

**LITTLE ST. GERMAIN LAKE PROTECTION
AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT
ST. GERMAIN, WISCONSIN**

Elected Commissioners

Steve Sward, President
Erv Stiemke, Treasurer
Carole Koldoff, Secretary
5844 Prince Court
Lisle, IL 60532

Appointed Commissioners

Ted Ritter, Town of St. Germain
Jay Verhulst, County of Vilas

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2004

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Steve Sward at 9:05 a.m. at the St. Germain Community Center with approximately thirty-one people in attendance. All Commissioners other than Jay Verhulst were present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Hank Kosanda, seconded by Dick Kenney, and unanimously approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve the 2003 Annual Meeting minutes was made by Hank Kosanda, seconded by Ken Koldoff, and unanimously approved by voice vote.

WELL DESERVED THANK-YOU'S

Thank-you's went to: John Manki for preparing the grant application and five-year lake management plan; Lou Mirek for donating a jon boat; Ron Mackowski for (1) donating a motor for the jon boat, (2) working on the self-help program, and (3) helping with the buoys with his son, Zeke; Mark Hiller and Mr. and Mrs. Nels Holmgren for diving to locate Eurasian water milfoil; Tom Best for raking and sampling; Gary Guyman for working on the aerators and the fencing; and Ken Stofflet and Tom Best for representing Little St. Germain Lake on the Town Lakes Committee.

FINANCIAL REPORT/BUDGET & ESTIMATED SUMMARY OF 2004 EXPENSES

presented by Erv Stiemke (as mailed in advance with meeting notice).

A Motion to approve the financial report was made by Jim Anderson, seconded by Lee Holthous, and unanimously approved by voice vote.

EXOTIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT UPDATE presented by John Manki

We currently have a problem in Little Saint with two exotic species, curly leaf pondweed (CLP) and Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) that were probably brought in by boats at the boat landing. In 2002, CLP was discovered in East and No Fish Bays with severe matting. The Lake District took immediate action, and a chemical treatment was very successful. In April of 2003, EWM was discovered in West Bay around the boat landing, and a treatment plan was started with the support of the WDNR. A chemical treatment of West Bay was done with some treatment into No Fish Bay. Both species are very invasive, and, left untreated, can take over the lake, decreasing lake quality and eroding property values. Little Saint is an ideal environment for both species in terms of hydrology and lake depth, and it is imperative that we maintain this approach to managing the exotic species.

1. Activity over the past twelve months.

Over the last year and in 2003, the CLP and EWM treatments were both successful. There was no matting this year of the CLP as there was in 2002, and the water clarity was better—not as severe algae bloom caused by the back of CLP. The density of the plants was much less than in 2003, and in

some areas you could not find any plants, but, as predicted, both came back in 2004. In late September 2003, a survey found CLP beginning its growth cycle. In early May 2004, a survey confirmed that CLP beds were back, but less dense than in 2003, and non-existent in some areas. In mid-May approximately 100 acres were treated for CLP with Aquathol K in No Fish and East Bays. Again, there was no matting and less algae bloom.

EWM scuba surveys were done on June 9th. Healthy beds were found, as they were last year, and on June 28th the perimeter of West Bay and small portions of No Fish Bay were treated with Navigate 2-4-D. A July 25th scuba dive found that the treatment was effective—especially in shallower depths. However, the plants were still healthy in deeper water of eight to fifteen feet. A second EWM treatment was done over thirty-three acres down to the fifteen foot depth line. During a scuba dive in late September, NES discovered CLP and EWM in East Bay that we will have to deal with in 2005.

2. Status and Forecast

Total eradication is extremely difficult and highly unlikely. However, successful control is highly likely, and the results are positive to date. We have a good jump on the problem thanks to the Lake District's quick action. The CLP matting is gone, and water clarity is improving with less algae bloom. Native plant life is returning, maybe too much, and we may need to take control measures in the future. Fishery is improving, and the lake's reputation is returning to its deserved level. This trend should continue, but will require commitment to a long-term effort. Some other exotics that could enter our lake in the future include rusty crayfish, purple loosestrife, and zebra mussels.

