

Spring meeting Crystal Lake Perch Lake Property Owners Association (April 10, 2021)

Trustees in Attendance: Marty Mulloy-President, Judy Moskus-Secretary, Bob Conn-Lakes, Rick Applegate-Roads Kevin McMaster-Member at Large.

Not in Attendance: Mike King, Treasurer

Call to Order

At 10 a.m., Marty convened this meeting by way of a Zoom conference call, due to the restrictions on in-person meetings in response to Covid-19. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Fall 2020 meeting were approved by motion and second print (Dave VanDerworp second by Kevin Mc Master)

I. President's Report-Marty Mulloy

New members Joann and Gordon Gauss were introduced and welcomed to the Lake Association. They live on canal side of the island.

Marty thanked all his fellow board members again for getting things done despite the difficulties created by the COVID-19 situation.

II. Treasurer's report-Mike King

Our Budget for the year is \$33,500. We have received \$29,080 in dues so far and our expenditures to date have been \$25,912. Checking Account Balance is \$26,838-Savings Account Balance is \$46,944.

We still have 7 who have not yet paid their Road/Administrative dues and 7 who have not paid their administration dues. Mike will be sending out my 3rd notice with a note that after 30 days a lien will be placed on those who have not paid their Road/Administrative dues.

III. Secretary's report-Judy Moskus

Judy reports that the establishment of the special assessment district SAD remains on hold due to the COVID-19 restrictions on public meetings. She will continue to monitor the situation through the township board.

IV. Lakes report -Bob Conn

Bob reported that due to the low amount of snowfall we received this winter, the lake level for both Crystal and Perch Lakes is low. In fact, the weir that regulates the water level between Crystal Lake and Lake Leanne has no water flowing over it currently, which is unusual for springtime. As a result of low lake levels, Bob is worried that there is going to be a bumper crop of weeds this year.

Bob also reports that he is about to stock the lake with 36,000 minnows. Since this is a form of Lake treatment – the minnows eat some of the vegetation, including algae-this cost comes out of the lake management budget, not the fishing budget.

Concern was raised about the number of ice fishing shanties that appeared on Crystal Lake this winter. While certainly all of our members are welcome to use the lake for this purpose, it would appear that people are inviting friends out to the lake for this purpose, and there are some strangers were just helping them themselves to this opportunity. Apparently, word got out that the walleyes were biting, so people were anxious to try and catch them. We have no police force to regulate use of the lakes, and so if it all possible if you are going to let a friend or relative use the lake, please give them written permission that they can show to someone if asked.

Bob reminded us that neither lake is a swimming pool and aquatic vegetation is part and parcel of our environment. We try to strike a fine balance between the various uses of the lake – for example, a “weedy” environment is probably more

beneficial for fisherman, but less beneficial for boaters and swimmers. So, we endeavor through as many natural means as possible, and chemical means as a last resort, to balance the lakes in a condition for all uses

A question was raised about the cutter boats that used to regularly be seen on the lakes. They still exist, but to use them a person needs to be trained first; be sure about the nature and of the weeds you are cutting, because if you cut an invasive species it will spread; and managing cutting of the weeds so that large masses of weeds don't end up on other people's property. Finally, cutting should only be done in conjunction with the timing for the use of chemical treatment

We had a rather number of algae blooms last year, and one of the members raised a concern that if this occurs this year, it may interfere with the busiest time of the lake, namely the Fourth of July weekend. Bob will keep an eye on the situation to make sure that the lake is as usable as possible for this holiday weekend.

In response to a member's question Bob reports that there is no treatment *per se* on the lakes for mosquitoes. The only thing that may help is the fact that the fat head minnows that are stocked in the lakes do eat mosquito larvae.

Bob mentioned that a couple of years ago there was a beaver population on Crystal Lake. Unfortunately, someone took it upon themselves to kill one of the beavers, which is illegal. DNR should monitor any culling or removal of beavers from the lake. Beavers can wreak havoc with water flow given their propensity to build dams.

Again, there is a weir that regulates water flow from Crystal Lake to Lake LeeAnn. Of late the Hillsdale County Drain Commission has reasserted its control over the weir by making a special assessment against certain property owners for its maintenance. There should be no self-help regarding at the weir in terms of removing boards to allow the flow of water to a lower property. If you hear about this or observe it, please bring it to Bob's attention.

