

Mission Lakes Association (MLA) Board Meeting
April 13, 2019

Attendees: Nick Bernier, Julie & Roger Mack, Cheryl Turcotte, Gary Rhode, Ron Hedlund, Barb Woese, Jack Schubert, Rebecca Timmins, Steve Scholtes

The board accepted the meeting minutes from 10/13/18.

Dave Williams, a lakeshore homeowner from Pelican Lake attended the meeting to report on his experiences with the VRBO next to his property and what obstacles he has encountered with the county in his exploration of regulating rental properties in the Brainerd Lakes Area. He reported that the VRBO next to his property is often rented to parties much larger than it was intended. Some of the outcomes of the rental property next door is an negative impact on the septic system and water in the lake. Noise can also be a problem. He has worked with the Pelican Lake Association who employed attorney Mark Severson. His legal opinion is that this property does not allow this kind of use. Research shows that in 2014 there were 504 lakeshore rental properties of the VRBO type, and in 2018 there were 1,186 in Crow Wing County. This number continues to grow. Dave has talked with the county commissioners and the Land Services office about instituting regulations and fees for rental properties, but has not found support for these ideas. He has been told that there simply is no policy and no plans to implement one. Dave's research shows that the following counties do regulate rental properties: Aitken, Douglas, Stearns, Lake, Mille lacs, Otter Tail, & Itasca. Gary Griffin, Director, Crow Wing County Land Services told Dave that they didn't have the manpower or money to enforce these kinds of regulations. Dave's emails have subsequently been blocked to the Land Services office. Dave believes with increased fees to those property owners, enough money could be generated to enforce the regulations. Dave also believes the newest county commissioners, Steve Barrows and Bill Brekken would be in favor of regulating rental properties. Dave has spoken to several other lake associations and has found favorable response. County Commissioner Board meetings take place on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 9:00 a.m. Dave feels that if a much larger group attended to talk about this that some action may be taken, or at the very least, the issue may garner added attention.

Nick asked that Dave send him information about this issue digitally so he could take it to the Lakes and Rivers Alliance (LARA) Board.

Jack attended a Crow Wing County Commissioners meeting and felt that the county and land services are rather apathetic when it comes to water conservation even though Crow Wing county is one of the largest contributors to the state coffers because of water tourism.

Financia

Board reviewed cashflow report discussed bank accounts and expenses for this past year and anticipated expenses in the upcoming months.

We continue to experience a shortfall of cash to pay for all the expenses the lakes generate including the treatment of AIS. The board will send a letter to all the property owners explaining what is needed for the upcoming summer.

We have paid the MLA dues and will be paying the LARA dues of \$50.

We currently have \$12,925 in checking and \$5,400 in savings.

AIS Treatment

The DNR will be making \$4000 per lake available for milfoil treatment this year. It does not fund any curly leaf treatment. Neither the county or the DNR provides any funds for boat inspection at the public access landings. This would have to be done strictly on a volunteer basis. Gary R. volunteered to do this on fishing opening weekend for Lower Mission. Right now we only have funds for a modest number of acres of treatment. The U of MN is working diligently on the AIS problem, and we hope to benefit from any discoveries they make.

Steve S. has volunteered to get more information about how to do decontamination from the station at Crosslake.

Annual Meeting

A letter from the board asking for funds and inviting recipients to the annual meeting will be sent via email to property owners before the annual meeting. Nick will prepare this letter.

The annual meeting will be held on Saturday, May 25 at 9:00 at the Center Township Hall. Nick has reserved the hall for the meeting. He will talk to the *Brainerd Dispatch* about putting a meeting notice in the paper. Gary R. will put out meeting announcement signs on the roads.

Barb W. and Cheryl T. will take care of the refreshments.

Donation envelopes will be distributed to all attendees at the annual meeting.

Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates, will be our featured annual meeting speaker. We've asked him to talk about the issues that we experience as well as what LIDs can do for a lake association and how it has worked for other associations.

We discussed inviting the county commissioners.

Rebecca T. will create a spring/summer newsletter after the annual meeting. She welcomes ideas for the newsletter.

Summer Lake Activities

In past years, PLM has done the AIS mapping for free, but this year is charging \$250 for milfoil and \$250 for curlyleaf mapping. This is still a bargain compared to what other lake associations pay. There was discussion of Jack using his GPS, and with guidance from Ron, do the mapping instead of PLM. The board basically agreed it would be easier for PLM to do this task. Nick has signed the contract with PLM to do the AIS treatment. The decision about what level of treatment and how many acres to treat will be made later.

Jack S. will do secchi readings.

Debunking Myths

The board agreed that our motto of keeping our lakes in the condition that makes them fishable, swimmable, navigable and beautiful enough to pass on to our children is one that we should keep front and center of all of our lakes information, i.e. letters to property owners and newsletters. We must attempt to debunk myths about AIS treatment hurting the fish and to inform about property values and how they are affected by AIS.

Misc.

Pelican Lake Association has asked us to contribute \$500 for another cormorant harvest this spring. The board agreed to this.

Nick is attending a meeting of lake associations at Ideal Corners on May 4th. It is a forum on AIS and he will send out information to the board about it as Ron has that information.

Roger Mack's neighbor has been filling in wetlands and building many small buildings on his property. A Land Services representative did take photos of this fill. Roger will bring a petition to the annual meeting to be signed and subsequently provided to the county to pressure them to enforce lakeshore rules against fill.

Ron H. and Jack S. will work on updating the website.

An anonymous property owner has agreed to continue to work on the beaver problem by eliminating them on a as needed basis. We have a permit for this activity.