

**(UNAPPROVED DRAFT)**

**BASS LAKE REHABILITATION DISTRICT  
ST. CROIX COUNTY, WISCONSIN  
[www.blrd.org](http://www.blrd.org)**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Saturday, August 15, 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  
Shawn Anderson, St. Croix County Rep  
Rick Colbeth, Town of St. Joseph Rep

**1. Call to Order**

Bill Holmberg called the Annual Meeting to order at 9:30 AM. All Commissioners present. **A Motion** was made by John Lehto to adopt the Agenda, which motion was seconded by Riemenschneider. **Motion passed.**

**2. Secretary's Report**

Last month, Agenda for the August 15, 2020 Annual Meeting with the Treasurer's 2020-2021 proposed budget and Agenda for the August 15, 2020 BLRD Commissioners Meeting were posted, and distributed, together with copies of the unapproved draft minutes of the July 25, 2020 BLRD Commissioner's Meeting and draft unapproved June 8, 2019 BLRD Annual Meeting minutes per mailing list that was again updated per the process that the County recommended.

Holmberg explained that the mailing of minutes and agendas for lake district Commissioners meetings need not be mailed according to statute (as distinguished from Annual Meeting Agenda and minutes), but the Board of Commissioners meeting agendas and minutes could still be posted on the website (with Tom Spaniol maintaining the website). Holmberg also explained that the minutes and agendas could also be emailed in advance of the meetings as usual, and therefore, it would be the intention to no longer mail physical copies of the Board of Commissioners agendas and minutes (but to still post those on the website and email them). There was comment that it sounds good to save mailing expenses and not mail physical copies of Board of Commissioners meeting agendas and minutes going forward (for months which nothing is being mailed regarding the Annual Meeting). There was comment that it is possible that someone may not have an internet connection. It was noted that meetings are on a regular cadence (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every other month), and it was discussed that if someone wants physical copies that could be addressed. It was confirmed that there was nothing further to report beyond the intention to save the physical mailing cost as discussed. **A Motion** was made by John Haas to approve Secretary's Report inclusive of last year's Annual Meeting minutes and was seconded by Ron Laumeyer. **Motion passed.**

### **3. Treasurer's Report**

Holmberg recapped information regarding spending this past year and noted that many things that were anticipated to happen under the grant did not occur. Holmberg noted some examples of spending that did not occur (e.g., insurance cost was reduced by \$300 due to Riemenschneider's efforts, but that the bill for the insurance did not come in during the fiscal year; lake monitoring expense was much lower than anticipated because BLRD was able to get volunteer labor rather than paid labor for the performance of lake monitoring). Holmberg recapped other spending numbers. Holmberg noted anticipated administrative expense includes administrative follow-up related to petition of non-riparian (non-shoreline) property detached from the BLRD. John Reiling inquired about the LPT grant. Holmberg recapped that the funding for the grant included things like fish cribs and shoreline restoration projects – Holmberg mentioned that he received informal information that the LPT would likely be extended through to the end of 2021 (Dec) – however, there is no guarantee that will happen. In response to an inquiry, Holmberg confirmed that monies available under the LPT grant for shoreline restoration projects of approximately \$25k remains available. Holmberg recapped: the checking account balance is approximately \$3,000; the line of credit balance is \$0.00; and all known bills are paid. Chally confirmed that he had nothing to report beyond what had been recapped. John Haag reminded Chally that the line of credit needs to be renewed to keep it, if Chally had not already completed that. **A Motion** was made by John Reiling to approve the Treasurer's report and was seconded by Chuck Edson. **Motion passed.**

