

BPILA Board Meeting Minutes
April 7, 2009

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Board meeting roll call

Tom Manikowski – President
Jen Medema – VP
Paul Mulheisen – Treasurer
Lisa Zigmont – Secretary

All board members were present.

Also in attendance were Pat Talbott, newsletter developer; Dan Bailey, CLMP/Lake Improvement Board representative; and Susie Manikowski, social events coordinator.

A motion was made by Paul Mulheisen with a second from Jen Medema to approve meeting minutes from January 26, 2009. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report

Paul Mulheisen reported membership still at 44 members for the year, thus far. Five of these are new members we did not have last year. Total membership last year was 88.

We have \$1294.77 in the checking account. Newsletter and lake testing are biggest expenses. Total balance between checking and savings is \$4498.43.

Tom Manikowski made the recommendation that the BPILA newsletters also be addressed to "current resident" so that it gets to more lake residents and cuts back on those that are being returned. Paul Mulheisen indicated that the labeling is done according to the township tax roll. Paul (and Pat Talbott) indicated that they will come up with additional address options.

Fireworks update

Per Tom Manikowski, Scott Marks will still head up fireworks this year. Scott was on vacation and unable to attend the meeting. Tom asked for a motion to approve a sheriff patrol again for this year's fireworks show. The patrol was added in 2008 and is for a ground patrol in the Greene's Landing area. There have been problems and violence in the area in the past, and the new patrol has improved the situation and local residents have been very appreciative. The BPILA board advised the Kent County Sheriff patrol that the intent of this patrol is to act as a deterrent for problem individuals and not designed to look for basic violations. A motion was made by Jen Medema to recommend that BPILA hire a sheriff patrol for the July 7, 2009 fireworks show, not to exceed \$500. The motion was seconded by Lisa Zigmont. Motion carried.

Hessler's currently allows use of their land for the fireworks show. The permit for the show has been filed and is in process.

The fireworks drive will start soon. Tom encouraged meeting attendees to pass the word about the drive to encourage participation in donations. Collections will begin mid-June after the newsletter announcement. It was agreed that fireworks collection should be done separately from association dues.

Tom inquired if we should do a separate mailing for association dues, since he's received reports that people did not see the dues form included in the last newsletter. Pat Talbott and Paul Mulheisen reported that a separate annual dues sheet inserted with the newsletter would not cost more for mailing.

Lake Improvement Board report

Dan Bailey was recommended and approved as BPIL representative on the township Lake Improvement Board. Dan reported that there was an increase in weed harvesting this past year. Our contract runs out with Professional Lake Management in 2009. The fees from PLM will increase from \$228 to \$265 per acre. Dan made a motion with the Lake Improvement board to get bids from other suppliers for the 2010-2014 contract term. Progressive AE engineers will start on getting bids. There is another public hearing with the Lake Improvement Board on May 28, 7:00 p.m., where this will be discussed. Dan will follow up on when these bids will be reviewed by the LI board, and will also obtain the minutes from the upcoming May meeting, once they are made available.

An inquiry was made as to what Progressive AE's role is. Dan reported that they are the project management arm for the Lake Improvement Board. They get bids and make recommendations on treatment and suppliers. Jen Medema inquired if the contract expiring includes Progressive AE's services. Dan reported that they are part of the contract. An inquiry was also made if we know the average number of acres that are treated now. Dan reported that he did not know.

Dan reported that there is some Eurasian milfoil that has been found on the north end of the lake. Progressive Lake Management recommends not to rake or harvest because it will re-seed itself. Pat Talbott suggested a newsletter article talking about keeping shorelines clean. Dan reiterated that lakefront owners must rake their shoreline, and agreed that an article should go in the newsletter. Susie Manikowski reported that there is an aeration tool for muck shorelines and muck buster pellets available. There is a company, owned by Jeff Traynor on Ratigan Lake, that will aerate shorelines for a fee. Dan indicated that Progressive AE has a great article on their website regarding seawalls and shoreline. He will forward this to Tom.

Dan also provided CLMP testing results. BPIL is considered average. Our phosphate rates are increasing, but still in average range. He recommended we encourage non-phosphate fertilizer in our newsletter article. Non-phosphate fertilizer is sold on Saturday mornings at the Bostwick Lake Congregational Church on Belding Road.

Newsletter report

Pat Talbott reported 3 new advertisers: Grattan Bar, Grattan Grocery, and H&W Farms. Tom reported that Jeff Traynor also would like to place an ad. Future articles will include lake history by Kathy Kirkbride; lake management by Dan Bailey; Fireworks timing and donation collections; and separate insert for association dues.

