

BASS LAKE REHABILITATION DISTRICT
ST. CROIX COUNTY, WISCONSIN
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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

St. Joseph Town Hall – 1337 County Road V

Commissioners Present: Bill Holmberg, Chair
Cecil Chally, Treasurer
Fred Young, Secretary
Tim Riemenschneider
Lynnae Thompson-Koats

Commissioners Absent: Jim Endle & Rick Colbeth

Residents: Bill Lawson
John Haag
Ron Laumeyer

1. Call to Order

Bill Holmberg called the Board of Commissioners Meeting to order at 6:01 PM. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Holmberg, Riemenschneider, Thompson-Koats and Young present. Commissioner Chally attended shortly after roll call. **A Motion** was made by Riemenschneider to adopt the Agenda, which motion was seconded by Holmberg. **Motion passed.**

2. Secretary's Report

Copies of the unapproved draft minutes of the March 27, 2020 BLRD Commissioner's Meeting, and the Agenda for the May 13, 2020 BLRD Commissioners Meeting were previously distributed. **A Motion** was made by Holmberg to approve last meeting's minutes; and to approve Secretary's report, and was seconded by Thompson-Koats. **Motion passed.**

3. Treasurer's Report

Chally noted that bank balance \$12,417.27 with everything paid. Chally explained that he gets the printer's bill, and there was discussion that the printing bill changes a bit from month to month with the size of the mailings varying. There was discussion regarding WI Lakes District mailings that provides information on topics relevant to the BLRD and legislative alerts, and whether it might be possible to pare back on the membership level and save cost. It was discussed that it unclear whether the tiered membership was due to lake tides mailing, or if it was simply based on the number of properties within the BLRD. Chally mentioned that the insurance bill will be approximately \$1,600-\$1,700 and there was discussion that there is a business auto policy; there was also discussion that the insurance brokerage that the BLRD has worked with has noted that there have been relatively limited options for sources of insurance; and it was mentioned that insurance was shopped 4 years ago. Riemenschneider noted he was willing to do an insurance review and shop around to see

if there are any options to reduce BLRD costs still maintaining appropriate coverages. Chally noted that he would pay the insurance bill that would be due 23rd of May if there was no money saving option discovered by Riemenschneider.

It was discussed that Haag and Chally will work together on the annual budget. Holmberg noted that the mailing address ideally should not be a residence, which is presently Cecil's, but that a PO Box could still be an option and that the intention would be to obtain a PO Box for the BLRD if Holmberg can get formal confirmation that this is acceptable under existing regulations for the BLRD. **A Motion** was made by Riemenschneider to approve the Treasurer's Report, which motion was seconded by Young. **Motion passed.**

4. Clean Boats, Clean Water (CBCW)

Holmberg noted that Thompson-Koats gathered some additional information and that the CBCW program would be delayed until June, and that the tentative plan is that inspectors would social distance – not touch boats/trailers. Holmberg noted that he was contacted about masks being supplied. Holmberg explained that he felt the BLRD cannot do the landing blitz, but that the DNR is considering changes to the CBCW minimum grant hour requirements; that the plan would still be to post the position for the CBCW landing inspector; and that that graduates are having a hard time finding jobs. There was discussion that it would not be likely that regulations would allow for an Annual Meeting in June – and that there was guidance to delay lake district annual meetings. There was further discussion that whether a landing blitz could be performed was up in the air.

Thompson-Koats had obtained information regarding AIS boat wash stations which Holmberg explained were expensive, and asked Thompson-Koats to present that information. Thompson-Koats explained that she looked into an organization that explained that main categories of approaches to AIS prevention included: “clean and drain areas”, watercraft inspection, boat washing, communication efforts and funding. Comment was made that many of these are already included within the CBCW program.

Thompson-Koats noted that there are various options (levels) of what can be set up at a landing for AIS prevention tools. She explained that pavement markings with paint for “clean-in” / “clean-out” areas may have benefit – as may disposal bins for weeds. Thompson-Koats explained that needing a water source for washing is where things get complicated and more expensive. There was discussion that cameras can be a deterrent factor for AIS related violations.

Thompson-Koats explained that there are options for “waterless” tools for cleaning and drying, and that the business proposing to sell those tools suggested that according to their study, there was a decrease in violations when those tools were made available. Thompson-Koats explained that the most expensive option offered was \$31,000 to install (which would include a solar powered station with internet connection) and various bells and whistles, and there would be an additional \$1,200 annual expense for that option. Thompson-Koats presented another option where the install expense would be \$11,000, and there would be an additional expense of \$1,000 annually. Thompson-Koats also explained a third option where a station with tools and signage (the tools to be replaced each year) would cost \$1,750 to install, and there would be an additional expense of \$50 annually.

