

**LAKE SARAH IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES**

Held at the Independence City Hall

Theme: Understanding the TMDL Study – our first step to improving Lake Sarah

October 28th, 2010

Board members in attendance were Joe Baker, Donna Sheeley, Scott Walsh, Carol Beasecker, Sonja Tilbury, Joe Salvec, Victoria Marley, Ann Slavec, and Mel Knapton.

Roger Van Beusekom, Mark Holten, and Paul Klesmit were not present.

After a social at 6:30, President, Joe Baker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Joe then introduced both new and old board members to the audience.

Joe Baker asked for approval on the Agenda for the October 28th meeting and stated the the agenda was not complete and that new subjects could be added. The subject of CPR classes was brought up and that this topic would be covered during the meeting. Len Nadasdy approved the agenda and Rob Sheeley seconded. All approved.

Agenda

Joe Baker opened up the floor to agenda items and expressed that there a lot of issues to cover for Lake Sarah in the next couple of years and that it starts tonight:

- Set the agenda (Joe Baker).
 - Anyone not on agenda may be placed under Open/Misc.
- Approval of last months meeting minutes (Donna Sheeley).
- Approval of Treasurer’s report and budget Bylaw change (Joe Baker reporting for Roger Van Beusekom).
- Report on Fishery/DNR (Joe Slavec).
- Report on membership, dues, trash, and salt programs (Sonja Tilbury).
- Report on lake level, outlet, and bogs (Scott Walsh).
- Report on water quality (Joe Baker reporting for Mark Holten).
 - TMDL Study Summary (TRPD speakers Richard Brasch and/or John Barten).
 - Pioneer Sarah Creek Watershed update (Sylvia Walsh).
 - LSIA water quality objectives for the coming year (Joe Baker).
- Open mic/misc.
- Adjournment.

September Meeting Minutes

Joe Baker asked for approval of September’s meeting minutes. Carol Beasecker approved, Sonja Tilbury seconded. All approved.

Treasurer’s Report:

President, Joe Baker (on behalf of Treasurer, Roger Van Beusekom) presented a financial report dated October 28, 2010 (*see handout*). Detailed items discussed included:

- That the United Way is a good option to contribute to the Lake Sarah Association, especially if your company is matching the donation.
- Joe Baker thanked Jerry Wise for doing an audit of the LSIA books.
- Joe Baker made a motion to accept the budget. Carol Beasecker approved, Victoria Marley seconded. All approved.

*The subject of CPR classes was brought up after approval of the Treasurer's Report. It was mentioned by someone in the audience that both Allina and the Rockford Fire Department offer the class. Joe Baker responded that the cost and dates should be figured out and communicated to the members. Someone in the audience asked when this would all be setup. Joe Baker said his goal was the spring general meeting as a target date.

Fishery/DNR

- Joe Slavec reported that there is \$3,000.00 in the walleye fund.
- \$1,000.00 of the fund would be used for the stocking that was going to take place this week.
- Released stock are approximately 4 to 6 inches and cost \$1.00 each.
- Joe has received some reports on the fingerling stocking that occurred two years ago. Some have caught walleye about 12 inches in size. This reporting helps support the fact that the stocking is working.
- There were a couple of questions from the audience.

Q.) Some lakes have slot limits, how are these set?

A.) Joe Slavec responded that the DNR gives no support when it comes to this subject. If a creel survey needs to be done, we are on our own. In the past the DNR has done creel surveys about every three years but lack of funding has slowed surveying. We are not trying to make Lake Sarah a "Walleye Lake". This is just something residents were interested in doing and that having walleye in the lake may increase property values.

Q.) Are there slot limits on other species?

A.) Joe responded that are this time Lake Sarah is essentially self run. Joe said that he had heard a rumor that the DNR had actually taken crappie out of Lake Sarah to stock other lakes.

