

Buffalo Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District 2018 Annual Meeting

October 13, 2018

Minutes

1. Meeting was called to order at 9:08am

Pledge of allegiance was said

Board Members Present: Ro Klecz, Vikki Trimble, Chuck Kopesil, Judy Nigbor, Town of Packwaukee Representative

Absent Jon Sheller, Marquette County Representative

Ro welcomed everyone and stated how proud she was that everyone in the Montello and Packwaukee community pulled together during the devastation of the fall storms.

In addition to the elected position, there are 2 resignations from the Board effective immediately. Tom Ogden resigned which a two-year term and Roger Nanoit resigned which a one-year term.

Chuck Kopesil's position is the one that is up for re-election today and that is a three-year term. As stated previously, there are two additional positions which are usually appointed by the Chairperson, but Ro would like to get the word out to membership via Facebook, email and website to see who may be interested in the two open positions. Usually the Chair appoints the positions that are vacant by resignation. Ro stated that she would like to see that decision made by the Board.

The Board was asked to introduce themselves introduced themselves to membership. Ro Klecz, Vikki Trimble, Chuck Kopesil, Judy Nigbor, Town of Packwaukee

Someone asked if Ro was the current Chair, Ro stated just for this meeting.

Marcel "Joe" Dion asked that we name who the county representative is and clarify that there are 7 board members not 5

Vikki stated that the county representative is Jon Sheller and that there are 5 elected positions and two appointed positions. One appointed position is from the County – Jon Sheller and the other appointed person is from the Town of Packwaukee, Judy Nigbor.

2. Minutes from the 2017 annual meeting

Vikki read the minutes from the last annual meetings.

Motion to approve the minutes by Marcel "Joe" Dion, seconded by Amy Carter.

All were in favor, No Nays, Motion carried minutes approved

3. Treasurers Report

Ro gave treasurers report Operating Fund had \$85,132.57 and Equipment Fund had \$116,024.64

4. Budget Hearing

Ro opened the budget hearings. Ro stated that the proposed 2019 Operating Income Fund is \$207,301.27, the proposed 2019 Operating Expense Fund is \$150,350.00, The proposed 2019 Equipment Income Fund is 236,648.16, the 2019 proposed Equipment Expense Fund is \$211,400.00

Ro discussed that the district was looking to purchase a transporter that would not replace the existing transporter but be in addition to. The Board is looking to repair the existing transporter. The Board is looking to obtain a grant to help in the purchase of the new transporter.

Ro asked Jim Barton to speak about the new transporter. Jim stated that they contacted 3 manufactures and decided to go with Inland from Burlington Wi. The transporter including delivery would cost \$184,650.00 instead of \$192,400.00 that is budgeted. The question was asked about the speed of the of the new transporter. Jim stated that it runs 4 miles an hour and is higher in cubic feet capacity. The new transporter is a paddle wheel style which works much better for the shallow weedy water. Linda Huggett asked where this would be used. Chuck stated that it hasn't been discussed by the Harvesting Committee yet. Stan asked what the plan for the west end was. Chuck stated that we would cut it like we have been doing. Bill Lewis agreed that we need a new piece of equipment. Bill stated that with the \$187,000.00, we should take 15,000.00 from the carry over of the operating budget and transfer it into the equipment fund, not knowing how long the grant process will take. Roger stated that he thought it wasn't a good idea to do that because we don't know how much the grant is really going to be and that we should leave the money in the operating fund and then see what happens. Roger stated that if we fall short from the grant, we could then transfer from operational fund to equipment fund. Bill stated that the company wants 3 payments and that we don't know how the long the grant process will take. Bill stated that the last few times it took a while for us to get the grant. We may have to wait until next year to purchase the equipment. Roger stated that the way payment is going to work is that it will be broken down into a 1/3 down now, 1/3 during production and 1/3 on delivery. We must get the order in, to be able to get the equipment by May. Roger stated that Bill made a good point, but it is ultimately up to the district members to vote if we should purchase the transporter. Bill stated that if we are looking to purchase the transporter and get it on the lake next summer, we need to cover our basis.