### **4. Election of Officers**

Holmberg noted that the Commissioners seat occupied by Tim Riemenschneider was up for election, and that Riemenschneider was willing to serve an additional term. Holmberg called for any interest/nominations of anyone other than Riemenschneider to be elected as a Commissioner. There was no response. Holmberg called for anyone other than Riemenschneider willing to be elected as a Commissioner/willing to serve as a Commissioner. There was no response. Holmberg repeated the request for anyone other than Riemenschneider willing to be elected as a Commissioner/willing to serve as a Commissioner. There was again no response. Holmberg again repeated that call for anyone willing to be elected as a Commissioner/willing to serve as a Commissioner. There was again no response. There being no persons interested in running for the Commissioner seat and no nominations other than Riemenschneider, Holmberg called for a vote for the election of Riemenschneider to the Commissioner seat. Riemenschneider unanimously elected to the Commissioner seat. It was discussed that this was a three-year term to which Riemenschneider was elected.

### **5. BLRD Management**

#### **Bass Lake Management Plan Update**

Chally reminded all that the BLRD needs volunteers for the 5 Goals, but there were only three volunteers last year. There was discussion regarding the LPT grant. Bill Lawson noted that even if your home is close to the shoreline, there are methods for collecting rainwater run-off and prevent that from entering the lake. John Reiling noted that phosphorus levels are the main concern. It was noted that one of the key factors of phosphorus is run-off entering the lake. Reiling noted that after investigating the road with run-off, the road is not a major contributing factor in phosphorus levels. Regina Rippel noted concerns regarding

erosion and what she suspects might be the effect that would have on the phosphorus levels. There was a comment that Bass Lake is in a valley with high hillsides that go into the lake, and there was a question how to reasonably prevent run-off. There was discussion that rain gardens and plantings help. John Reiling reminded everyone that Cheryl Clemmons does an analysis under the LPT grant project that is free to the property owner (as long as the grant is available with unspent funds). Bill Lawson commented that normal woods where the ground is loose can take up to 8” of water without running off. Oscar Theiler inquired about good types of vegetation – he was encouraged to look at the BLRD website on that topic, but also to set up a meeting with Cheryl Clemmons.

**Fish cribs** – Holmberg recapped that the BLRD was able to undertake this project, with big thanks to Tom Spaniol for his extensive coordination efforts. Special thanks was noted to Ron Laumeier and Dick and Lynnae Thompson-Koats and others. Holmberg recapped that there were some cribs that did not sink, and there were additional efforts to sink those this spring. Special thanks was also expressed to Todd Tuma and Mike Marty for the donation of their time and equipment. The BLRD also anticipates another crib build this winter if grant is extended.

**CBCW** – Holmberg invited one of the boat landing inspectors, Jaxson, to speak. Jaxson noted that he educates boaters on AIS at Bass Lake – taking weeds off, draining lake water (bilges, ballasts, etc). He explained he also looks underneath boats with trailers coming in to launch. He stated he also educates on power-loading and the no-wake rules. He said most people are generally cooperative. There was discussion about potentially making the no-power-loading sign more visible and what “power-loading” meant. There was discussion regarding tracking the number of boats in and out at the landing. Jaxson noted they already have a pretty good idea what those numbers are. It was discussed that the information regarding how many boats are going in and out is also available on the DNR website. There was discussion that people are parking on the roads that are signed as no-parking and in other non-designated parking areas, overloading the landing.

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Landing Blitz** – Holmberg explained that there was a Blitz last year, but this year there wasn’t enough support for volunteer hours for the landing blitz – likely due to Covid; and hopefully, the BLRD can hold a landing blitz next year.

### **Lake Pumping Feasibility**

Holmberg recapped that the previous permits allowed pump to maintain a lake elevation of 886.0. Holmberg and Chally have been taking water samples at the pump intake for phosphorus and zebra mussel veligers. Holmberg shared that this past week the DNR contacted him and told him additional sampling may be need – including sampling at the river where the water enters. Holmberg explained that at the last Annual Meeting we had talked about a remote monitoring system. The system was installed, but unfortunately, a beaver dropped a tree on it. However, Holmberg explained that the remote monitoring station is accurately reporting the water level (date and other metrics are not accurately reporting). Holmberg explained that 885.41 was the latest lake reading level as of a few days ago. Weeds that wrap around posts of device do cause spikes on the data sheet (by an inch or two). To calibrate, Lawson’s property had a survey reference that was originally used. However, there is also an official survey mark at the landing that can be set as reference for the remote monitoring station. [See previous BLRD Commissioners Meeting Minutes.] Holmberg highlighted that the remote monitoring station takes and records measurements every 30

minutes and rain events are reflected in the data (not to be confused with spikes from weeds wrapping around device).