3. Five year Plan

Copies of John's five year lake management plan are available for review. Ted explained how the five year plan came to be. With tremendous effort and in a short amount of time, John put together a grant application and five year management plan to control CLP and EWM that has a \$240,000 cost. The DNR approved and confirmed his plan, and over the next five years the Lake District will receive \$120,000 from the DNR, retroactive to May 1, 2004. Little Saint Germain is the first lake in Wisconsin to receive this type of grant.

The objectives of the plan are to control the exotics to a spot treatment status by 2008, thereby improving lake quality and reducing costs to the Lake District. The plan includes the following: monitoring and documenting by volunteers, an annual survey by NES, annual chemical treatment, community awareness programs (in concert with the efforts of the Town Lakes Committee Clean Water Clean Boat program), and public announcements of findings and progress. John asked that all Lake District members get involved, as this is our lake and our problem. He asked that we learn the plant types, report suspicious findings, and support the Wisconsin legislature in the Clean Water Clean Boat program. If we lake hop, we must clean our boats, and encourage all visitors to also clean their boats before putting them into our lake.

Steve advised that the DNR wanted assurance that we would be a five year player as far as financial commitment. The Board has shown them our budget for this year and that we are building our carryover, and they seem to be satisfied. In order to finalize receipt of the grant, we need the endorsement of the plan from the membership and confirmation that each year's budget will include a portion of the \$120,000, which amount will decline over the years. A motion to endorse and support John's report and the DNR grant over the next five years was made by Bruce Lussier, seconded by Lee Holthous, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Jim Anderson asked if there was more than one herbicide used in treating these exotic plants. John said that there are a number of different treatment plans that we can use, and research in this area is ongoing. Part of preparing the plan was examining all alternative methods that are available. We work very closely with Cliff Schmidt to make sure that we are using the right chemicals. At least today, the Aquathol K that we are using on the CLP is the best chemical, and Navigate 240 is the

preferred chemical to use on EMW. If the plants would build up immunity to those chemicals going forward, we would have to evaluate the situation at that time. Our lake, especially West Bay, has a very healthy population of native milfoil, a good plant, that looks very similar to EWM, a bad plant. Research has verified that in some lakes there tends to be a cross-hybridization of the two. The EWM can be growing in a bed of native milfoil, and the herbicide will knock out the EWM, but not affect the native milfoil. However, when there is hybridization, is the hybrid as problematic as EWM, and will the chemical work? We took a sample of a plant from West Bay that is very suspicious. It is currently being sent out East for some genetic study to see if it might be a hybrid. If so, we would also have to look at that. The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis, and adjusted as needed.

A question was asked as to whether there was any other kind of treatment available besides herbicides. John advised that mechanical harvesting is not effective, especially for EWM, as it spreads by cuttings. Likewise with CLP, which propagates by turion seed pods. Alternatives would be dredging in smaller lakes and drawing down the water level in shallow lakes.

CLEAN WATER CLEAN BOAT PROGRAM

A member asked if boat landing cleaning could be made mandatory. Steve pointed out that this would involve significant costs and manpower, and, due to the grade and drainage at the public boat landing, there could be a problem power washing boats there. Also, there are several private boat landings on the lake. Ted advised that, in connection with the Clean Water Clean Boat program, one of the Town Lakes Committee's objectives is to have a clean boat clean water volunteer based inspection program at all five of the town's public boat landings by the spring of 2005. This would not include washing boats or catching 100 per cent of the boats, but it is a program that has been found effective in Minnesota at reducing the spread of exotics. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend the Town Lakes Committee meetings. One of the DNR requirements in the five year management plan is some assurance that we are trying to prevent any more exotics from coming into our lake by having a program in place such as the Clean Water Clean Boat program. We are trying to satisfy that requirement at the town level. Currently, Little St. Germain is the only lake in St. Germain that has exotics. However, it is very likely that one or more of the other lakes will be invaded in the future.

