

**Lake Ripley Management District  
Meeting Minutes  
April 21, 2012**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The Lake Ripley Management District Board of Directors met at the Oakland Town Hall on April 21, 2012. Chairman Molinaro called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present: Mike Sabella, Gene Kapsner, Jane Jacobsen-Brown, Georgia Gomez-Ibanez, John Molinaro, Dennis McCarthy and Walt Christensen. Also in attendance: Paul Dearlove (Lake Manager), Tristan McGough (Cambridge News), Rick Kutz, Debbie Kutz, Roger Rude, Kent Brown, Jay Settersten, and Cambridge Cable TV 98.

**II. Public Comment**

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

**III. Approve Minutes of Last Meeting**

Draft minutes from the prior meeting were reviewed. *Gomez-Ibanez moved to approve the 01-21-12 minutes without additions or corrections. Motion seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 7-0.*

**IV. Treasurer's Report**

Sabella distributed and reviewed copies of the first-quarter financial reports ending March 31, 2012. They included: Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Equity; Statement of Revenues and Expenses; Actual-to-Budget/Budget Remaining report; General Ledger; and Transaction Listing. Total current assets of \$182,325.34 consisted of \$200.00 in petty cash and the remainder as cash in the bank checking account. Total current liabilities of \$2,818.69 represented accrued state and federal payroll taxes and pension. Total equity of \$179,506.65 included \$66,688.36 in restricted funds, a fund balance of \$63,413.56, and revenue over expenses of \$49,404.73. Revenue for the first quarter of \$82,559.65 was comprised of property taxes (\$77,431.83), interest income (\$208.24), restricted donation (\$500.00), and a DNR pass-through grant for the benefit of the Hoard-Curtis Scout Camp project (\$4,419.58). Direct costs of \$11,882.58 consisted of cost share projects (\$7,463.00) and Hoard-Curtis expenses (\$4,419.58). Total operating expenses were \$20,003.71, and other expenses were \$1,268.63. Revenue over expenses for the first quarter was \$49,404.73. *Gomez-Ibanez moved to accept the treasurer's report and enter it into the record. Motion seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 7-0.*

**V. Lake Manager's Report**

Dearlove summarized Lake District activities since the last meeting. Cost-share reimbursement was issued for the Hoiby rain gardens and lakeshore restoration. The project cost considerably less than originally estimated, and was observed to be functioning as designed. The Mar-Pohl shoreline riprap installation was also completed, but bids for the phase 2 planting work have yet to be submitted by the landowner.

Bulk, native plant orders were accepted on behalf of interested property owners through Agrecol's early-order program. Participants were directed to pick up their orders at the town hall on May 18-19<sup>th</sup>. Also on May 19<sup>th</sup>, Lisa Reas will be hosting a native plant sale in partnership with the Lake District. She will give a presentation and slide show from 11:00-12:00, and hold the plant sale from 12:00-1:30.

Lake District Preserve activities included the completion of the 20-year plan, solicitation of contractor bids for woody invasive species control, and the receipt of related grant awards. Grants included \$3,750 from Alliant Energy Foundation and \$5,000 from Enbridge. Additional money is being sought through the County Conservation Aid program for which a proposal has been submitted (~\$1,500). Dr. Nic Tippery, UW-Whitewater Biology Department, has offered to help us complete baseline plant inventories for tracking ongoing restoration progress.

Community outreach included a spring edition of the Ripples newsletter, and the hosting of a half-day lake seminar focused on aquatic plants and algae. The seminar was well-received thanks to partners from Wisconsin DNR and Jefferson County Land & Water Conservation Department. Also, a District-themed poster presentation was given at the Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Green Bay. Dearlove and Jacobsen-Brown both participated in the three-day conference and reported on their experiences.

A \$2,687 DNR grant award was received to complete a near-shore fishery evaluation. Planning meetings will begin later next month followed by actual field work in June. A 75% advance on the grant will be requested to cover any initial costs. Additionally, a five-year mechanical weed-harvesting permit was approved by DNR. Dearlove concluded by summarizing 2011 water quality monitoring findings.

Sabella asked if water quality safety information could be publicized on a more frequent basis. Dearlove replied that safety-related concerns generally relate to bacteria or blue-green algae blooms, both of which vary widely in time and space. Bacteria levels are tested at the Ripley Park Beach on a weekly basis by the county, but the results are not immediately available, and conditions can quickly change in the interim. Molinaro said it has been the District's practice to educate and inform the community about common risks and basic safety precautions. He felt this was the better approach given the lag time between water testing and the publicizing of lab results.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **A. Discussion and possible action on 20-year plan for Lake District Preserve**

Copies of the draft plan were previously distributed for board review. Jay Settersten of SetterTech, LLC was present to respond to questions. Being a 20-year plan, Molinaro cautioned that people not panic over estimated costs or worry about how everything will be paid for. He felt the plan's real utility was in delineating management zones, identifying tasks and timelines, and outlining budgeting considerations from year to year. Settersten added that the plan was designed to be adaptable, and that numbers can be modified along with changing budget priorities, site conditions, availability of volunteer/grant support, potential task delays, and even unanticipated bidding outcomes. Aside from the larger upfront cost to control woody invasive species, it was noted that the rest of the plan was basically a maintenance schedule for managing the Preserve in accordance with the board's stated goals and objectives. He recommended that it be regularly reviewed and adjusted as needed.