### **LPT Grant**

Holmberg explained that the Thompson-Koats property had an LPT project as a recent shoreline restoration site example. There was discussion that funds are still available and John Reiling or Commissioners can be contacted if anyone has an interest in undertaking a shoreline restoration project – the purpose of which is to increase water quality in Bass Lake (e.g., by preventing run-off). The 70% cost-share grant was again highlighted, and it was discussed that it's possible to offset the 30% owner portion with the owner's labor (assuming all approvals and paperwork are made). Holmberg noted water clarity data from 1986 – 2019, and pointed out that clarity recently has become better. Holmberg reported that as of a reading 7 days ago, there is 16' of clarity.

### **Water Level**

Holmberg explained that 885.41 ft was the last reading that he had observed. It was explained that this water level elevation observation is based on the recent County work. Holmberg explained that the official ordinary high water mark has been higher (e.g., 889) and lower over the years, but the DNR's established official ordinary high water mark is 886.9 – and this ordinary high water mark was established based on a geological study that included soil sampling performed by the DNR.

There was comment from a resident that has resided at Bass Lake since 1953 who is also a civil engineer: Bass Lake is a water table lake (no inlets, no outlets) and dependent in most cases on precipitation. Regina Rippel stated that Bill Lawson had told her that it would be better if the high-water mark were set two feet lower. Bill Lawson explained that his comment wasn't related to high-water mark, but was instead related what would be a more ideal lake level for property owners so some could have some beach, while others would still have workable access (e.g. in shallower areas of lake). There was comment that it may not be worth fighting Mother Nature, and that it may not make sense to attempt pumping. Tom Spaniol explained the history on the official 886.9 ordinary high water mark as established by the DNR: the Town had sued DNR in connection with a desired road construction project that was impacted by the ordinary high water mark, and the DNR set the ordinary high water mark based on a geological survey. Tom Spaniol expressed that given the circumstances of the past litigation between the town and DNR and the DNR's extensive geological study, it is now more or less impossible to alter the official, DNR-established ordinary high-water mark of 886.9. Lawson noted that in 1976 the County didn't really have much in the way of zoning, so folks could develop close to the shoreline and some did so.

Holmberg reminded everyone that the slow/no-wake ordinance goes into effect when the lake level exceeds 886.1. Holmberg explained that some folks want the slow/no-wake ordinance to be removed or go into effect at a higher elevation, while some want it lower, and many do not want any change. Holmberg explained that any change to the ordinance would only happen with a public hearing. There was comment that there was no scientific evidence that wakes outside of the 200 ft distance would cause any issues, and that the ordinance was established due to fear, not science. There was additional comment that there must be a justifiable and reasonable cause to remove rights to recreate on the lake – something that certainly doesn't exist at an elevation below 886.1. There was comment from another resident noting concerns that if the water elevation reaches 886.9, that would not be too far off (1.5 ft)

from starting to threaten his cabin. There was comment that the wakes from boats is the subject of study.

Holmberg reminded all that in the concrete slab at the landing, there is an official survey elevation marker set at 885.8 ft. Timothy Olson inquired if the elevation of the slab might possibly change, and noted that hypothetical circumstance could affect the lake level measurement. Holmberg noted that was a good point, and that if the slab had hypothetically settled a couple inches, the water level would likely be a couple inches lower than the current value of 885.21 ft.