NATIVE WEED CONTROL UPDATE presented by Erv Stiemke

Harvesting was done this year in No Fish Bay at a cost of \$8,000. As there was no real problem in lower East Bay and South Bay, harvesting was not done there. From August 12-16, 2004, 49 hours of harvesting removed 40 loads (approximately 120 tons of vegetation.) No fern pondweed (the plant that was a nuisance in the 2002 harvesting) was observed. Oxygen levels and the algae situation should improve in that area. Cliff Schmidt did not notice any exotic species in the area where he harvested.

AERATION PROJECT UPDATE presented by Steve Sward

This was a multi-year study program on our lake by USGS. It was hoped that we would have their final report for this Annual Meeting. However, it is now likely to be close to the end of the year before we get the report. Last fall, USGS wanted us to authorize additional monies for further sampling of the lake, particularly in the Spring to measure the effectiveness of the aeration. We declined due to the significant increased cost, the information we previously obtained from USGS, and the additional information we are now able to obtain through our self-help program.

PROSPHORUS REMEDIATION UPDATE presented by Philip Korth of Foth & Van Dyke

Phil brought a draft final report and an overhead slide presentation. In 2000 and 2001, they did a study on phosphorus on Little Saint. Little Saint is a naturally eutrophic lake, highly fertile, high in phosphorus concentration and high in weed growth. Fifty-one percent of the phosphorus comes in from Muskellunge Creek (MC). The second largest contributor is probably groundwater. East Bay is impacted the most. Models show that if we eliminate all of the phosphorus from MC, we would reduce the phosphorus in the lake by about 46%. Even if all of the phosphorus was removed, Little Saint would still remain a eutrophic lake, but we would have less algae bloom and better water quality.

Aluminum sulfate (alum), a non-toxic chemical commonly used in water treatment and phosphorus removal in lakes, could be added to MC. It would initially cost somewhere in the \$250,000 to \$300,000 range for a structure and to bring in electrical power, with a year round cost of approximately \$14,000 to \$25,000. If we did this on a seasonal basis only, we could minimize the dissolved particles that would settle into the lake. However, there would be still be particles that would settle out into the lake and become part of the sediment. Before we make any commitment, we should first look at where we could locate a treatment facility, essentially a small lot for a 20 by 24 building that would house a 5,000 gallon fiberglass tank inside the building for the liquid alum and heat pumps. The DNR would need to authorize a one inch pipe being placed at the bottom of MC with holes in it, and we should review our plan with Dale Robertson at USGS. Second, we should prepare a financing plan. There are grant monies up to 75% available from a DNR Lake Protection Grant. Third, we should send a flyer to all Lake District members.

Foth & Van Dyke also looked at the possibility of side stream alum treatment. Cost would be approximately 1 1/2 to 2 million initially and \$49,000 to \$98,00 per year, and permitting would be difficult. They do not recommend this option.

Ted stated that we know that the water coming down MC is generating a substantial amount of nutrient to the lake. We have evaluated the ground water flow into the lake and understand what that is. However, there is one area that has not been looked at yet that could determine whether this program would even work. It is entirely possible that we could reduce the nutrient flow down MC and still have a very heavy algae bloom. This would be due to the nutrient being released from the sediment on the lake bottom, especially in light of the heavy weed mass from curly leaf in the past several years which releases nutrient, much of which stays in the sediment for some time. He suggested that it may be smarter to do a sediment core study during the next year to evaluate just how much nutrient is coming out of the lake bottom before moving ahead with this type of program. If we find that there isn't that much and that this really might work, then a year from now we could give serious thought to moving ahead. That project could be done through grant money, and USGS would coordinate and contribute to it financially. The cost to the Lake District would be under \$4,000 to do that one last study which could help determine the likelihood of this being effective or not.

As Steve saw Phil's report for the first time today, the Board is not prepared to make any recommendations at this meeting. He suggested that we take a year to have further conversations with Phil, study the report, look into grant money, and bring a recommendation to the membership next year.

The meeting was then opened up to any questions the members might have of Phil. One of the questions was posed by Larry Acker who asked about a third alternative--treating the entire lake. Larry also stated that in the winter the water is very clear, so there would be no need to treat on an annual basis--just seasonal. Phil said that the one-time treatment is not recommended, because MC and groundwater pipe a high amount of prosperous in every year, and we would be looking at doing it again every few years. However, he will estimate the cost of that option for us. As a result of this process, sediment will settle out in areas of the lake where we have winter aeration systems, so Ted stated that we would also need to look into how these areas would be affected.