Membership/Database/Directory

Sonja Tilbury reported the following information:

- The 2010 Lake Sarah Directories are here available in the front for everyone.
- Carol Beasecker and Sonja have been busy exploring possible discounts programs for members. We have 134 paid members which is down from past years and encouraged all attendees to take some membership forms with them and talked to their neighbors who are not members, and ask them to join because it is the right thing to do, being part of the Lake Sarah community. The discount of \$51.00 you will receive from Randy's trash collection more then offsets the \$35.00 membership dues.
- Sonja has also explored having a softener salt discount for paid members of the association. If we get 20 people to sign up for this program we can get 40# bags of salt

delivered and taken down to your basement for \$5.95(+ tax) a bag. If 50 members sign up the cost drops to \$4.19(+ tax) a bag.

- Joe Slavec brought up his idea about having a lifetime membership option. For a one time fee of \$500 or \$1,000 one could become a lifetime member and possibly having these members receive a flag to fly on their property. He said this kind of money would really help when it comes to the costs we will incur in the future for the lake cleanup. Joe asked who might be interested in this program, six attendees raised their hands. Joe also brought up the idea of raising the membership dues as a way of raising more money to go towards lake cleanup.

Q.) Would we be able to select the kind of salt for our softeners, or would the discount only apply to one kind?

A.) Sonja responded that she had asked the vendor about selection and that it is possible to have different kinds available and that would be discussed later when the deal is a little more firmed up.

- Joe Slavec suggest we have a “membership blitz” and send out or have members walk their streets with signup forms.
- Joe Baker then mentioned that Brad Spencer has taken care of our online newsletter for so long would be bowing out to rechannel his energy in other areas. To thank Brad for all of his hard work, a gift certificate was presented to him to take his family out to dinner. His personal newsletter will still cover some of the high points of Lake Sarah.

Lake Level, Outlet, and Bogs

Scott Walsh reported the following information:

- Lake Sarah has approximately 5,000 acres of watershed. It has two inlets and one outlet.
- His mission is to regulate the lake level to what was set by the DNR and to keep it at a stable level. This past spring beaver dams trapped the spring runoff in the lake so we lost some time there. The beaver dams have now been taken care of, but we have issues with the outlet being clogged with cattails and bulrushes. He emphasized how important it is to maintain the water level because we could have a replay of what occurred in years past with huge bogs floating around the lake doing damage to property (i.e. docks, boat lifts, shoreline), and a “no wake” which ruins everyone's fun.
- Scott said that if a bog lands on your property, you should to obtain a permit to remove it, and that it was best not to just push it out and let it float onto someone else's property.
- He stated that he is monitoring the creek at County Road 92 each day and that it is flowing, but not as fast as we would like.
- He is investigating options for a cleanup of the outlet.
- Scott sent around a signup sheet for those interested in helping out in the event of an emergency for things such as floating bogs, etc.
- Joe Baker added that we been over the high water mark the entire season.

Q.) Someone from the audience asked Scott if he could clean out his wood duck houses near the west end since he was down there everyday?

A.) Scott answered that they were already taken care of.

Q.) Senator Gen Olson, who was present at the meeting asked if it was possible to apply for a “blanket permit” to deal with the bogs?

A.) Scott replied that the board had talked about that at the last meeting because bogs are such an issue on Lake Sarah. Gen Olson responded that she was willing to help if need be.

• Scott proceeded to show a poster of pictures of how the weir and outlet looked shortly after the installation, and how it looks today.

Q.) Can the weir be cleaned out?

A.) Yes, the DNR allows us to maintain it. There are two ways to do this, chemically or by dredging.

Q.) Does it fall on the cities to pay to clean it out?

A.) Three Rivers and the city of Greenfield paid the last time. If it is cleaned out, we should see a 25% increase of outflow.

Bylaw Change

• Carol Beasecker mentioned the change in a bylaw located on Page 4; Section C (Secretary & Treasurer); Number 3.

Existing Reads: The treasurer shall prepare an itemized **annual** budget for consideration by the Board of Directors to be presented to the membership at the **Annual (summer)** meeting each year.

Change: The treasurer shall prepare an itemized **calendar year** budget for consideration by the Board of Directors to be presented to the membership at the **Spring** meeting each year.

Joe Baker asked for approval of the change, Ann Salvec approved, Carol Beasecker seconded. All approved.

TMDL Study Summary

• Presentor, Richard Brasch, went over his background stating that he has 30 years in the water business and then proceeded to a slideshow (see handout) covering TMDL study done for Lake Sarah. It was followed by a question and answer forum.