Larry Haygood asked if the money gets transferred in the equipment fund and not used, it could always be transferred back could it not it? Vikki & Roger answered that it could be transferred back. There was discussion about having enough money to purchase the transporter. It was determined that there is enough money to pay for the transporter. Marcel "Joe" Dion asked in view of the discussion could we make a motion to the board and adjust the agenda to move the resolution forward to vote on purchasing the transporter. Marcel "Joe" Dion stated that if membership doesn't want the transporter, the budget discussion of the transporter would be a moot point. Vikki stated we can't make a resolution without budgeting the money first. Vikki asked Roger if that was correct and Roger stated it was. Marcel "Joe" Dion stated that he didn't know if he wanted to spend that much money out the equipment fund without the grant. Vikki stated that membership will vote on the budget and if membership doesn't think we should earmark our money for that purchase, then we won't purchase the transporter this year. It was determined that there is enough money in the 2019 budget to purchase the transporter without the grant at which time would could transfer over \$15,000.00 if needed and that we should start the grant process ASAP. Bill stated that the current transporter we have now is a 2001 steel haul and realistically the stuff is wearing out. Bill stated that the District is behind the 8 ball with equipment and even with this purchase we still need to replace at least 2 more pieces of equipment sometime in the future. Bill stated that we should be able to rebuild the top half of the current transporter and the other equipment that have the stainless hulls should be rebuilt from the bottom up. Bill stated that it is necessary that we purchase the new transporter, if the current transporter goes down, the harvesting operations will be in dire straits.

Al Rosenthal asked about the \$16,000 unemployment insurance being paid out. Vikki stated that was money that was never paid before. Prior to the last 2 or 3 years no one has ever applied for unemployment. Vikki stated that it is a process to become a seasonal employer and she has started that process with the State which will reduce the amount of unemployment tax that we are currently paying. Because we have never been a state unemployment taxable employer, we are paying for the full unemployment payments. But again, Vikki stated that she has started the process to reduce the cost of unemployment the process takes some time to get through.

John asked if any of the harvest equipment had the ability to read depth. Chuck stated that there is no technology that he is aware that can do that for the equipment like you can for your boat. Chuck stated what they do now when they go out and cut is that they bring the heads all the way to the bottom of the lake and when they see the bubbling of the bottom, they bring the heads up a little bit and then cut the weeds. They cannot dredge into the bottom. It is against the DNR regulations. John stated that is where the technology would come in. The Board stated that the Harvesting Committee could investigate some type of technology (depth finder) to assist in harvesting. John stated that he brought up last year that we should be painting markings on the sickles so that people can see how deep the cutters are cutting. Chuck stated with the 4-foot marks there are areas in the lake that are not 4 feet. John stated that at least you could see that the

crews are trying to cut. Vikki mentioned that the Harvesting Committee could look into painting markings on the sickles.

Bob Neman asked if the transporter would be any bigger than what we have now? Chuck stated that capacity wise it is bigger, and Jim Barton stated that it is 1000 cubic feet. Chuck stated that he thought that the current transporter is about 850 cubic feet give or take. Bob wanted to know if there was a bigger transporter than the one we are looking at? Bob stated that the cutters are always waiting on the transporter. Chuck stated that this was the biggest one Inland makes.

Ro asked if there were any more questions pertaining to the budget? Marcel “Joe” Dion stated that he had one more question regarding the budget. He brought up assessments and the total amount of assessments. Vikki stated that there are assessments on both budgets. \$94,804 operating fund and 46,199 on the equipment fund because 1/3 of our assessments go into the equipment fund and 2/3 stays in the operating fund. Vikki also mentioned that the District gets little checks throughout the year from people who don’t pay their taxes right away. Dennis Schroeder asked why total assessments are more for 2019. Vikki mentioned that there was a 25% increase to the assessments which was voted on by membership at the 2017 annual meeting.

Al Rosenthal made a motion to close the budget hearings, Roger Naniot seconded, all were in favor, no one opposed. Motion passed.

Darrel Unsinn made the motion to accept the 2019 operating and equipment budgets, Jeff Carter seconded, all were in favor, no one opposed. 2019 Operational and Equipment Budgets passed.

6. Resolution 2018-1

Ro read resolution 2018-1:

RESOLUTION 2018-1: To allow the purchase of a new Inland transporter which would be in addition to the current transporter. The purchase and delivery of the new transporter is not to exceed \$192,400.00. The purchase of the new transporter would allow the District to continue and assist with the harvesting operations as budgeted.

Ro asked if there was any discussion regarding the resolution 2018-1. Tracy verified that the District was going to repair the current transporter. Ro stated that it was the district’s plan to repair the transporter. Chuck stated that the transporter we have now needs some minor repair and will be taken care in the spring.

Jim Barton stated that our current transporter is the oldest boat in the fleet and that it is a 2001. Jim stated that we desperately need to have a working transporter all the time or the harvesting operation grind to a halt.

Karen stated that at the Harvesting Committee meeting there was discussion that there was equipment that needed repairs and how is that determined? She wanted to know if the money is reflected in the proposed budget that was just past.

Bill stated that at the harvesting meeting, it was discussed that all the equipment is in need of evaluation. Bill stated that we have 3 pieces of equipment that we don't know at this point what they need in the way of repairs. We need to have everything evaluated. Bill stated that process should have been done prior to this budget, but it wasn't. Chuck stated that some of our elevators are from 1988. Bill stated again that we need to evaluate all the equipment so that we have a better handle of repairs going into the 2019 harvesting season.