There was discussion that Bill Lawson's lake level measurement based on a reference point established by the County at his property years ago is quite close to matching the lake level measurement that one would observe if measuring off of the official elevation marker in the concrete slab at the landing – about 2” off. There was discussion about when the lake was last slow/no-wake. Bill Lawson noted that 1997 was last slow/no-wake event (when the elevation of the lake level exceeded 886.1). There was discussion about how lake level is established. Bill Lawson highlighted that when we are talking about survey accuracy, we are only talking an inch or two – not feet. There was comment that it is straightforward math based on measurements taken by County surveyors with expensive equipment to arrive at an official measurement. There was comment that many folks would like the lake level down. John Reiling commented that lake levels in the region are changing due to decreased evaporation. Holmberg noted that there are many factors that drive the lake level. Those factors were discussed (e.g. precipitation, watershed area, water table irrigation (farming), water column pressure (sinks)).

### **Lake Pumping**

There was discussion that the least expensive pumping option was to pump in the off-season (1-2 million gallons/day). There was comment that perhaps 1” of lake level per week could be pumped out, with the potential to reduce the lake level by 1 foot in the off-season. There was discussion that if the BLRD were to pump, it would be ideal to be able to pump down to an elevation of 885.0 ft. Holmberg explained that the anticipated cost to pump to the Willow River would be approximately \$500,000. It was noted that another alternative is to pump lake water onto vacant land, and one benefit of doing so is that there would be no concern about invasive species or phosphorus levels, off-season vs. year-round. But that strategy would presumably require purchasing land. There was discussion regarding water level and slow/no-wake and that the BLRD could have a special meeting this fall to discuss.

### **Landing**

There was discussion that usage of the landing continues to rise and correlates with lack of recreation opportunities during COVID. Holmberg noted that the DNR owns the landing, the County leases and maintains the landing, and the Town of Somerset manages the roads that access the landing. Holmberg recapped that he discussed landing use with County and DNR together, and that Chuck Edson has been looking into whether pay stalls could be installed at the landing. It was mentioned that the Town of Somerset has explained that they don't have funding to enforce parking on the road outside the landing. There was comment that the County noted that the sheriff's department is enforcement mechanism for parking issues, and that the County explained that once the lot is striped (painted), the County would be enforcing. There was comment that perhaps one possibility would be for the BLRD to pay for sheriff's deputy's time to pass through the landing area to issue no-parking tickets.

Holmberg noted that Wisconsin Lakes Association has a lot of information on topics that were discussed.

## **6. Ordinance Enforcement, Landing/Signage**

### **Ordinance Enforcement**

Riemenschneider explained that the BLRD water enforcement officer has been out with focus on Thursdays through Sundays. Riemenschneider recapped that the patrol boat has been in and out of service, but that the BLRD is now in a situation where the boat motor cannot be repaired because the needed part is not available. It was discussed that there is not money in the budget this year for a new boat, which could require a new lift. However, Riemenschneider explained that there is one resident who wants to remain anonymous who would be willing to contribute up to 50% of the cost of a new motor for the patrol boat (presumably in a range of total motor purchase price being \$5k-6\$k to be installed on the existing boat). There was discussion that used motors may not be a great approach because they would require service, and that late model motors do not appear to be available at a significant discount. It was discussed that motor bids are 5k-\$6k for a new motor. Ron Laumeyer noted that he doesn't feel \$5k is justified. In addition to the anonymous \$2,500 pledged, additional donations were pledged as follows: Dick Koats - \$500; Bill Arrigoni \$250; Chuck Edson \$250; John Reiling \$200; Sarah Johnston \$100; Regina Rippel \$200. [Note 8/18/2020: Riemenschneider reported that Timothy Olson subsequently pledged \$250.] **A Motion** was made by John Reiling for BLRD to buy a new motor for the existing boat for approximately \$5,500, and was seconded by Bill Arrigoni. **Motion passed.**

### **Signage at the Landing**

There was discussion that it would be possible to propose an additional sign at the landing. The ILIDS camera now also broadcasts slow/no-wake landing. Timothy Olson proposed the potential of a LED sign and would look into that. There was comment that an LED sign would be subject to vandalism. Regina Rippel commented that she was against additional signage since people do not read it. Ron Laumeyer noted that cars will park in front of signage.