Riemenschneider explained that he had taken the time to visit various boat landings with boat cleaning stations over the last four weeks. Riemenschneider explained that he encountered a DNR officer at a landing, and the DNR officer shared his feelings that

regardless of the cleaning stations, the people who are going to take off weeds will take off weeds and those who won't, won't. Riemenschneider, in stopping at 5 stations and speaking with others, explained that the main themes surrounding these stations was that they were vandalized, that there was general non-use, and that they amounted to a waste of money. It was also discussed that the BLRD has had its own experiences with vandalism of the ILIDS camera, and the BLRD doesn't have ownership of the landing.

Thompson-Koats raised the point that pavement markings still seemed like a good idea. Riemenschneider said that he talked with Ryan Brathal with the parks department, but that there was not a guarantee that we could get markings on the pavement even though the expectation is that the landing will be worked on this year. There was discussion whether markings are useful given that no-parking signs aren't even observed and aren't enforced as the BLRD has not enforcement authority over any of it. Holmberg asked if Thompson-Koats could bring up the topic of markings at the landing with the appropriate contacts (County/DNR), and that she could contact CD3 regarding any grant information that may be available.

Lake Protection Grant

Holmberg noted that Cheryl Clemmons had reached out to Chally. Chally explained that \$35,000-\$40,000 was left under the Lake Protection Gant, and there were maybe five property owners left that may have some remaining interest. It was discussed that John Reiling's intention would be to individually follow up with BLRD members to see if they had interest in performing a project under this grant.

Lake Pumping Feasibility

Holmberg noted that a lake resident had contacted the DNR noting concern that the BLRD was pumping the lake without a permit. Holmberg followed up to explain that was obviously not accurate – the whole purpose of the ongoing lake pumping feasibility study is to determine if the DNR might allow the BLRD to pump the lake. Holmberg noted that even with seasonal pumping, we may never be able to keep up with the rise of the lake – so he and Chally discussed with the DNR the possibility of getting permission to pump the lake below the 886.1 elevation. The DNR indicated that they might consider that. However, there was discussion that pumping into a sand pit may be a better option – albeit expensive. However, that option would not require a pump retrofit (with an expensive pump retrofit being necessary to pump into the Willow River due to zebra veliger concerns).

There was also discussion that high water mark was 889, but the 886.1 “ordinary high water mark” was a level at which residents did not have any beach left or had their access limited, particularly on the east side of the lake – so it would be nice if the lake could go to a level significantly lower than 886.1. There was a recap of discussions about the ordinary high water mark being set at levels above and below 886.1 over the course of the last several decades, but that the ordinary high water mark of 886.1 was established based on more recent study – particularly with regard to soil sampling. It was discussed that in any event, the 886.1 mark is the established as the ordinary high water mark for when a lake pump could be turned on (assuming that the BLRD would meet any and all other conditions imposed by the DNR for lake pumping, such as acceptable phosphorus levels and observed continuous absence of zebra veligers). Lawson noted that the 886.1 ordinary high water mark was an official survey marking that affects setbacks, etc., but that it doesn't necessarily need to have any relevance

for when the lake can be pumped assuming that the DNR may be willing to permit pumping at a lower elevation.

It was discussed that a datum was set years ago out from Bill Lawson's place, that he believes to be accurate within a couple of inches; and that 885.5 was the last official measurement, but it is expected that the level is down about an inch since that last measurement. There was discussion about contracting a surveyor to obtain an actual measurement and put in a staff gauge (so a surveyor can read it at beginning of season and end of season every year).

Chally noted that he would continue taking samples this year. It was recapped that if pumping to the Willow River were allowed, the DNR would require a much smaller screen, that the pump would need to be retrofitted which was explained in great detail at the 2018 Annual Meeting.

5. Consider, Discuss and Take Action Regarding Correspondence sent by Mr. Webster "Bye" Barsness to BLRD Chair, Which Correspondence Requests Removal of two non-shoreline Parcels of Land from BLRD Owned by Trust of which Mr. Barsness is Trustee.

Chally noted he spoke with attorney Mike Brose and his associate will be getting back to the BLRD with advice, and Holmberg noted he would get back in touch with Bye Barsness. The matter was tabled as the BLRD is waiting on legal advice.

