

Lake Ripley Management District
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2006

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Lake Ripley Management District (LRMD) Board of Directors met at the Oakland Town Hall at N4450 CTH A in Cambridge on April 15, 2006. Chairman Molinaro called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Dennis McCarthy, John Molinaro, Jane Jacobsen-Brown and Gene Kapsner. Pam Rogers, Jefferson County Board Supervisor and past LRMD Board member, was present to temporarily serve as county representative. Derek Hoffman and Mike Sabella were absent. Also present were Paul Dearlove (Lake Manager) and Gary Zibell (Cambridge Cable TV).

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

III. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the 3/18/06 meeting and had no additions or corrections. *Kapsner moved to approve the minutes as written. Motion was seconded by McCarthy with no further discussion. Motion carried 4-0, with Rogers abstaining.*

IV. Treasurer's Report

Sabella was unavailable to present the quarterly financial statements. Discussion and acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was tabled until the next meeting.

V. Project Manager's Report

Dearlove distributed to the Board copies of his report and phone logs. He began by reviewing the 2005 Priority Lake Project Progress Report that had been submitted to the DNR. He explained that the analysis was intended to highlight major activities and accomplishments from the prior year, including estimated pollutant-load reductions from completed cost-share practices. He said there currently were about a dozen shoreline projects in various stages of implementation. Many of these efforts were on track to be completed later this spring.

A proposal was received for work associated with an observation deck at the Preserve. The \$1,565 estimate from LanDesign, LLC was for concept planning, engineering design, permitting, contractor research and project bidding. It did not include actual construction costs. Dearlove said he was still trying to get more proposals, and asked the Board for any leads on other potential bidders. Kapsner inquired about its size, suggesting it could probably be built without the need for a lot of expensive planning and design work. Dearlove replied that it would be of modest size, and that the Board had not advanced any specific design criteria. He also concurred with Molinaro that some of the planning and coordination tasks could be done in-house. Molinaro said he was envisioning a simple wooden observation deck with a railing that would be built into the hillside and could support 4-5 individuals. Kapsner offered that the DNR might have designs that we could use. He also suggested contacting someone down on Lake Koshkonong where an observation deck was recently built.

Dearlove also reported on the following:

- The outboard motors were sold as a pair for \$1,150. Dearlove felt it was a fair price given that one of the motors was in pretty bad shape.
- The slow-no-wake buoys will be installed on May 5th with Captain Gondert. Ken Bilstad will update the kiosk at the public landing with the 200' -from-shore no-wake ordinance. In addition, Dearlove said he would issue a press release.
- Rain barrels are available for purchase and delivery for \$50 through the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association. Dearlove described their appearance and how they work, and said he was putting together an information packet for those who might be interested. Molinaro added that the Lake District could help facilitate the process of ordering and installing the rain barrels, and could maybe set up a demonstration. An article on the topic was suggested for the next newsletter. As a side note, Molinaro mentioned that the City of Madison was hosting a compost bin sale on May 6th.
- The letter requesting a ban on phosphorus lawn fertilizers was sent to Jefferson County on March 23rd. Co-signers and supporters included the Rock River Coalition, Rock Lake Improvement Association, Friends of Allen Creek Watershed and Lake Koshkonong Wetlands Association. Molinaro said the Town of Lake Mills also sent a letter to the county requesting a ban. He added that the Rock River Coalition is looking into producing a PowerPoint

presentation with help from UW-Extension to educate public officials on the topic. Rogers said she supported a ban, and asked that the Board let her know if there was anything she could do to help lobby her fellow county supervisors.

- Board members were reminded about the litter cleanup on April 28th. They were also reminded about the “Clean Boats, Clean Waters” invasive species training for volunteer watercraft inspectors on May 13th. Molinaro said that the Lake District regularly partners with Ed Grunden on these and other efforts, and that he will be retiring in a couple months. Kapsner said we needed to be proactive in communicating with and involving Ed’s eventual replacement.

