

**Lake Ripley Management District
Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2006**

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Lake Ripley Management District (LRMD) Board met at the Oakland Town Hall at N4450 County Highway A in Cambridge on October 21, 2006. Chairman Molinaro called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Secretary Jacobsen-Brown took roll. Board members present included Dennis McCarthy, Mike Sabella, John Molinaro, Gene Kapsner, Mike Burow, Jane Jacobsen-Brown and Derek Hoffman. Others present included Paul Dearlove, Gary Zibell, Kent Brown, Bill Ratzberg, Ted Teske and Shirley Teske.

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

III. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the 9/16/06 meeting and had no additions or corrections. *Sabella moved to approve the minutes as written. Motion seconded by Burow with no subsequent discussion. Motion carried 7-0.*

IV. Treasurer's Report

Sabella distributed and reviewed the third-quarter financial reports for the LRMD and Lake Ripley Priority Lake Project (LRPLP) for the three-month period ending September 30, 2006. Handouts included balance sheets, statements of operations, actual-to-budget/budget remaining analysis, and copies of general ledgers/check registers for each entity.

LRMD: Total current assets of \$189,072.33 consisted of \$62,676.67 in the general checking account, \$95,000.00 in a bank certificate of deposit, and \$31,395.66 due from the LRPLP. There was a payroll tax liability of \$143.96. Total revenues for the quarter were \$13,974.71, consisting mainly of property taxes. Operating expenses of \$7,668.94 included insurance, weed harvesting, board stipends and office administration costs. Other expenses included \$8,000.00 paid to the Town of Oakland for a 10-year storage lease, and \$2,492.67 for an observation deck and trail maintenance at the Preserve.

LRPLP: Sabella noted that the program will expire in the fourth quarter of this year, at which time it will be combined with the LRMD account. Meanwhile, he explained that additional funds will be transferred from the LRMD to cover the cost of operations through the end of the year. Total current assets of \$32,108.36 consisted of \$200.00 in petty cash, \$4,752.72 in general checking, and \$27,155.64 in the Nonpoint Source (cost sharing) account. Current liabilities consisted of \$949.20 in accrued payroll taxes that were paid in October, and \$31,395.66 payable to the LRMD. He explained that the amount owed to the LRMD will disappear when the accounts are combined in 2007. Total revenues for the quarter were \$25,311.52, consisting mainly of DNR cost-sharing reimbursements. Operating costs were \$15,245.68, consisting mainly of staff wages, rent and general office expenses. There were also direct costs of \$12,635.20 for cost sharing projects. Other expenses included \$528.23 for information and education activities.

Kapsner moved to accept the treasurer's report. Motion seconded by McCarthy without subsequent discussion. Motion carried 7-0.

V. Lake Manager's Report

Dearlove reported on his activities since the last meeting. Handouts included phone logs, a weed harvesting summary report, amended cost-share contract and project scoring sheet, status of past planning recommendations, sample Welcome Wagon packet, and a final report for the LRPLP. He said that the weed-harvesting equipment and all the buoys had been removed from the lake and returned to storage. Work is now underway servicing and repairing the harvester and shore conveyor. Other activities included updating the landowner cost-share contract, project scoring sheet and BMP technical standards to incorporate new cost-sharing protocols. In addition, the Ripples newsletter was nearing completion, and the hope was to have a final draft to the printer within the next couple weeks. Outreach activities also included the mailing of Welcome Wagon packets to 16 new landowners with property both on and off the lake.

Other announcements included the following:

- DNR fish-survey crews were shocking on 10/16. A data summary report was requested upon its completion.
- Three more zebra mussel discoveries were confirmed. Continued monitoring has not identified the presence of the larval "veligers," suggesting a lack of reproduction associated with an infestation. Dearlove made another plea for volunteers who could inspect boats and educate boaters at the public landing next summer.

- DNR cost-share reimbursements of \$25,871.50 were received, representing the last grant payment of the LRPLP.
- Informational signs are being updated at the Lake District Preserve. Myles Buss was recognized for his volunteer contributions in producing two of the kiosk signs.
- Dearlove, McCarthy, Jacobsen-Brown and Kent Brown graduated from the Wisconsin Lake Leaders Institute on 10/20. They each took turns summarizing the experience and what was learned during several days of classroom and field activities. DNR Secretary Hassett recognized the graduates at a ceremony held at the Aldo Leopold Shack in Baraboo.

VI. Old Business

A. Approve Amended Cost-Share Agreement and Project Scoring Sheet

Dearlove reviewed the amended documents, noting the specific changes and additions. Sabella asked for clarification regarding the scoring of proposed projects, specifically why so few points were needed for eligibility. Dearlove explained that a point threshold was established strictly for pre-screening purposes to weed out grossly under qualified projects. Even if a project meets minimum point requirements, it may not be endorsed for funding by the review committee, and must still be brought before the full Board for discussion and approval. Dearlove confirmed that the Board would receive copies of the completed scoring sheets, and that the subcommittee would submit one combined scoring sheet for each project. Sabella recommended that legal counsel review the contract before it is put to use. Jacobsen-Brown questioned what happens if a participating landowner is granted a six-month extension but fails to make progress on the project within that timeframe. Molinaro suggested that Dearlove could review the extenuating circumstances and make a recommendation to the Board.

