing to do so. Commissioner Mariani noted that Deer Lake has a program that apparently

has not done anything else. Commissioner Kelly asked Marisa to contact Deer Lake and see if she can find out why the program is not working.

12) NEW BUSINESS

- County recreation deputy / Wieder
 - a) Already discussed.
- CBCW data & cleaning station use / Mork & Ulbrich & Wieder
 - a) Commissioner Kelly noted that the data we received does not seem to match up with what our CBCW monitors are seeing. The reports we can retrieve include numbers of boats as well. We need to do this. Commissioner Kelly asked Marisa to run additional boat use reports and send them out.
 - b) Commissioner Wagner noted that the monitors are applying for unemployment insurance. 2 of them only applied by early November, the rest applied later as they are now not working a winter job. Commissioner Kelly noted that we may need to add another \$10,000.00 in costs related to this. Marisa contacted the statewide coordinator at the Lakes Extension to see if this is normal or if we have any options. They are part time, seasonal workers so we need to look further into this. Marisa is following up on it.
 - c) Commissioner Wagner asked if we could possibly move in the direction of using students instead of the current system. Also internships with colleges may be a possibility. Commissioner Kelly said that Carl, who used to run the program, noted it is very difficult to deliver enough hours using students or interns.
 - d) Commissioner Weix noted that kids may not be as effective when people are not using the cleaning stations.
 - e) Marisa will continue to work on it.
- Landing cameras / Weix & Mork
 - a) Commissioner Ulbrich stated he thinks the cameras are a great idea.
 - b) New camera technology records hull numbers, license plates, and automatically reports non-compliance. Signage tells them that they will be reported if they do not comply.
 - c) Charging at launches or for parking is also a possibility to help pay for the added cost.
 - d) Commissioner Kelly asked if there is DNR funding for camera systems. Marisa said there is grant funding available to help pay for the initial installation, but not for ongoing costs. She noted that monitors are educational in nature, not enforcement.
 - e) Commissioner Mork noted that the inspectors are responsible to inspect the boats coming in and going out, and this has been their primary focus since day one. Now that we have the cleaning stations, adding cameras should result in reduced need to monitors.
 - f) Marisa noted that only 200 hours are required per landing. She has not seen the level of hours at other lakes.

- g) Cameras can handle up to 500 violation reports. They have AI technology which can determine people versus animals, etc.
- h) Commissioner Weix noted that we can determine whether we want to send the reports to the sheriff or not for each cleaning station.
- i) Commissioner Wagner said the idea of charging for launches is an interesting one. Commissioner Mork said he was threatened with having his car keyed if he pursued it in the past.
- j) Commissioner Weix will gather information on cameras for the next meeting.
- Ayers Dam study results / Kelly & Wieder
 - a) Commissioner Kelly said everyone has received the Ayers report about the dam. It has asked that the left trail race needs to be replaced. There are 4 options for various parts of the dam replacement, with costs from \$48,000.00 up to \$1,400,000.00. The Village may come to us for some assistance. They have contracted with Ayers for assistance in grant applications. We are waiting to hear more. But something needs to be done with that soon. Commissioner Ulbrich expressed support in charging at the landings, with a portion of the money helping to pay for the dam replacement. Commissioner Weix noted that maintaining the landings could also be funded with this money. Marisa noted the grant could pay up to 50% for the first \$400,000.00 and 25% above that. So it is likely that we would first be asked to provide a letter of support. Commissioner Kelly noted that we could certainly offer a letter of support.
 - b) Commissioner Wagner noted that vegetation around the dam also needs to be maintained so roots don't damage the dam moving forward.
- Polk County Shoreland zoning updates / Palmberg
 - a) Marisa does not have a lot of information about this, other than apparently Land and Water is not very involved in this, but that Environmental Services is now approving. She does not have a lot of information yet, but has a call scheduled with Logan in the zoning department on Monday. She thinks they are legally required to have a public comment period. Commissioner Mariani said the public comment period will likely take place in January or February. Commissioner Mariani noted that the Zoning Department will be responsible for enforcing the new zoning updates.
 - b) Commissioner Kelly noted that we need to understand the zoning updates, qualify the permitting process and verify project monitoring and enforcement. The district could also pursue integrating water runoff mitigation into shoreline zoning projects.
 - c) Commissioner asked if we can reach out to other lake associations to ask for their assistance. Commissioner Kelly noted that we need to be prepared as soon as they open up for public comments, and that we route our draft to other lake associations for their feedback or support. Commissioner Kelly laid out several things to include, such as water runoff plans, enforcement, to include us in the permitting process as it pertains to Balsam Lake. Marisa will see if she can determine what the proposed changes are in her call on Monday so we know where to go from here. We are really

looking to provide input prior to the final version being put to public comment. Commissioner Palmberg noted that we should all be asking the same questions and comments to the county as a call.

- d) Commissioner Kelly asked Marisa to email the board after her call with Logan on Monday, and to send it to the board. Then the board will determine next steps.
- Goose egg oiling / Kelly
 - a) The Balsam Lake Homeowners Association is willing to take this project on again next year. They would like us to be part of the communication process in the newsletters and also for us to confirm that we are in support of the program so they can put our names on communications. Commissioner Ulbrich noted that we could add that if people add natural grasses to their property, it will help keep the geese away. We can write an article something like 'How to Keep Geese Away'.
 - b) The Homeowner's Association will send targeted information to people with nests on their property.

13) OTHER REPORTS:

- Milltown / Palmberg
 - a) Milltown postponed the item of moving zoning until January.
- County / Mariani
 - a) The county is putting a lot of interest into recreation in the county.
 - b) They also discovered 2 chronic wasting disease cases in deer in the last few weeks.
Per the county, you don't get sick if you eat venison from a diseased animal

14) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- **No meeting in January.**

15) ADJOURN:

- Commissioner Palmberg motioned to adjourn, Commissioner Weix seconded, all approved, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:56 AM.