

**Lake Ripley Management District
Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2013**

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Lake Ripley Management District Board of Directors met at the Oakland Town Hall on March 16, 2013. Chairman Molinaro called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present: Gene Kapsner, Jane Jacobsen-Brown, Georgia Gomez-Ibanez, John Molinaro, Dennis McCarthy and Walt Christensen. Mike Sabella was absent. Also in attendance: Paul Dearlove (LRMD Lake Manager), Perry Oates, Debra Kutz, Kent and Mark Brown, and Leah Garrison of Cambridge Cable TV 98.

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments concerning issues not already on the agenda.

III. Approve Minutes of Last Meeting

Draft minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. *Gomez-Ibanez moved to approve the 01-19-13 meeting minutes without additions or corrections. Motion seconded by Christensen. Motion carried 6-0.*

IV. Treasurer's Report

Copies of the treasurer's report were distributed for the two-month period ending February 28, 2013. Receipts for the period amounted to \$77,665, and consisted of \$76,894 in real estate tax revenue, \$139 in interest, \$50 in non-restricted donations, and \$582 in DNR grants (nearshore fishery assessment). Disbursements for the period amounted to \$16,696. An attached transaction listing showed most disbursements were for staff payroll, Preserve-related contract work, a new computer system, and other office-related expenses. Asset balances included \$200 in petty cash and \$205,010 in the general checking account. Other items of note included a \$506 advance on a grant for the Clean Boats-Clean Waters initiative. Due to Sabella's absence, Molinaro asked that questions be reserved until the next meeting. *McCarthy moved to accept the treasurer's report and enter it into the record. Motion seconded by Christensen. Motion carried 6-0.*

V. Lake Manager's Report

Dearlove summarized Lake District activities since the last meeting. Handouts included his lake manager report, phone logs, and other supporting materials. Highlights included:

- The Landowner Incentives Committee met to develop program and funding recommendations. Interested partners so far include: Agrecol, LJ Reas Environmental Consulting, Midwest Prairies, Awesome Landscaping, Butterfly Graphics, Formecology, NRCS and Jefferson County.
- A \$2,025 'Clean Boats, Clean Waters' grant was received to pay for 200 hours of watercraft inspections and boater education. Jeanne Scherer was subsequently re-hired as our program assistant and CBCW coordinator.
- Planning is underway to re-test water quality conditions at three sample sites in the inlet tributary. This was last done in 1993 as part of a Lake Ripley Water Resources Appraisal, and before the purchase/restoration of the Preserve and completion of the Priority Lake Project. If needed, Kapsner recommended seeking funding through a Cambridge Foundation grant to help pay for the testing.
- Forestry mowing operations were completed and on budget. A follow-up inspection tour was conducted.
- Gratitude was extended to the Cambridge Elementary Environmental Club and the Friends of the Glacial Heritage Area for pledged volunteer work at the Preserve.
- A grant-funded report on the feasibility of reintroducing extirpated nongame fishes to Lake Ripley was completed. Comments are now being sought from collaborators. Implementation could potentially be funded through a DNR Lake Protection Grant. A poster presentation will be given at the WI Lakes Convention.
- The Park Rd. treefall restoration was completed and has passed inspection.
- A new laptop computer system was acquired for the Lake District office.
- Content is currently being written and assembled for a spring Ripples. Molinaro recommended including "wish list" items, such as an ATV for the Preserve.
- A lakeshore restoration off Sleepy Hollow Rd. was added to the list of proposed cost-share projects.

VI. Old Business

- **Discussion and possible action on proposed work and cost sharing of the Willerup Bible Camp lakeshore restoration.**

Dearlove summarized the multi-phased project scope, estimated costs and current financing status. Perry Oates was in attendance as the camp's representative. He expressed his interest in taking care of erosion problems and improving the property in a way that would benefit the lake. He explained that the camp does not have the money to pay for all the work, but a fundraising effort is in progress. He did not expect to hear if the camp will receive the \$7,500 it requested from the Cambridge Foundation for at least another week. He hoped the Lake District might also be able to provide some matching funds.