Paul Mulheisen recommended we also have an article asking for additional volunteers for road reps, joining Herrington trash collection, social events, etc.

Pat reported that her goals for the newsletter include: education and information about the lake and its environment; answering questions; present a positive image of BPIL and the community; and encourage participation in the association and the board.

Tom indicated that we are posting the prior BPIL newsletters on the township website. Dan Bailey recommended that we include this fact in the newsletter.

Township Supervisor update

Frank Force reported that the township sewer O&M contract has been terminated. They are reviewing 4 supplier bids for a new contract: Sierra Consulting, Ryan's, B&B, and Infrastructure. A decision could be made by next Monday's meeting on April 13, 2009.

Frank also reported that Grattan ponds are high, but not as high as in previous years. We should be fine until May 1 when we can begin pumping again. Frank is measuring the ponds each week. A temporary expansion of the irrigation site will probably be needed for the Grattan site. The board is hoping to submit a permit to the DEQ to irrigate further into orchards.

Tom asked if the township board could put more permanent irrigation expansion into place. Frank reported that a permanent reserve irrigation site is being investigated and was recommended by the DEQ.

Frank is getting quotes on an upgrade to the Grattan/Vergennes irrigation site. This would start in 2010. The permit renewal that's in process now will require the upgrade in order to get the permit approved. Tom inquired about the cost to upgrade. Frank reported that it will be \$300,000, plus or minus 20%. One of the options considered to cover the capital improvement to the G/V site is a temporary \$100 increase in rates for a period of one year, with a total of \$400 sewer customer. Once the funds are collected, the rates would return to the normal rate. Lake resident Karl Otte stated that he did not agree that the sewer system is wearing out.

Dan Bailey asked is there was any solid matter sludge measurement. Frank advised that it's at a manageable level, but it's never been cleaned and probably will need to be at some point.

Frank inquired with the BPILA board if they agreed whether or not sewer rates should be increased annually by the rate of inflation, with 20% of the increase going to capital improvements. Not all attendee's of the meeting agreed with this increase.

Lake resident Scott DeMeyer inquired as to what happens with past due bills from abandoned residences. Frank indicated that the county pays for these and the cost is added to the property tax statement.

Paul Mulheisen inquired whether the township is still collecting for the last special assessment for capital improvement costs in our sewer bills. The G/V irrigation project is a required project that is pending and our DEQ permit renewal states this as a requirement.

Scott DeMeyer asked if grants were available to the township to cover capital improvements. Frank indicated that there are funds available via the federal stimulus package, and that items have been submitted to Lansing, including sewer upgrades and the addition of Cowan Lake to the sewer system.

Lake resident Jack Proos inquired as to how the township is doing on budget. Frank indicated that the state revenue sharing funds may be cut by 30%, which the township is anticipating and has built into their 2009 FY budget.

Dan Bailey commented to Frank that he appreciates the township board and the work they are doing. This was seconded by Tom.

Safety Network

Tom put out a request/inquiry to road reps to spearhead a safety network, but received no responses. Scott DeMeyer volunteered to lead this effort. Pat Talbott advised that Deb Story or Chris Nikodemski (sp?) may have some history on this. There was previously not much interest in participation by the lake community.

Township Lake Coalition

Tom has talked with other lake boards about their interest in organizing a coalition that would represent all local lake boards to have one common voice in matters with the township. It would be open to non-lake residents, too.

Goose round-up

Tom reported that lake resident Larry Kootje contacted him about whether we need to begin a round-up permit request with the DNR.

Lake resident Annette Beatty reported that 70% of the lakefront owners have to sign a petition in favor of the round-up in order for the permit to be approved. The prior 5 year permit has now expired, and was used only once. The permit application and petition that are certified by the township have to be in to the DNR by June 1. The pens used for the round-up are located in the trailer park barn.

Tom shared a statement from the Kent County Health Department and the MDEQ that the amount of eColi in the lake from the feces of geese is higher than compared to Sanitary Sewer Overflows.

Annette indicated that the petition needs to be signed by the property owner of record. Annette does not want to be the coordinator for the round up, but would be available to help.

Manure on farm fields

The BPILA contacted the MDEQ for information regarding the application of manure in the fields at Lincoln Lake Road and Heffron Road and has found that the application of manure is governed by the Department of Agriculture, Michigan Right to Farm Act, under the GAAMPS guidelines. The BPILA Board finds this acceptable and if any resident chooses to pursue this on their own, they are doing so without the endorsement of the Big Pine Island Lake Association.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.