Molinaro moved to approve the amended cost-share agreement (subject to legal review) and project scoring sheet. He further moved that projects not completed within the six-month extension must be re-evaluated by the Project Manager and approved by the Board. Motion was seconded by Sabella without subsequent discussion. Motion carried 7-0.

In other Old Business:

Kapsner requested a status report on the Kaashagen situation. Molinaro said it appeared that little to no DNR progress was being made on the case. He said he was in contact with DNR's lead attorney, Michael Cain, who had agreed to look into the matter to see what was holding up the enforcement process.

McCarthy announced that he completed water quality monitoring for the season, and the data had been submitted to the state. This led to discussion about how to read the staff gage that McCarthy recently installed to track lake level fluctuations. Sabella suggested eventually including an explanation in Ripples. Additional discussion ensued when Kapsner asked about setting a high water mark that would trigger emergency no-wake conditions. Once this is established, he suggested having that point clearly marked on the gage. Kapsner also asked whether the osprey nesting platform needed any maintenance. Molinaro responded that it did not, but cautioned that it could take a number of years for it to attract a nesting pair of birds.

VII. New Business

A. Summary Report and Discussion of Weed-Harvesting Operations

Dearlove provided an overview of the weed-harvesting program, and introduced Ted Teske and Bill Ratzberg who operate and maintain the equipment. Teske and Ratzberg were commended for their excellent work in implementing the program. Dearlove then summarized the aquatic plant management plan and DNR permit requirements that dictate what can be cut, where and under what conditions. He also distributed a written summary of key operational statistics from 2001-2006. The summary provided yearly analysis on hours worked, loads harvested, expenses and other data.

Molinaro asked Teske and Ratzberg for feedback. Teske said he's lived on the lake for 42 years and has been involved with the harvesting program since 2001. He said they are very careful about what they cut, and felt they were doing a good job of cleaning up the milfoil. He then described some of the different variables that can influence harvesting operations. He explained how time gets divided between the actual cutting and handling of weeds versus other tasks. Other tasks included working on the equipment, making fuel runs, chasing parts, dealing with vandalism and other problems, and conducting weed surveys. Ratzberg explained that he also lives on the lake, and that this was his first year with the program. He said he enjoys the work and has been busy doing a lot of the equipment repairs.

Jacobsen-Brown recounted how a neighbor recently complained to her about weeds that were not being cut. She said it was important for people to call the office with their questions or concerns. Dearlove and the harvesting crew could then investigate the situation and respond accordingly. Kent Brown asked about the role of the property owner in managing weeds close to shore. Dearlove replied that the harvester cannot operate in water depths of less than three feet, nor in close

proximity to piers and other obstructions. He said that property owners must be responsible for managing weeds in these areas. He offered to meet with lakefront property owners who needed help distinguishing between milfoil and other plants.

Sabella asked how much time it takes upon arriving at the Scout Camp before actual cutting is started. Teske estimated that it can take 30 minutes or more. He said it depends on any number of factors related to the status of the equipment, and travel time to get to the area they plan to harvest. Regarding the use of outboard motors, Teske said they were never used and were in questionable shape before they were sold. He did not think outboard motors were worth the trouble and expense given the relatively short distances they typically need to travel to get to the milfoil beds. Sabella brought up several safety issues, including the fact that the operators were covered by worker's compensation insurance. He asked how many people were needed to safely operate the machinery, and whether safety gear was worn. Teske replied that two people were ideal to safely handle everything that's going on, especially during the off-loading of plants. While one person could do it, he said there was the risk of slipping and getting hurt from trying to do too much multi-tasking. As for life vests, Teske noted that they are kept in a cubby within easy reach of the operator's console. Sabella and Molinaro recommended that they wear the vests for insurance purposes. Discussion ensued regarding the current condition of the equipment and whether any additional tools or supplies were needed. Suggestions included a new dump truck to replace the old one, extra-wide mirrors for the existing truck, and a lock box to store supplies. With respect to operator wages, Dearlove asked that the Board consider making adjustments to account for inflation and reward experience. Molinaro asked Dearlove to prepare an analysis and make a recommendation to the Board.

B. Outreach Strategies for Watershed Landowners

Molinaro noted that in his travels around the state, he found that many people mistakenly think that lake districts only deal with the lake and surrounding shoreline areas. He said this perception couldn't be further from the truth, especially here on Lake Ripley where we work on projects throughout the watershed. He said one of his goals was to improve communications with landowners off the lake to get them more involved. He asked the Board to start thinking of creative ways to more effectively reach out to this group and increase their participation rates.

VIII. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

IX. Adjournment

Sabella moved for adjournment at 10:40 a.m., and was seconded by Hoffman. Motion carried 7-0.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting: November 18, 2006.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Jacobsen-Brown, Secretary

Date

Recorder: PDD