

BLPRD Harvest Committee Meeting Agenda
Saturday, August 29, 2020 – 9:00 AM
Packwaukee Park Pavilion

Present: Gary Kershaw, Linda Hugett, Bill Lewis, Larry Haygood, Joe Dion, Ed Schams

Absent: Jim Barton

Called to order at 9:00 am by Harvest Chairman Gary Kershaw

Equipment Review

- a. Major repairs
- b. Minor repairs and service
- c. New transporter

On the #5 cutter, the original plastic fuel tank had a water leak and was taking on rain water. The fuel tank was replaced with a new aluminum one. On the #6 cutter, the hydraulic paddle wheel motor went out on 7-23, towed back to lake site on 7/25, and put back into service on Monday, 7/27. The #4 cutter was listing to the left on 7-27. There was concern that water was in the pontoon system and had no water. Gary was unaware that there was this problem when the cutter was new. Weight to set level was added to the right side as it was done when it leaned in 2005. On the #4 cutter, the torque drive box which drives the paddle wheel disintegrated on 7-28. Replacement part was checked for availability and Aquarius stated 4-6 weeks at a cost of \$1,600. Two used gear boxes were put together for a temporary fix and the machine was put back into service on 7-29. Lack of parts availability could be due to age of machine. The #3 shore conveyor had a broken shaft on 8-6. The shaft was taken to Hi Tech Welding for repair and back in service Monday 8-10.

#3 and #4 cutters had several hydraulic hoses broken and replaced due to age of the machines. Several broken cutter bar sickle sections were broken and replaced due to debris floating in the lake. Several hydraulic motor brackets and drive chains had been replaced due to the misalignment of the new transporter.

With the amount of problems with hookup to the transporter and damage to the cutters, Gary talked to Chad at Aquarius on 8-14. Aquarius will build a new attachment boom to match our machines at no charge before the 2021 harvesting season. Hookup will be easier and will prevent damage to the cutters to stop weeds from spilling into the lake.

Ed stated that there was an unusual amount of maintenance and repairs since last meeting and asked how many hours did we lose. Approximately 24 hours were lost of cutting time. Gary stated this week Hwy C was closed last Monday and it rained Tuesday causing more lost hours.

Weed Harvest

- a. Progress and updates
- b. Weekly breakdown of costs

As of 8-20, we had 3,480 hrs labor for harvest and maintenance since 6-1 start of harvest. As of 8-27, we had 821 truck loads hauled from the east side and 251 truck loads hauled from the west side for a total 1,072 loads. Ed asked how does that compare to other years. Gary stated that the log books for

2019 were lost. Per the annual meeting minutes, 423 truckloads in 2019, 1,490 truckloads in 2018, 1,200 truckloads in 2017, and 939 truckloads in 2016. Carol Deer stated that the density of the weeds and height of the water would affect the number of truckloads per year.

As of the end of July, we had spent \$17,600 for maintenance and repairs, \$5,000 for fuel and oil, \$38,500 for labor with another 6 weeks of labor scheduled. We are under budget and do not have August numbers added to the figures.

Ed questioned if \$35,000 was authorized to add to labor to help take care of the weed problem. Joe stated that the board decided to let the labor overrun and had dropped the request. Gary stated that the crew went to 9 hours per day starting Monday 7-18. Scheduled hours were 7-4. Linda stated another employee was hired so that all cutters were running. In the past per Bill Lewis, only 2 cutters were used on the east side and 1 on the west side.

2021 Plan

Several off season harvest meetings will be organized to identify and remedy issues. These meetings will be specialized to one topic at a time. For example, job requirements – job pay scales, solid job descriptions, and what is expected of all work crew. All new and current employees will be required to reapply for positions each year.

Gary stated a specialized meeting would be held to create a harvesting plan using past seasons as a guideline.

Don Klecz asked to acquire quotes from outside sources to hire a management company and bring it to the board. Gary stated that in past minutes, a management company was investigated with no call back. Darrell stated that he did not recall the name of the management company but believes the company would respond. Ed asked what is Montello Lake and Emery Lake doing? Joe stated the Emery Lake has a staff and they did try to get a management company in the past. Ed stated that Emery Lake looks good now.