V. **Foundation report- Dave VanDerworp**

Since the SAD is not in effect yet, we still are dependent on voluntary donations of our members for our lake maintenance activities. Last year donations slightly exceeded expenditures, due primarily to the proceeds from our silent auction and our T-shirt sales. This year, our goal is to raise \$19,000, and so far, \$12,575 has been collected. If we anticipate another \$3000 from other fundraising activities, that means we still need another 20 people to donate to make our goal. Dave will start asking/reminding people to donate.

As many already know, Dave reported that our esteemed board member and staunch Lakes advocate, Stan Kirkwood, passed away this year. Donations have been coming in in his name in memorial. So far about \$3300 has been collected. However, this money will not go into the general fund, rather will be held aside for special projects that would be a meaningful tribute to Stan.

A question by new members about a newcomer's brochure and additional information about how things work at the lakes was raised, Thea Kirkwood believes that such a brochure or handbook exists and may be online. Marty believes that the website contains most of the information pertinent to newcomers

One of our new members, Gordon, states that he is having difficulty finding what he needs to know about being a new member of the Lakes community. Marty says he will try to enhance the sort of information on the website

VI. **Report from Member at Large-Kevin McMaster**

Kevin reports that the board tries to do a survey every two years to understand issues of importance to our membership. Unfortunately, the response to the last survey sent out was poor. Of the 13 responses he received, 85% of those who live on the lake full-time, making the concerns perhaps of those who are part-time resident under reported or represented

Some of the comments in the surveys that there were a bit at odd, in that some people felt they were too many meetings and some people felt they were not enough. Also, people are generally happy with the condition of the roads. Miscellaneous issues were raised like light pollution and barking dogs. Overall,

however, there is level of satisfaction with the way we manage the association. People are most concerned about the health of our lakes.

Survey responders like the information provided in the newsletter. Someone suggested that perhaps in each issue of the newsletter we feature a member, so people can get to know their neighbors better.

As a reminder, we also need to be clear about the distinction about money requested from our membership. Road fees or dues are mandatory, because each of us uses the association property, i.e. the roads, in the form of an easement. Anyone who uses an easement has a legal obligation to contribute to its maintenance. This was established many years ago through a court order.

However, Lake maintenance funds are, at this point, are still voluntary, and are categorized as a donation that is tax deductible is paid to the foundation. Until the SAD comes into effect, we are at the mercy of those who donate understand the importance of maintaining our lakes environment. We set a proposed contribution level this year at \$175, but there are many people who donate more than that and thankfully so.

VII. Roads report- Rick Applegate

The road grader “Gator” is used to maintain the roads and, we believe that the roads are in very good shape. Rick wanted to again thank his steadfast and reliable volunteers Chuck Hopkins and Terry Yamarino for helping him in this endeavor.

Rick wanted to remind everyone that if you use the Association’s compost pile, please make sure that you put your material as far back in the lot as possible. That makes it easier for other people to use as well and facilitates movement of the compost to the back of the Gator.

Rick wanted to remind that any permission you give to others to use the lake should be in writing if all possible. Discussion was had about other ways that this could be accomplished. Rick also said good fishing etiquette is important. We are a catch and release lake as much as possible, and it should be emphasized that, if you are allowing guests to come on the lake, they should not overharvest our fish population.

There was further discussion about standardizing a pass to be given to guests on the lake and how that would be administered. Marty asked that this be deferred to a board meeting for further discussion and implementation

VIII. **Old Business**

Bob Conn reminded everyone that most of the current board members' terms will expire this year and those individuals do not plan to extend them. Therefore, it is even more important that those who have not served yet or haven't served in a long time consider giving their time to this very important effort to maintain our lakes community.

IX. **New Business**

Marty reports the status of the summer meeting is still in flux. Although it is still technically scheduled for July 10 at the Township Hall, we do not know if that can happen given occupancy restrictions. Out of necessity, it may end up being a Zoom meeting. The board will keep everyone advised in this regard. The same thing is true of the summer picnic on July 11.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 AM by motion and second (Joann Gauss and Kevin McMaster).

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Moskus
Secretary CLPLPOA