### **ILIDS**

Bill Holmberg noted that the ILIDS system serves as a physical deterrent. Holmberg reminded everyone that the lens has been broken two years in a row and has not yet been broken this year. Holmberg explained that the ILIDS system plays AIS messages and slow/no-wake info, and is approximately \$2,000 to have videos captured, reviewed, and to have the system maintained. Holmberg recapped that there is a \$500 upgrade expense that would be needed if it were to continue to operate due to the need to upgrade the system from 3G to 4G. There was discussion that the BLRD has received video of violations in the past, but sheriff's department has other enforcement priorities and has not enforced past recorded violations. There was comment that ILIDS camera does not make sense to continue to incur the operational expense since the use of ILIDS has never led to enforcement violations, but that it would make sense to physically keep as a deterrent. Tom Spaniol and Bill Lawson both expressed that the ILIDS camera has a good educational purpose in playing the recorded messages. Based on a show of hands there wasn't support to add full ILIDS camera operation to budget, and there was no motion to introduce that expense into the proposed budget. However, there was majority support based on show of hands for keeping the ILIDS camera

at the landing as a deterrent, but not recording video. It was discussed that the anticipated “support” expense for the recordings would be \$200.00.

#### **AIS – Goal 4**

Lynnae Thompson-Koats explained that there is literature that boats are the major factor in causing AIS spread, and the DNR states that Bass Lake has curly-leaf pondweed, Chinese mystery snails, etc. Thompson-Koats presented that she has undertaken to research potential AIS countermeasures, and that there are four categories related to AIS countermeasures:

1. Painting clean-in and clean-out areas at the landing, which should get done when the County restripes (paints) the landing;
2. Performing landing inspections – something that the BLRD already does and supports;
3. Messaging and outreach – again, something that the BLRD already does via its website, it’s involvement with the community and broadcasting audio on the ILIDS system;
4. Boat washing stations

Thompson-Koats explained that she contacted CD3, a company that sells AIS boat wash stations. Thompson-Koats recalled that CD3 had various boat cleaning stations at different expense levels. A more basic station was \$1750 plus the expense of tool replacement – ranging all the way up to a solar powered station and vacuum costing several factors more.

There was discussion that it is possible that the DNR may have a grant to cover 70% of the cost of a boat washing station. There was comment by John Reiling that if there is funding for it, it seems like that might be a good idea. There was comment from John Haag that the basic station would be must less expensive and less likely to break down. Regina Rippel commented that the BLRD has not been able to keep a garbage or a portable toilet there due to all of the vandalism that has occurred. Riemenschneider commented on how much effort Thompson-Koats put into researching this and expressed thanks to her for those efforts. Riemenschneider explained that he has previously driven to other sites with boat washing stations and solicited opinions regarding their use – he noted that he had the occasion to speak with a DNR officer where one of those stations was located, and the DNR officer while certainly in support of helping people clean off weeds, noted that people who are going to clean are going to clean regardless of whether there’s a boat wash station, and those who aren’t going to clean, aren’t. John Reiling expressed interest in assisting with the preparation of a grant request to the DNR for an AIS cleaning station. [Note 8/18/2020: Thompson-Koats located information that there is a Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> pre-application deadline for a rough draft of that request; and a Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> final draft deadline.]

#### **7. News, Updates and Plans**

County Rep Shawn explained that the parks department may have authority to write fines for parking issues within the landing, and there are plans to be a handicapped marked spot. However, it was his understanding that the County would not intend to staff the charging stations – that payment to those stations would need to be on the honor system.