SELF-HELP PROGRAM AND WATER SAMPLING presented by Ron Mackowski

Ron demonstrated how he does temperature reading and water sampling with equipment supplied by the DNR. The DNR will evaluate findings if we do the volunteer work. Due to the uniqueness of our lake, we are doing four sites that coordinate with the USGS program done during the last number of years. Ron will be looking into the purchase of an oxygen meter (which the Board authorized the purchase of during the summer meeting). This will save a considerable amount of time, and allow us to do additional testing.

TOWN LAKES COMMITTEE REPORT presented by Ted Ritter (Chairman)

This committee was created approximately one year ago. The first thing they did was draft a resolution to get approval by the Town Board to allocate \$25,000 from room tax receipts for lake projects. Twelve thousand dollars was allocated to Little Saint Germain Lake District for exotic species problems (which reduced our levy), and \$13,000 was set aside for projects on a town-wide basis. A plant inventory study, being done exclusively on Little Saint by Tim Hoyman, is wrapping up this year. Very specific maps will show where all the native plants are located. Probably early next summer, training presentations will be held where people from all of the lakes can come and be shown how to monitor any changes in the lake. CLP was in Little Saint for a long time before being identified. We want to avoid that on all town lakes, and let property owners know how to monitor, identify problems, and alert earlier when plants are easiest to control. What concerns us is spiny water flea and zebra mussels. We are at extremely high risk, and cannot allow these to come into our lakes. There needs to be much tougher laws and better enforcement, and we need commitment from the DNR, the county, and the town. The Town Lakes Committee will oversee all of this. In 2003 Larry Acker and Charles Their from Found Lake developed and conducted the first St. Germain Town Lakes Fair. It will now be taken over by the Town Lakes Committee. Their committee meetings are public, and everyone is welcome to attend.

PROPOSED LEVY FOR 2005 presented by Erv Stiemke

The proposed tax levy of \$67,000 for 2005 was reduced by \$7,000 for native weed control, and increased by \$4,000 for a USGS sediment study. A motion to approve a final levy of \$64,000 was made by Jim Anderson, seconded by Lee Christianson, and unanimously approved by voice vote.

ELECTION OF TREASURER TO REPLACE ERV STIEMKE AS OUTGOING TREASURER

Erv has done an extremely competent and valuable job as Treasurer. In addition to preparing our reports and keeping the books, he also handles all of our financial relationships with the DNR to make sure that we do all that is required of us in order to get the various grant monies, and that we receive them when due. Steve Sward advised that Erv would be receptive to continuing as Treasurer for another term, if that is the wish of the membership. The floor was then open for other nominations. However, since there were none, Erv was unanimously elected by voice vote for another three-year term.

WEB SITE presented by Ted Ritter

The sum of \$2,500 has been budgeted for 2005 for web site development, design, maintenance, and hosting. The web site is not being developed to circumvent mailings, but to have additional and current information available. The possibility of links through the Town's or Chamber's web sites was discussed. Ted called for volunteers to form a small web site committee. As no one volunteered, it was hoped that someone who was not present at the meeting would volunteer.

MISCELLANEOUS

The aeration system in South Bay is located in deep water, and oxygen cannot be forced down. The flow of water has to go over the sand bar that separates the northern portion from southern portion of South Bay. It is very shallow there, and the south half of South Bay is not getting nearly the benefit as the north half. Dick Kenney asked if a trench could be cut through the sandbar to get oxygenated water at a low level flowing through the passage and benefiting the other one-half of South Bay. Steve stated that this question was not currently on the table, and the WDNR will not allow a trenching.

A question was asked regarding the possibility of a no-wake buoy being placed at the end of West Bay towards highway 70. We have pursued this question before with the DRN with no success, and Ted stated that the DNR typically restricts no-wake zones to thoroughfares and narrow passages.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Jane Powell, seconded by Lee Holthous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Carole Koldoff, Secretary