As part of a larger discussion on costs and budgeting, Sabella questioned where the extra money might come from to pay for non-budgeted actions shown in the 2012 column. Grant awards, possible volunteer support, and the postponement of certain tasks were all mentioned as possible answers. In general, there was recognition that following the basic tenets of the plan was likely to require an increased investment by the District in future years.

***Kapsner moved to accept the plan as a guidance tool for future decision making. Motion seconded by Christensen. Motion carried 7-0.***

### **B. Discussion and possible action on contractor bids for Preserve restoration work; acceptance of related grant awards**

Contractor bids were reviewed to manage woody invasive species in the Preserve. The bids were received following the distribution of a formal Request for Proposals (RFP). They covered a three-year project period involving forestry mowing, spraying, and a controlled burn focused on the main woodlot. Settersten, who prepared the RFP, reported that he reviewed the bids and felt they should all be considered highly qualified. He said the bulk of the costs would be incurred in year 1 for the forestry mowing. Up to several thousand dollars, or a third of the costs, would realistically come into play in years 2-3. Not included in the bids was the cost for professional oversight and monitoring. Settersten estimated those costs at around \$2,000 in year 1, and another \$1,000 for years 2-3.

Jacobsen-Brown and Sabella both advocated that professional oversight be included as part of any operation of this magnitude. ***McCarthy moved to accept the low bid from Applied Ecological Services for \$23,700. Motion seconded by Gomez-Ibanez. Motion carried 7-0.***

## **VII. New Business**

### **A. Discussion and possible action on sending harvester operators to one-day training workshop**

Dearlove asked for Board authorization to send our new weed-harvester operators to a one-day training seminar sponsored by Aquarius Systems. The seminar is scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup> in North Prairie. He reviewed the agenda and costs associated with the training. Potential costs included \$45/person registration (includes meals and materials), mileage, and hourly wages to attend. ***Jacobsen-Brown moved to cover the cost of registration, mileage and hourly wages to allow the operators to attend the training seminar. Motion seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 7-0.***

**B. Discussion and possible action on revised strategy and criteria for administering landowner assistance grants**

Dearlove outlined several recommendations related to the future budgeting strategies, project prioritization, and targeting of landowner-assistance grants. The goal was to gradually de-emphasize shoreline riprap work, and more aggressively pursue higher-value wetland restorations and shoreland buffer installations (among others). He also encouraged consideration of adjusting cost-share rates and using other incentive arrangements, such as federal wetland grants, to help move critical projects forward. Molinaro added that it was probably a good time to do another shoreline inventory to confirm where work was still needed. Discussion involving particular landowners, potential incentive packages, and specific negotiation strategies was reserved for closed session.

**C. Preferred topics and timing of future educational seminars**

*In the interest of time, Jacobsen-Brown moved for continuation of the matter to the May meeting. Motion seconded by Gomez-Ibanez. Motion carried 7-0.*

**VIII. Correspondence/Announcements**

There were no other announcements or correspondence not already covered during the course of the meeting.

**IX. Closed Session [as per Wis. Stat. §19.85 (1)(e) to deliberate or negotiate the purchasing of public properties or the investing of public funds; and §19.85 (1)(c) to consider staff employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data]**

*Molinaro requested a roll call vote to go into closed session as permitted by statute. The roll call vote passed with all members voting to enter into closed session at 10:42 a.m.*

**X. Return to Open Session**

*McCarthy moved to return to open session at 11:15 a.m. Motion seconded by Jacobsen-Brown. Motion carried 7-0.*

*Kapsner moved to approve the weed harvesting subcommittee’s recommendation to increase the starting and capped wage rates of the harvester operators to \$11.00/hour and \$16.00/hour, respectively. Returning employees would continue to receive \$1.00/hour increases for each year of employment until the cap is reached, and the mechanical rate of \$18.00/hour would remain unchanged. Motion seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 7-0.*

**XI. Adjournment**

*McCarthy moved for adjournment at 11:16 a.m. Motion seconded by Jacobsen-Brown. Motion carried 7-0.*

Next meeting: May 19, 2012, at 9:00 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

-----  
Jane Jacobsen-Brown, Secretary

Date

Recorder: PDD