

TEAL, LOST LAND AND GHOST LAKES IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF GENERAL SUMMER MEETING 2018

TIME & PLACE: The General Summer Meeting of the Teal, Lost Land and Ghost Lakes Improvement Association was held Sunday, July 29, 2018, at Boulder Lodge on Ghost Lake. President Dave Neuswanger called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Executive Committee (EXCOM) members present: Dave Neuswanger (President), Norm Bratteig (Vice President), Gayle Little (Treasurer), Gail Nicholson (Secretary), and Steve Fiala (Director-at-Large).

Members Present: Dan Brandenstein, Linda Bratteig, Terry & Michelle Conroy, Bob & Sue Dale, Jim & Pat Dooley, Dick & Carol Dujmovic, Al & Tina Foster, John & Sue Grady, Fred & Peggy Haueter, Tom & Carol Jarzyna, Orlin Johnson, Mike & Joni Kirkoff, Case & Jo Mazik, George & Connie Miller, Bryan Neuswanger, Sandy Neuswanger, Kim & LouAnn Phelps, Nancy Skow, Larry & Ann Wheeler.

Guest: Jerry Kuchta

AGENDA ITEMS

1. INTRODUCTION by Dave Neuswanger, President: A big thank you went out to Terry and Michelle Conroy, proprietors of Boulder Lodge, for once again graciously hosting the Quiet Lakes Improvement Association (QLIA) General Membership Meeting. Dave introduced current EXCOM members Norm Bratteig, Gayle Little, Gail Nicholson, and Steve Fiala. Dave also introduced the volunteer program leaders: AIS Monitoring and Response, Norm Bratteig; Fishery Management, Dave Neuswanger; Shoreline Habitat Enhancement, John Grady; Water Quality Monitoring, Bryan Neuswanger, Property Management, Mike Brandt; and Membership, Gayle Little.

2. SECRETARY'S REPORT: Gail Nicholson presented information about the Minutes from the Summer 2017 General Membership Meeting. The Minutes had been posted on the Quiet Lakes Improvement Association web page, and members were encouraged to review them in advance of today's meeting. A motion was made and seconded for approval of the Minutes, and members voted unanimously to approve.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT: Gayle Little presented the Treasurer's Report concerning the current account balance of \$10,668.25 as of 7/29/2018; current membership of 172 members, including some 57 members who have not paid their dues; and we had three new members sign up at the meeting. Gayle Little provided information about our current status as a 501c(3) organization. Currently there are about 360 property owners. Fewer than half are members of the Association. Everyone is encouraged to talk to neighbors about the benefits of joining the Association and becoming an active member. Our Association website, www.quietlakes.org, has posted forms for new and returning members to use as they sign up for membership.

Gayle Little requested volunteers who might be willing to be mentored on Treasurer and Membership Program responsibilities. Tina Foster and LouAnn Phelps (Tina's mother) volunteered to be mentored, and will be working with Gayle Little.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: At the June 22nd Executive Committee meeting, Norm Bratteig, Vice President; and Gayle Little, Treasurer, agreed to be considered to serve another two-year term in their same positions. No additional nominations were submitted by the membership.

The members who were present at the meeting voted, and there was unanimous agreement to re-elect Norm Bratteig as Vice President, and Gayle Little as Treasurer.

5. WEBSITE at www.quietlakes.org: Dave Neuswanger presented information regarding current and future features of the Association's website. In the future, there will be no newsletters, and the website will be used for most routine communications with the membership. All Association members are encouraged to periodically check for updates of the Association website. There are many newsworthy items of interest that will provide information about the Quiet Lakes and the local environment. The following are some of the highlighted areas: About Us (including contact information for EXCOM members and program leaders), Fisheries, Water Quality, Events Calendar, and Photos (Bryan Neuswanger serves as photo editor and welcomes submissions from members).

The Association's former blog site will no longer be used, and historically significant blog information will be incorporated into the web site. Updates on hot topics will be provided in the "Latest News" section in the top right corner of the home page, and will be later added to the proper topical sub-page when no longer breaking news. Members are encouraged to send local news stories of interest to Dave Neuswanger for possible publication on the site; and photos may be sent to Dave or Bryan Neuswanger to be considered for posting.

6. WDNR BOAT LANDING RENOVATION AND CLOSURE: The WDNR renovation project is currently scheduled for August 6th until August 31st. Dave Neuswanger announced that the public landing on Lost Land Lake will be closed by the WDNR on the 6th of August and will stay closed until the renovations are completed. Ralph and Helen Hlavin, who manage The Retreat at Lost Land Lake, will make their recently renovated resort boat landing available for free public use while WDNR's public ramp is closed. The Retreat at Lost Land Lake will also have parking available for those who are using their boat landing during this period. The Hlavin family (at their own expense) and Dave spent a great deal of time planning and facilitating approval of the resort ramp renovation (several meetings with the Township of Spider Lake Board) so there would be an alternate point of public access during WDNR facility renovation.

7. INITIATION OF PLEDGE DRIVE FOR PURCHASE OF ECO-HARVESTER WEED PULLER: Norm Bratteig provided an overview of the ongoing concerns that the 2013 discovery of Hybrid Eurasian Water Milfoil (HEWM) has brought to the Quiet Lakes. A discussion followed this overview.

The EXCOM's first two efforts to control invasive HEWM in Lost Land Lake involved selective application of herbicides. After trials with 2,4-D and Diquat Dibromide, HEWM returned to heavily infested areas and expanded to new areas. The cost of chemicals was prohibitive (\$600/acre/treatment). See the Aquatic Plants sub-page of our website for a more detailed overview of past efforts to control the invasive weeds.