In discussion, Jacobsen-Brown said she was already familiar with the property and its issues, and felt it warranted high-priority status. Molinaro agreed but noted that the Lake District had only budgeted \$5,000 in total for cost-share projects this year. The amount was down from prior years to keep the levy low, and was largely based on project proposals that had been received at the time. Even if the full amount was awarded to the camp, he said it would still leave a fundraising need of several thousand dollars.

Molinaro asked that the project-review committee be allowed to tour the property and formally evaluate the proposal before the board votes to commit funds. Meanwhile, Kapsner suggested that Oates contact Joel Winn for possible fundraising assistance. To help with fundraising, Molinaro offered that an article could be included in the next newsletter talking about the 100th anniversary of the Willerup Camp and hopes for future restoration work. Discussion ended with no board action being taken. The issue would be placed back on the agenda next month.

VII. New Business

A. Discussion and possible action on Landowner Incentives Committee recommendations for funding and implementing a new pilot program

Committee members included Christensen, Dearlove, Kent Brown and Jay Settersten. The approved minutes from four meetings and a recommendations summary were distributed for board consideration. Christensen, as committee chair, reviewed procedural and funding recommendations for the proposed pilot program (see attached).

Molinaro said two decisions were needed. The first was whether to proceed with the program as recommended, and the second was to decide on a funding commitment. *Jacobsen-Brown moved that the landowner incentive pilot proceed as recommended, and that the board be prepared to make a fund-transfer decision by the April meeting. Motion seconded by McCarthy. As a point of discussion, Kapsner questioned the need and intent of the "conservation farming program enrollment" practice. Dearlove and Christensen explained that the idea was to offer signing bonuses or other enticements for agricultural landowners to sign onto an already existing farm program. The particular program was still undecided, but the objective was to address farm runoff which is a documented problem in the watershed. Motion passed 6-0.* Molinaro said he would like to invite Dennis Vollmer of NRCS to the next meeting to answer questions about existing farm programs.

B. Discussion and possible action on a potential transfer of FEMA-owned shoreline property to the Lake District to be used as perpetual conservation land

Molinaro provided background on shoreline property located at N4214 Sleepy Hollow Rd. that was acquired by FEMA following the 2008 floods. The land is now under the management control of the Jefferson County Parks Department (Emergency Management division). He noted there may be an opportunity to have the land transferred to the District if the board felt it was its best interest. The small lot is now vacant, receives little if any upkeep, and must remain perpetually use-restricted as per FEMA requirements. Molinaro asked if the board would be open to a transfer if it was deemed feasible.

In discussion, Kapsner said it was important for the board to decide what it intended to do with the property and at what cost. He and Jacobsen-Brown both indicated they were in favor of a transfer in order to keep the property in local control. Christensen suggested that the District could work collaboratively with the county to make any desired improvements, and without the need to take ownership of the title. Molinaro responded that he did not think the county was in a position to put any money into improvements. Kent Brown volunteered to work with the neighbors to raise the needed money for any maintenance and improvement activities. He pointed out that about 12 acres of uplands end up draining through this one wetland property. Molinaro offered to go back to the county to

Landowner Incentives Committee Recommendations to the Board

Needs Statement

Investing in new landowner incentives and a related promotional campaign are both justified and recommended as a means of better engaging the community and increasing BMP-adoption rates. This will be done through the implementation of a pilot. A successful pilot can then be built upon and expanded over time as future budgets and partnerships permit.

Purpose of Pilot

The purpose of the pilot is to make additional progress toward specific goals and tasks outlined in the 2009 Lake Ripley Improvement Plan. These can be found under the Executive Summary goal headers: "Clean, Clear Water" and "A Well-Informed and Engaged Citizenry." The pilot is intended to supplement, rather than replace, the existing landowner cost-share program as a means of inspiring action. Implementing the pilot will allow LRMD to gauge how well new incentives and promotional activities can engage the community and motivate the adoption of best practices.

