

Lake Ripley Management District
Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2004

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chairman Molinaro called the meeting of the Lake Ripley Management District (LRMD) to order at 9:00 a.m. Secretary Hoffman took roll call and noted the following Board members present: John Molinaro, Derek Hoffman, Dennis McCarthy, Sheri Walz, and Mike Sabella. Board members Paul Jorstad and Joanne Knilans were absent, as was Paul Dearlove (Priority Lake Project Manager). Others in attendance included a representative from Cambridge Cable TV 12, Shirley Teske (Cambridge News), and Roger Rude (LRMD resident).

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

III. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the 06/19/04 meeting and had no additions or corrections. *Hoffman moved to accept the minutes as written. Sabella seconded. Motion carried 5-0.*

IV. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Sabella indicated that he had not prepared a financial report for this month. Molinaro noted that a proposed 2005 budget had been prepared, and that a budget hearing is scheduled for August 14, 2004 (9:00 a.m. @ Oakland Town Hall). He said the budget will be properly noticed and sent out with our newsletter before the end of the month.

V. Project Manager's Report

Molinaro distributed and read the June 21-July 17 Project Manager's Report that Dearlove had prepared for the meeting. He also distributed Dearlove's phone logs since the last meeting. The report is presented below:

Aquatic Habitat Study

Since the June 19th meeting, a great deal of fieldwork has been conducted as part of our grant-funded aquatic habitat study. Fieldwork consists of gathering descriptive information on each randomly-selected study site; using light-intensity meters to evaluate the shading effects of piers; deploying minnow traps and fyke nets; fish shocking; taking samples of aquatic vegetation; and collecting macro-invertebrates. The data collection phase is on schedule to be completed by early August.

Weed Harvesting

The weed-harvesting equipment was moved back to the lake and operations are well underway. Our harvesting crew has reported harvesting nine dump truck loads of weeds as of this week. They have each worked about 80 hours since mid-June, with a good portion of that time spent repairing and performing necessary maintenance on the equipment. Milfoil harvesting has generally been confined to problem areas within Milwaukee Bay and on the northeast side of the lake.

Cost-Share Projects

There is not much new to report on the over half-dozen cost-share projects that are awaiting implementation. However, one shoreline riprap project was just recently completed (Van Acker). Unfortunately, the contractor failed to meet design specifications. Cost sharing will not be issued until the rock is re-installed to meet specification, and it will not cover the added cost of re-doing the riprap.

Lake Watch

We currently have only a small handful of volunteers participating in this summer's Lake Watch program, and are looking for additional help. Violation reports are currently being forwarded to the Oakland Town Police. These reports indicate that a number of slow-no-wake violations are occurring over the weekends when the police are not on the lake.

Lake District Preserve

Direction is needed from the Board regarding the nature and scope of projects we want to accomplish over the next 2-3 years. In particular, input with respect to desired trail improvements would be helpful so we can solicit bids and budget accordingly. The existing trail is routinely impassable in certain locations due to extreme wetness, and any extension or re-routing of the trail will most likely require the use of some type of boardwalk. Past experience suggests that maintaining a mowed trail within perennially wet areas or east of the woodlot would be problematic.

Information & Education

The summer edition of Ripples is nearing completion. The goal is to have the newsletter back from the printer and disseminated before the end of the month. It will contain official notices of our budget hearing and Annual Meeting.

Other News

- The third meeting of the Lake Ordinances Review Committee was held on July 7th. Minutes were distributed to the committee and LRMD Board members. The next and possibly final meeting was scheduled for August 4th (7:00-8:30pm @ Lake District office).
- The DNR has approved a permit request from the Lake Ripley Sport Shop to reconfigure their pier. The new pier will extend further out into the lake, but will have three fewer boat slips (from 14 down to 11).
- The DNR also continues to receive inquiries from Majestic Pines regarding the possibility of piers in the channel and along that sensitive shoreline. Assurances have been given that any permit request is likely to be denied.
- The launch-fee deposit box at the public landing was broken into sometime last weekend, and an undetermined amount of money was stolen. If anyone has information pertaining to the theft, please contact the Oakland Town Police.

VI. Old Business

A. Lake Ordinances Review Committee (Lake District/Town Boards)

Molinaro reviewed the progress of the Lake Ordinances Review Committee, which met for the third time on July 7th. At present, the committee has reviewed most of the Town ordinances that either directly or indirectly regulate access and use of the lake. He said that several ordinance changes will be recommended to the full Town Board for the purpose of better protecting and managing the resource. Roger Rude asked for specifics regarding the recommendations. Molinaro summarized some of the recommendations, including: increasing the public launch fees; prohibiting new piers in designated sensitive areas; establishing an emergency slow-no-wake policy during high-water periods; expanding existing no-wake zones; and adopting an ordinance to restrict keyhole developments.

B. U.S. Highway 12 Construction Update

Molinaro said he continues to meet with the DOT to discuss matters pertaining to the Highway 12 reconstruction. He gave a status report, and indicated that the DOT had agreed to hold public informational meetings. The first meeting is set for Friday, July 23rd at 8:30 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall.

C. Annual Meeting Notices & Proposed Budget

Molinaro reported that a proposed 2005 budget had been prepared. Copies of the budget were distributed to the Board members. It was noted that the budget will be posted and discussed in detail at the August 14th budget hearing (9:00 a.m. @ Oakland Town Hall). Copies of the budget and Annual Meeting agenda will also be disseminated via newsletter before the end of the month. The proposed 2005 budget represents a 2% decrease from the current year, and an estimated 17% decrease in the tax levy. Molinaro said he anticipated a significant drop in the mill rate due to an expected increase in assessed valuation of over 20%.

VII. New Business

A. Update on WI Act 118

Molinaro reported on the DNR's progress in developing emergency rules to carry out the legislative directives in WI Act 118. As a result of considerable controversy over issues pertaining to the regulation of piers, the entire rule package was suspended for 30 days following a public hearing in Minocqua.

B. Future Site-Development Plans for Lake District Preserve

Molinaro requested that Board members walk the path at the Preserve and come to the September meeting with ideas and priorities. He explained that the path was impassable in certain locations due to marshy conditions, and that a multi-year plan would need to be developed if major changes or improvements are proposed. He also explained that money was still available this year for whatever work might be deemed necessary.

In other New Business, Sabella noted that the number of personal watercraft (a.k.a. jet skis) using the lake appeared to be increasing. He asked if anything was being done or should be done to manage this increased traffic. Molinaro said he documented a 27% increase in moored PWCs around the lake compared to last year's inventory. Discussion ensued as to whether new rules or better enforcement of existing rules was needed. Sabella felt PWCs were responsible for much of the noise pollution and safety concerns on the lake. He suggested that the Project Manager look into what other lakes are doing to address these issues, and bring any recommendations back to the Board. Molinaro added that a more vigilant law-enforcement presence on weekends might also help address many of the problems associated with PWC traffic.

VIII. Correspondence

A letter was received dated June 30, 2004, addressed to Jim and Cindy Van Acker from the Jefferson County Zoning Department. The letter indicated that property located at W9063 Ripley Rd. was the subject of a shoreland zoning violation. A number of trees had been illegally removed from the shoreline, and the property owner was ordered to develop and implement a restoration plan.

IX. Adjournment

McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 a.m. Molinaro seconded. Motion to adjourn was carried 5-0.

Next meetings: Budget Hearing – August 14, 2004 (9:00 a.m. @ Oakland Town Hall)
Annual Meeting – August 21, 2004 (9:00 a.m. @ Oakland Town Hall)

Respectfully Submitted,

Derek Hoffman, Secretary

Date

Recorder: PDD