

BLPRD Harvest Committee Meeting Minutes
Saturday, June 5, 2021 – 9:00 AM
Packwaukee Town Hall

Meeting called to order by Gary Kershaw at 9:00 am

Roll Call:

Present: Gary Kershaw, Joe Dion, Linda Huggett, Bill Lewis, Cindi Blumreich, Bernie Sosinsky, Ed Scham, Bob Fohey

Absent: Sara Laitenen, Don Klecz, Larry Haygood

Bob Fohey, the new supervisor was introduced.

Topics of discussion

A. Harvest startup

DNR approved early cutting in the main channel. Cutting in the main channel and training started May 24th. All lake cutting started June 1st. Cutting on the East end will start at the dredge bank and travel from east to west. The two cutters on the East side will travel in tandem to save on fuel costs and to have less wait time resulting in more weed loads being hauled daily.

B. Hollenbeck's Landing on West side of the lake

An upgrade was needed at Hollenbeck's Landing for shore conveyor parking due to amount of muck, cattails, and the low lake level. Three bids were needed - \$3,500 Marquette County, \$1,462.96 Twin Elm Excavating, \$985 Peschel Excavating. The project was completed Thursday, June 3rd by Peschel Excavating. We now have a necessary option to move our conveyors so that travel does not need to be done to go back to the Freedom Rd Landing.

C. Results from Aquarius seminar

Bob and Gary attended an Aquarius seminar on May 21st. There have been problems with conveyers in past. We did find the speed of the conveyor belting was running too fast at 35% faster than they should be. The conveyors have been made to run at a 35 degree angle. Some of the conveyors were at a 45 degree angle and the weeds would fall backwards and would not go up the conveyor. There have been a number of problems. We need lower trucks or better conveyers. The conveyors are 1988 models. A lot of money and labor was put into the conveyers just to make them work this year.

D. Discussion on monthly district board meetings during harvest season

The harvest committee suggested the lake district board to have monthly meetings during the summer harvest season so that if we have a need or request for finances, there is no waiting for the board to meet. Suggestion was to get a blanket authorization. Joe stated that a cost of \$700 for one board member approval, \$1,500 for two board members approval, and \$2,500 for three board members approval. Higher needs to be bid out with three bids.

E. Debit card for supervisor

A request has been made for the supervisor to have a debit/credit card. We are currently buying diesel fuel and gasoline at the Oxford Travel Plaza and Holliday. Gary researched Endeavor Gohlpost last summer and diesel fuel was as much as \$.50 a gallon cheaper. This year it is \$.12 to \$.25 cheaper. Bob has made major purchases this year using his own credit card. He has found different sources this year at considerably less costs. A debit/credit card is needed so that supervise can shop for the best prices. At the Gohlpost, there is an instant savings of \$.12 a gallon. We need to request at a business rate so that we can pursue items at a better price. An advantage is that we can keep records of what we are buying. Rough figure savings of \$700 to \$800 of fuel per year with a credit card. Joe has listed on the next district board meeting agenda to acquire a credit card. The need is for a credit card to make online purchases to buy product that we need, It would give us a record of purchases including how much fuel was purchased, etc, We did not pursue buying fuel from the county as it was \$.50 cents a gallon higher.

F. Sale of old transporter

Bob Fohey listed the old transporter on Facebook and it sold for \$25,000 asking price. A consigner had it listed at \$22,000 with 20% commission. The district benefited by approximately \$7,000. It was sold in three days and has been picked up.

G. Muskrat shoreline damage

Gary had severe muskrat problems. He put up rip rap and they have now moved next door. He talked to Gary Bloom, a trapper from the area, and the skinned price for a dried muskrat hide is \$2. Suggestion was made to create a trapper bounty fund and put a bounty on it. Bernie stated he personally has someone trap in front of his house. It is within the law for a property owner to hire a trapper for own purposes.

H. Five year plan

Discussion on the Five Year Plan to improve equipment with grants and district funds. The equipment is 80% wore out and does work with major money put into it this year. There is a need for a workshop and shed to get the equipment out of the winter weather. Our \$180,000 transporter sat outside in the winter elements the first season. Our need is for a building with a simple roof over the equipment. The #4 cutting machine filled with water from the top and turned into ice inside causing a leak in the hull from sitting outside.

The tool storage, workshop, and supervisor's desk is in a 1970 semitrailer with squirrels, mouse nests, walnut shells, etc in it. Something as simple as a 24x30 garage on a slab would be an improvement. The records are kept in a shipping container and paperwork in a file. Bill stated the five year plan needs to be a step by step process. Need to start with the biggest expense on the equipment. The discussion needs to be continually. Bob stated all information was documented this spring.

Joe stated the equipment belongs to the district. The state requires us to operate on a balanced budget. In the past, a motion was passed to take district funds and yearly allocate 60% to operations and 40% to capital equipment fund. At that time, another motion was made to remove repairs and items. Over \$20,000 in repairs this year so far. If you pay lake fee, you are paying part of it. Joe stated if you want to apply for grants, the district needs to have that money in a fund to move forward. There is government money out there, but you have to have certain amount of money for the fund. Bernie stated

there should be a priority list 1-5 and then start looking at the priority needs and then start looking at grants. Gary stated that Bob and he went to Aquarius and they said grants were 50% and have changed June 1st to 35%. Aquarius has used machine coming in for \$110,000 with stainless hull. Bob have to have \$220,000 in within 3 weeks of grant hearing. Half off 50% within 3 weeks of approval.

Bill said that he has a five year plan from the past. Darrell not sure of getting grant, wouldn't it make practical sense to budget. Joe keep in mind motion was started to be made at an annual meeting for the 40/60. Financially going to receive the same amount of money each year. Darrell stated more a budget meeting. We know exactly what needs to be replaced. Bob stated a low interest loan to help. Joe stated the state allows the lake district to borrow money. Borrowing is an option coordinated at the time of the annual meeting. Bill stated grant needs to be happen ahead of time. Would have to wait until October for annual meeting. Budget would need to be reworked because of balanced budget at annual meeting. Bob has entered into computer all equipment repairs.

Bob Fohey has volunteered to lead the five year plan for equipment and site upgrades. He will work with volunteers. A priority list will be created. Bob will work with Gary, Bernie, Darrell, and Bill on a subcommittee.

Need someone to step forward to create more interest in the lake, fund raising, commarderie, etc. Get more people to look at positive things and move forward in positive way. Bernie stated that we need goals for fund raising. What is going to be the best way to do fund raising? Have a drawing per se. Joe stated involving the district and put before the board to approve because of money and responsibility. If you use the word Buffalo Lake that would fall under something that the board would have to approve. Equipment is huge issue, get need to see when driving by. Something that is going to show this is what public to see.

Joe stated that the lake maps will be placed on the Buffalo Lake website next week to identify where the cutters have been through the week.

Establish next meeting

July 17, 2021 - 8:00am - Packwaukee Town Hall

Note: The Buffalo Lake Harvest Committee will require 6' social distancing and mandatory 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.