Dearlove concluded his report by congratulating Molinaro on being the recipient of the 2006 Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award. He indicated that the award will be presented to Molinaro at next week’s Wisconsin Lakes Convention. Molinaro received a round of applause from the Board.

VI. Old Business

A. Discussion and possible approval of Kaashagen restoration plan

Molinaro summarized the illegal clear-cutting that took place within the Lake Pointe conservation easement, and the events that followed. He said he was still waiting for DNR to send an enforcement letter to Kaashagen. The letter is supposed to officially document the violation, stipulate any fines, and outline required restorative actions and a timetable for curing the violation. He explained that those details must be forthcoming before approval of any restoration plan could be entertained. Jacobsen-Brown asked if there was any Board action that could be taken irrespective of DNR. Molinaro replied that the Lake District and DNR are joint easement holders which called for a coordinated enforcement response. Jacobsen-Brown said it was important to continue pressing DNR to act. She was concerned that any further delay gives the impression that nothing is being done about the violation. Molinaro said that he and Dearlove were already in frequent communication with DNR. He promised to stay on top of the matter and was hopeful that the letter would go out shortly.

B. LRMD Strategic Planning Task Force

With the Priority Lake Project grant coming to an end this year, Molinaro said the Board needed to figure out how the Lake District will operate moving forward. He said that a tax levy increase would be needed to maintain even basic operations. He pointed out that while the District has enjoyed a low and falling tax rate over the years—and currently taxes at a 0.28 mill rate—it has the statutory authority to tax up to a 2.5 mill rate. This led to discussion regarding the possible implications of a legislative proposal that would impose tax caps on local governments.

Molinaro then asked the Board for recommendations in putting together a strategic planning task force. Jacobsen-Brown felt an advisory group should be convened as soon as possible, especially if a mill rate increase was going to be proposed at the annual meeting. She suggested starting with a small group consisting of two or three Board members and Dearlove. Kapsner concurred that it was a good idea to start out with a small exploratory committee that could potentially be expanded later. He said this initial group could gather all the necessary facts and figures related to existing programs and operations.

Molinaro said that he, Sabella and Dearlove meet every year to crunch the numbers and draft a budget. He suggested they prepare a summary analysis of existing programs and priorities, current funding sources, and future budgeting requirements to present to the full Board. Jacobsen-Brown noted that there was a difference between budget planning and strategic planning. She felt that the whole Board would benefit from going through the planning process and becoming better educated on the issues prior to the budget hearing. Kapsner offered that the Board could set aside an appropriate block of time at an upcoming meeting to thoroughly discuss priorities and get public input. Molinaro agreed to distribute a program and cash-flow analysis by the May meeting, and then have a discussion in June regarding budgeting priorities and the future direction of the Lake District.

In other Old Business, Kapsner asked about the status of the osprey nesting platform. Dearlove said he had not received reports of recent osprey sightings. Molinaro cautioned that it might take a few years for the birds to take up residence at the lake and decide to nest there.

VII. New Business

A. New fee schedule for public boat access

Molinaro announced that the Town of Oakland adopted a new fee schedule for the public boat landing. Users will now pay a flat \$7.00 daily launch fee. For a season pass, Oakland residents and property owners will be charged \$20.00, and all other “non-residents” will be charged \$30.00. He indicated that the Lake District worked closely with the Town to update the fee schedule in accordance with DNR standards.

In other New Business, Jacobsen-Brown reported that the recently damaged shoreline off Sleepy Hollow Road has started to erode now that water levels have risen. She said the contractor installed sandbags along the shore and would be

returning next week, but that soil was still washing into the lake. After considerable discussion, Dearlove agreed to arrange a meeting with the DNR conservation warden to discuss the matter.

VIII. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

IX. Adjournment

McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 a.m. Motion was seconded by Jacobsen-Brown without further discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

Next meeting: May 20, 2006

Respectfully Submitted,

Derek Hoffman, Secretary

Date

Recorder: PDD