In an effort to find a more effective and affordable method of control, Dave, Norm, Steve, and Gail went to Chetek, Wisconsin in July of 2017 to observe a mechanical weed harvester that was currently in use by the Chetek Chain of Lakes Association. The "Eco-Harvester" is designed to pull up and bring the entire plant (including roots) onboard the harvester, completely removing it from the lake. Any plant fragments can also be skimmed from the water surface and disposed.

After considering all possible options, including renting and sharing of a harvester (not practical for several reasons), the EXCOM determined that the most viable option was for QLIA to purchase its own weed harvester to protect the lake environment. Vendor quotes for an Eco-Harvester aquatic plant puller included \$70,000 for the harvester itself and \$7,500 for a custom trailer to haul it.

If an Eco-Harvester is purchased, Norm Bratteig offered to begin operation, maintenance, and storage of the harvester and related equipment at no charge. The EXCOM would also be looking for other volunteers to help Norm with the HEWM control project.

To begin raising funds to purchase an Eco-Harvester, the EXCOM decided to initiate a pledge drive. Actual donations will not be accepted until the pledges total at least \$75,000. As pledges are made, the progress of the pledge drive will be shown on the Association web site. Pledges (and later donations) may be made publicly or privately. These funds will be used only for the Eco-Harvester and related operations. If the Eco-Harvester is to be purchased and ready for use in the 2019 open-water season, the funding goal must be reached by 12/1/18. The Board will also seek after-the-fact grant reimbursement funding that could be considered for any possible proportionate return of funds to donors if any such grants were to be obtained.

9. FISHERY MANAGEMENT: Dave Neuswanger, President and Fisheries Program Leader, presented updated information on the state of fish management in the Quiet Lakes. In the fall of 2017, large (6-8 inch) walleye fingerlings were stocked in all three Quiet Lakes. WDNR provided all of the stock for Teal Lake and for Ghost Lake. QLIA, with helpful donations from the Quiet Lakes Tourism Association and Walleyes for Northwest Wisconsin, funded the stocking of Lost Land Lake. Surveys in spring of 2018 showed good survival of the fall 2017 stockings, but predation by largemouth bass is still making it difficult for naturally hatched walleyes to survive to their first birthday. WDNR's Sawyer County Fishery Manager, Max Wolter, will publish summaries from WDNR's fall 2017 and spring 2018 fish surveys when they are completed, and the information will be presented on the Association website. Dave Neuswanger thanked several members who provided help with the surveys when WDNR crews were short-handed.

10. SHORELINE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT: John Grady, Program Leader, asked members to consider providing more large trees to serve as habitat for fish, turtles, and other wildlife in shallow water near shore in Lost Land Lake and Teal Lake. Permit applications and other information is available online. However, John and other volunteers are willing to do the work. This includes obtaining permits and cutting trees if a homeowner is willing to volunteer a tree and lakeshore space for this project. A request was also made for any individuals who might be interested in serving as a Shoreland Habitat Enhancement Program volunteer on an as-needed basis.

11. **WATER QUALITY:** Dave Neuswanger talked about water quality issues. After consulting with Sawyer County Sanitarian Eric Wellauer, Dave feels there is no immediate need to repeat the septic system surveys conducted more than two decades ago. Details are on the Wastewater sub-page of the Water Quality sub-page on our website. However, if any residents still have old steel septic tanks, they should seriously consider replacing them. Thanks were extended to QLIA Past-President Jack Wellauer (Eric's father) and others who have participated in the Clean Lakes Monitoring Network in the past.

In 2016 and again in 2018, Teal Lake was designated by the WDNR as an "impaired water" under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. President Dave Neuswanger contends that Teal Lake should never have appeared on this list, especially since one of the key data points resulting in the decision was obtained during an uncharacteristic drought year in 2012, which should have been excluded under WDNR listing guidelines. As a result, there is a heightened need to continue phosphorus and chlorophyll monitoring to show that Teal Lake does not belong on this list. Details of this complicated issue appear on the "Lake Water Quality Monitoring" sub-page of the "Water Quality" sub-page of our website. Bryan Neuswanger has agreed to serve as Water Quality Program Leader. He and Samantha Smith are monitoring Lost Land Lake in summer of 2018 and beyond. Bryan will also be seeking a volunteer to monitor Teal Lake starting in 2019.

12. **PROPERTY AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT:** In the past, John Gouze managed the buoy placement in the Quiet Lakes. That placement and retrieval process has passed to Bryan Neuswanger and Rick Thearin (Northland Lodge). In Addition, Mike Brandt is willing to serve as Program Leader for Property and Facilities Management and will supervise island picnic site maintenance.

13. **BOATING ORDINANCE:** The QLIA sent a letter to the Sawyer County Board in support of operational limits for wake boards in Sawyer County.

Numerous reports of excessive speed in the Quiet Lakes in 2017 and a few recent flagrant violations have required attention. Gail Nicholson reviewed the current Boating Ordinance, and presented an overview to the EXCOM at the last meeting. The Spider Lake Township Ordinance limits all watercraft to operating at a maximum speed of 10 mph on Teal Lake and Lost Land Lake. The Ordinance can be enforced by Sawyer County Recreation Officer Craig DePew (mobile 715-699-4820), who can also be contacted at the Sheriff's Office at 715-634-4858. The QLIA EXCOM recommends a measured approach to thwart flagrant violations, and encourages members to exercise prudent judgment and use common sense for marginal speed issues, need for emergency travel, etc.

14. WRAP UP: Everyone in attendance was encouraged to take part in the picnic immediately following the meeting. A motion was made, and seconded to adjourn the meeting, and a unanimous vote was held. The meeting was adjourned.