Primary Objective

Enhance the infiltration of stormwater runoff.

[The benefits of focusing on this specific objective include: reduced soil erosion; reduced flooding; reduced pollutant delivery (e.g., phosphorus) to Lake Ripley; improved stream baseflow; moderated lake-level changes; increased runoff filtration; increased groundwater recharge; improved delivery of cooler, cleaner water to Lake Ripley; and a more balanced hydrologic cycle.]

Secondary Objective

Enhance fish and wildlife habitat in and around Lake Ripley.

Target Practices

- Rain gardens
- Shoreline buffers
- Rain barrels
- Treefalls
- Redirected roof downspouts
- Tree planting
- Impervious surface removal
- Conservation farming program enrollment (TBD)

Pilot-Implementation Design

Guiding principles

To be most effective, the program is designed with these goals in mind:

- It should be easy to understand
- It should avoid being overly complex or time-consuming to administer
- It should eliminate as many potential barriers to participation as possible (cost, time, complexity)

Basic framework

1. Promotional materials and entry forms are developed and broadly disseminated. The materials would describe the pilot, target practices, sponsors, participation rules and benefits, and other details. Marketing of this limited-time opportunity will be used to motivate eligible landowners to compete for participation rewards.
2. Interested landowners select from a menu of optional practices on a pledge form, make a case as to why they are ideally suited for an award, and then submit their entry forms by the established deadline.

3. An expert review panel reviews contest entries and selects award recipients based on established ranking criteria and available funding. Ranking criteria can consider such factors as number of pledged practices, strategic value of project location, degree of public visibility, and overall points scored on an environmental benefits index.
4. Award recipients are announced at a board meeting or special “Ripley Club” celebratory event. (The Ripley Club concept is intended as a vehicle to annually recognize and celebrate good stewardship activities, and to create a pool of local ambassadors who can help further promote the desired actions.) Each award recipient receives one or more redeemable vouchers that can be exchanged for the pledged practices if completed prior to the voucher expiration date. In return, recipients agree to serve a role in ongoing recognition and promotional efforts. Remaining contestants who are not selected for a project award are automatically entered into a drawing for one or more donated gifts.

Proposed Timeline

March 16, 2013	Board approves pilot and authorizes fund transfer
March – June, 2013	Line up partners, solicit donations, and develop promotional materials
June – Sept., 2013	Distribute promotional materials, publicize benefits of participation, and include pilot as part of 2014 budget deliberation
Sept. – Nov., 2013	Assemble review committee, process applications, and select award recipients
Nov. – Jan., 2013	Announce/publicize award recipients, conduct prize drawing, and distribute vouchers
Jan. 2013 – July 2014	Landowner completion of projects
Jul. – Aug., 2014	Evaluate effectiveness of pilot and include as part of 2015 budget deliberation

Funding

The Board is asked to consider approving a transfer of money from general unrestricted funds to finance the pilot. A sum of about \$25,000 is recommended to help pay for project vouchers and the development of promotional materials. This start-up money would be used to leverage additional resources from possible grants and partner contributions that can go into a designated, restricted account. Consideration could also be given to adding a new line item to the 2014 budget.

Examples of what \$25,000 can buy:

- A) 25 rain gardens (200 sq. ft. x \$5/sq. ft.)
- B) 6 shoreline buffers (1000 sq. ft. x \$4/sq. ft.)
- C) 143 rain barrels (\$175 each)
- D) 33 treefalls (\$750 each)
- E) 625 redirected downspouts (\$40 each for labor and materials)
- F) 125 ball & burlap nursery trees (\$200 each); or 500 bare-root nursery trees (\$50 each)
- G) 6,250 sq. ft. of pavement removal (at \$4/sq. ft. incentive rate)
- H) 12,500 acres of enrolled farmland (at \$2/acre added signing bonus)