Q.) Are farmers allowed to use phosphorus fertilizer?

A.) Yes, but they are all required by state law to do a soil test on their property. Animal waste is not a huge issue for Lake Sarah.

Q.) I live in Greenfield and farmers send in soil samples. Were any of those farmers results put in the TMDL, because the farmers say they are not to blame?

A.) We didn't go to individual farmers, we went by the state information.

Q.) As we move forward, do we need to know how much is agriculture?

A.) It would be helpful to know what percentage of the watershed is agriculture. But, we are not trying to pit farmers against lakeshore owners. We are trying to also provide a public area to those how live up in the watershed.

Q.) Is alum the best way to combat our water problems?

A.) There is a study being done on Lake Rebecca, it is one the last things done, and costs between \$700 and \$800 per application.

Q.) Doesn't Lorretto have an ordinance which can't prevent feed lots? Will this change in the future?

A.) If it's not going in the storm water it gets sensitive. Grant money needs to be found to help farmers with feed lot control.

Q.) Is there anything new for controlling curly pond weed?

A.) There are DNR approved low dose chemical treatments and weed harvesting. These offer the best opportunity to control curly pond weed. We are exploring costs of both and their effectiveness.

Q.) Is this EPA mandated? And if we don't do anything as lakeshore owners, will something happen anyways?

A.) There are two reasons to get active.

1.) It will get the job done faster then waiting for the EPA.

2.) It is better when the ground work is done locally.

Q.) What can we do as individuals to combat this?

A.) Form a strong, diverse local group with influence.

Q.) Isn't 60% of the problem coming from inside the lake?

A.) Curly pond weed will take a while control. With herbicides it takes 3-5 years to see results.

Q.) We as individuals are spending \$300 to \$400 a year to control weeds. Is there a better way for this money to be spent?

A.) Lake Sarah has the Beach Buddy which is also a good way to help take care of weeds. This past season 40 residents sign up to use it. You want to do anything to remove nutrients from the lake. Chemicals are okay but they are a band-aid. Rain gardens are another way to help or external retention ponds, anything that slows down what's coming in to the lake.

Q.) Greenfield is the largest contributor, what can residents do to help?

A.) Do not point fingers. I met with the city council folks in Greenfield, they care. But they are also scared with the mention of \$2,000,000 ticket to build retention ponds. It will take a lot of grant money. Please, don't be threatening Greenfield.

Q.) Will our property values double if this is taken care of?

A.) It has a significant impact on property values.

Q.) How long does the alum treatment last?

A.) 10 to 20 years.

• Senator, Gen Olson, added the following three things on the topic:

1.) Gleason Lake in Wayzata has had some success controlling the curly pond weed and suggested we talk with some of the people there.

2.) Lake Minnetonka is in the 3rd year of a 5 year study in three bays controlling weeds and that residents on more of the bays want to be in on this effort. She suggested we talk to them about the pitfalls.

3.) Irrigation from lake watering helps control weeds. She was told that if you do this to extend the intake out 100' and it will draw out more phosphorus out of the lake.

• She commended the residents and association on their effort in taking on this matter.

- Joe Baker added that Lake Rebecca is on year one of a two year plan. 2011 is work in the external, 2012 is internal. He reminded attendees that this is not about holding people hostage. It's about working together towards a solution.
- Sylvia Walsh from the Pioneer Sarah Creek Watershed said the next 6 to 12 months will include:
 - An update of a second generation plan.
 - Projected projects for the future.
 - Expanding the culvert, a retention pond at Dance Hall Creek.
 - These will all set us on the path to apply for the respective grants.

She also added that the TMDL will be hosting more meetings.

Door Prize

- President, Joe Baker announced that we would draw four names for gift certificates to BaggyJos in Delano (they make our Lake Sarah sweatshirts and T shirts).
- The winners were:
 - David Allen
 - Fred Bills
 - Bob Berens
 - Leah Pitzenberger

Joe Baker ended the meeting saying that he and our guest speakers would stay for a while and answer any additional questions.

President, Joe Baker called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00. All seconded. All approved.

Add items to the agenda.