5-Year Plan

a. Suggestions and ideas

There is a need for volunteers to get involved to see where we are at on employees, buildings, equipment, lake site, etc. on how to pursue and satisfy needs. Gary stated half of our cutting equipment is aged. To winter the machines and keep them from deteriorating, a building to house the machines would be needed. Statement was made to look at storage facilities. Joe stated that most of the transport trailers are not DOT inspected or safe for highway. Only two trailers are street legal in respect to DOT.

Question asked who is controlling cutting weeds if hours are 7-4. Gary stated there is a crew foreman hired to do this. Statement was made that 90% of the time, the crew is not starting at 7 on the east side and shutting down early before 4. Larry stated that there is a need to document to follow up. Statement was made that the lake has been used a lot this year for recreation.

Operations

- a. Lake segment division
- b. New hires

Joe stated he did measurements of the lake and found what the middle points are. Over the winter, a plan will be put together for improvement on the next harvest season. This will be part of the harvesting plan and will cut down on the travel distance of the machines. Statement was made if more buoys were put out. Joe stated that additional buoys were not added to the lake this season and some that have been placed moved around this year. 17 laterals have been put on the lake with one more year on the permit. Question asked if laterals should be cut at an angle. There is a lateral that comes straight across on the east side. Next one down to east looks like a snake. Question asked how does that promote the flow of the weeds. Joe stated it will be talked about.

Don asked how big a shed do you need to build? Gary stated that it would take a pretty large structure. Statement made to look into Amish. Gary stated that you would need to look into what you need and check county zoning. Larry stated that grants may be available to apply for.

A new truck driver was hired before 7-16 harvest meeting. Two cutter operators were also hired. When one person was sick, we had another person to call in.

New Business

Ed stated that the cutter on east side of causeway cleaned up on the north shore by the causeway. Joe stated that at the beginning of the harvest season, the supervisor was to run the machine when not doing repairs or fueling. He was supposed to work further down on the east side and this was not being done. There was a concern that the employees would quit. Gary stated this is on the 2021 plan to correct.

Larry stated that the old transporter was not used. He suggested selling the transporter and ordering a new cutter with the money. Joe stated that we need total funds and would need to have \$213,000 in the account to buy a new cutter. This would take another year to gather the funds. Larry put in a motion to a vote to sell the transporter. Bill seconded. All present members agreed. This will be presented to the board to sell the old transporter at the Sept board meeting.

Larry asked if it be beneficial to work 2 weeks longer. The end of the season is normally the Thursday before Labor Day and the crew will be shutting down the weed harvesting that day.

District Member Questions and Comments

Statement was made that budgeting for next year should be based on this year due to extreme work. Larry stated that budget will be presented at general board meeting.

Darrell stated that there is a need to look at operations to cut 5 weeks down to get cutters up and down the lake faster. This is unacceptable. Carol asked if they can rotate and start at the dredge bank to work back toward the causeway. Larry stated there needs to have flow to carry away the weeds. Gary stated if the laterals are cut at the correct angle, this will promote flow of weeds. Linda stated that on the west end, they start at the causeway. Gary stated that the reason is to open culverts. Carol stated that we will get better culverts in a couple of years when the causeway is redone. Darrell asked do we actually have the appropriate number of laterals and are they in the right direction? Do we have more than is on the map? Joe stated that there is an additional lateral between the lodge and campground that is not correct. Darrell stated he has one that shouldn't be there. Linda stated that laterals were taken out on west end.

Statement was made to include in 5 year plan the reasoning to see what you want the lake to look like in the future. Look at other ideas on what we can do.

Establish Next Harvest Committee Meeting

Sat, Sept 26 at 9:00 am. Packwaukee Park Pavilion

Linda moved to adjourn.

Note: The Buffalo Lake Harvest Committee will be observing 6' social distancing and face coverings and asking anyone attending the meeting to bring their own face covering as none will be provided. Please do not attend if you have had a cough or fever in the last two weeks.