Rick Colbeth commented that Town is blessed to have this group of Commissioners and people who care. He noted that the Town cannot modify the shoreline district zoning, so that would still be covered under the County. There were a few other zoning districts that the

Town has no authority over. There is a September 14, 2020 public hearing for the Town to consider doing its own zoning and he strongly encouraged folks to attend.

### **Annual Picnic**

It was stated that there is no intention to have a BLRD picnic in 2020 due to Covid-19, and that it is hoped that the BLRD will be in a better place to hold a picnic in 2021.

## **8. 2020-2021 Annual Budget**

It was noted that the LPT grant spending is in the budget, and of course, if the LPT grant is extended officially, any unspent balance could potentially be carried to 2021. It was also mentioned that there was a little bit higher administrative expense anticipated. The proposed budget was reviewed. Tom Spaniol noted that anyone making a motion regarding the budget should include a line item to show \$4,000 of income in boat donations with an increase of the ordinance enforcement and signage budget to \$10,500.00 to account for the inclusion of those anticipated donations with the intention to spend approximately \$5,000-\$5,500 on a new motor with the balance toward other boat maintenance and ordinance enforcement (labor) and smaller signage related expenses. Various other expenses were highlighted in discussion. It was also discussed that based on prior discussion that occurred during the meeting, ILIDS operation expense should be \$200 – not to operate video, but instead to potentially maintain audio messages that it plays. The levy was increased to \$14,000 to cover any difference between motor expense and pledges and maintaining some dollars to support the ILIDS.

**A Motion** to approve the proposed budget and levy with following revisions was made by John Reiling, and was seconded by John Haag:

- income line item to be added/reflect increase of \$4,000 for anticipated, pledged boat donations;
- the \$5,000 line item for ordinance enforcement to be increased to \$10,500 to allow the purchase of a new motor;
- an increase of the \$0 ILIDS item to \$200 for support of the ILIDS camera; and
- an increase of the levy from \$12,000 to \$14,000 (to account for the increased spending on the boat motor and support expenses for the ILDS camera)

**Motion passed.**

## **9. Public Comment/Resident Concerns**

Shawn Anderson clarified that large stones will be brought into the County park to help corral parking. There was a question whether we are still stocking with walleye – Holmberg clarified that BLRD does not stock with walleye – the DNR does that.

There was comment that it was an excellent idea to charge parking at the landing, but the DNR has not given formal approval for that. Shawn Anderson repeated that a pay-station would most likely be on the honor system. There was discussion about the parking signs at the landing, and that there would be additional striping.

**10. Discuss Meeting Schedule**

**Discussion for Next Meeting Schedule/Finalize Agenda**

- **Next Board of Commissioners Meeting: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 6:00 PM, St. Joseph Town Hall**
- **Commissioner Meetings will continue at the Town Hall every other month, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month**
- **Next Annual Meeting: Saturday, June 12, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. (tentative) St. Joseph Town Hall**

**11. Adjournment**

**A Motion to adjourn was made by Len Fricke and seconded by Cecil Chally. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:23 PM.**

**Recorded by:  
Fred Young, Secretary**

**Attendees:**

John Low  
Randi Low  
Bill Lawson  
Tom Spaniol  
Ron Laumeyer  
Tim Olson  
Doug Elert  
Dick Koats  
Sarah Johnston  
John Reiling  
John Lehto  
Sally Lehto  
Penny Chally  
Nancy Burman  
Darrell Burman  
Scott Heuer  
Matt Heuer  
Mark Johnson  
Chuck Edson  
John Haag  
Debbie Haag  
Jack Haag  
Len Fricke  
Pam Fricke  
Ruth Huss  
Greg Schmidt  
Amy Senn

Heidi Eckstrom  
Angelica Young  
Janet Stout  
Regina Rippel  
Eric Golberg  
Oscar Theiler  
Bill Arrigoni  
Lisa Arrigoni