6. Ordinance Enforcement, Landing, Signage and ILIDS

Riemenschneider explained that after working to find a qualified water patrol officer he was able to locate a qualified individual, and Riemenschneider and recapped his resume, experience, impressive background working both in prison system, a pastor, extensive volunteer coach involvement, etc. He also recapped the discussion he had about possible patrol schedule, the County Clerk of Courts' process for writing tickets, and the needs of the BLRD. Riemenschneider noted that the patrol officer could get started this Friday evening per the independent contractor agreement for those services, and that emphasis would be on weekend water patrols. Riemenschneider noted that he would get a W-9 to Chally for the water patrol officer.

Holmberg mentioned that the 3G modem stopped working, and the ILIDS vendor upgraded the modem to 4G, which upgrade expense would be payable if the upgrade is approved at the Annual Meeting. Otherwise, there would be no charge. There was discussion that even if the ILIDS camera isn't operating, it could still serve a significant deterrent effect.

Landing/Signage

Holmberg noted Ron Laumeyer's repeated efforts to move forward the discussion with the County about the drainage at the landing. There was comment about more signage potentially being placed, the County's removal of a fence at the landing and placement large boulders on the west end of the parking area.

7. County Updates, Town Updates

Holmberg explained that Rick Colbeth is still the BLRD town rep., that Steve Bohl was not re-elected (he was not on the ballot), and that Jim Endle did not run for re-election and a County Supervisor has not yet been available to attend. Holmberg noted that Community Development meets the third Thursday of every month at the County if anyone is interested in attending.

8. News, Updates and Plans

Holmberg and Thompson-Koats virtually attended the Lakes Conference. Thompson-Koats noted that there was a follow up communication last week about COVID-19 as it related to Stay at Home Orders. There was discussion what recommendations and guidance was for virtual meetings. Holmberg explained that for annual lake district meetings, the guidance was that annual meetings would be best to delay, but that September 8 is the last date that an Annual Meeting could be held and that the Annual Meeting could be held virtually with the exception of the election of Commissioners. Holmberg also explained that there is guidance that one option is that a lake district board of commissioners could call a special meeting to pass a resolution to delay the election of any open commissioner seat. There was discussion that with social distancing and other considerations – and the work to be done on the budget and proposed levy, it would make sense to delay the Annual Meeting to perhaps August, and delay the next BLRD Board of Commissioners Meeting to the second Wednesday of July per the normal cadence of BLRD Commissioner’s meetings being the second Wednesday of every other month, which would be July 8, 2020.

9. Public Comment/Resident Concerns.

Ron Laumeier had concerns about the length of the Annual Meetings having been 3+ hours and 4 hours in another instance – he suggested limiting to 2 questions per person and a 3 minute time slot per person because of the same statements/topics getting repeated over and over. Thompson-Koats shared that topics can be limited to specific time periods (e.g., a particular topic could be limited to 30 minutes), and that the structure of the meeting can also be more succinct.

John Haag commented on the 24/7 slow, no-wake ordinance that takes effect at a lake elevation of 886.1 – noting that removal of the 24/7 restriction would not appear to present any imminent danger, that the 24/7 restriction being set at an elevation of 886.1 seemed arbitrary/doesn’t make sense. There was discussion that it was believed that all septic systems were redesigned to account for a much higher water level. There was discussion that if the BLRD were to change an ordinance, there would be a procedure that would need to be closely followed, and it can be difficult, and a change to a slow, no-wake ordinance likely cannot be completed within the boating season given the long notice requirements for ordinance changes as they relate to boating restrictions. There was discussion that an appropriate petition could be crafted by any resident interested in changing an ordinance.

Thompson-Koats brought up the swim platform that appears to have been abandoned. It was noted that the sheriff was contacted about it, and that it is not the BLRD’s jurisdiction. Haag volunteered to at least attempt to secure the platform so that it is not as likely to damage anyone’s docks or boats.

10. Review of Building Plans/Shoreline Restoration and other Plans

There is a house with an approved permit that is being built in a very similar footprint as the house that formerly was in place, the information was shared (after the permit was issued). Holmberg noted that he did not see any particular concerns that stood out. There was discussion that there is money available under lake protection grant if there is interest in certain landscaping to help shoreland conservation efforts.

11. Discussion for Next Meeting Schedule/Finalize Agenda

- **Next Board of Commissioners Meeting: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 at 6p.m. at St. Joseph Town Hall**

- **Next Annual Meeting: Saturday, August 15, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.**
(tentative) St. Joseph Town Hall

There was discussion that due to COVID-19 issues, the Annual Meeting will be rescheduled with a tentative date set for Saturday, August 15, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Chally and seconded by Riemenschneider. **Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.**

Recorded by:
Fred Young, Secretary