Al Rosenthal made a motion for the District to purchase the Inland transporter and not to exceed 192,400.00. Seconded by Jim Barton.

Discussion: Frank asked why wait until spring to do the repairs, do them now so that we are ready to go in the spring. Chuck stated that right now our payroll budget ends at the end of September and begins the middle to the end of April. Frank asked why the repairs were not done when they pulled the equipment out in September. Chuck stated that due to the time they had, they only had enough time to winterize the equipment. Vikki stated that the reason we stop payroll after September is that the State has given us special status. We can't have payroll during the 4th and 1st quarters. The way the District files and pays our payroll taxes requires us to do it this way. Can it be changed? Possibly. We only pay payroll during 2 quarters of the year. April should give the harvesting crew enough time to make repairs. The District cannot start cutting before May 15. Vikki agreed with Frank that we should know where we are at when it comes to repairs. Inspections could be done in September to get us ready to make those repairs in April.

Roger asked Ro if we could call the vote on resolution. Ro asked if there were further questions or discussion pertaining to Resolution 2018-1. With no more questions, Ro called for a vote on Resolution 2018-1, all were in favor none opposed. Resolution 2018-1 passed

5. Election of One Commissioner

In addition to the expired elected position there are two vacated positions that are open due to two commissioners resigning. Usually the Chairperson has the ability to appoint people to the open positions, but Ro would like to give membership a chance to put their name in the ring if there are interested in being on the board. We will vote for the expired elected position today and then in November the two other positions will be appointed by the Board which allow members to apply for the two open positions. Ro asked each candidate to introduce themselves to membership for the elected 3-year term that has expired.

The following are the candidates that were running for the one open 3 year elected position

Bill Lewis,
Katy Carter
Larry Haygood
Chuck Kopesil

Ro asked everyone to vote and then ballots were collected and counted

6. Committee Reports

a.) Dues and Finance Committee

Already discussed

b) Site Committee

Chuck reported that some money was spent putting down some gravel in the yard to fill in low spots. The shore line had to be rebuilt because of some erosion at about \$700.00. Eventually some the sheds will need to be replaced. Ro asked if there were any questions. There were none.

c) Harvesting and District Equipment

Chuck gave a brief over view of the harvesting season. Chuck talked about the equipment failures we had. We were running 2 machines on the east side the begin of the season and doing great then they put the third machine in the water and had problems. The 3rd machine is an older machine which started leaking. The machine started to fill with water. Due to a recent situation in Washington County where a machine flipped over and killed the operator, it was decided to take the leaking machine out of service. The machine was out of service for 6 weeks. Chuck stated that they had obtained two estimates to repair the machine with no guarantees that the machine would be able float. One bid was for \$5000 and the other was for about \$7000. We found someone to do some temporary repairs for \$500. The repair seemed to work fairly well. When the machine was pulled out of the lake at the end of the season, there was a little bit of water in the hull. Someone asked if there was a bilge pump used to pump the water out. Chuck stated that yes, a pump was used to pump the water out every day. Eventually the pontoon log floats are going to have to be repaired properly. We need to get estimates on that. Chuck stated he was going to have the guy who did the minor repairs come out and pressure test the equipment to check for all the leaks. Jim stated that when they went to Inland the machine that flipped over in Washington Co was in their yard. The reason the machine flipped over was due to inexperience. The person operating it was hitting the bottom and filling the machine with muck and the machine got to heavy and flipped over.

Chuck stated that our current transporter is one big cavity and that if you have a leak it fills the entire cavity of the hull. The new machine has 14 bulkheads which makes it safer. Ro asked if there were anymore questions. Someone asked how many weed cutters and transporters we have. Chuck responded by stating that we have 1 transporter, 1 smaller weed cutter that we purchased last year strictly for the west side and 4 other cutters. 1 is not usable at all, we have 3 with some small repairs will be used for the east side of the lake. So, we have a total of 4 usable cutters.

There was a question that last year there was discussion that a cutter was going to be turned into a transporter. Chuck stated that was the plan but found out that the bulk head had leaks and the conveyor and hydraulic motor were weak and leaking also. Chuck stated that it wouldn't be practical to repair/convert it. There was a question if we only had one transporter last year. Chuck confirmed that we only had 1 transporter last season. Vikki stated that the Harvesting Committee has a lot of work to do this year. Gary Kershaw stated that he lives next to the boat landing on Freedom Rd. He asked if the cutter that was used on the west side was 8 feet wide and did it replace a cutter that was 10 foot wide? Chuck stated yes. Chuck stated on the west end of the lake they hauled out 470 truckloads of weeds. On the east side of the lake they hauled 1020 truckloads for a total of 1490 loads pulled from the lake. In 2017 they pulled 1200 loads of weeds from the lake. Gary asked how one little machine could pull out that many trucks loads compared to the 3 machines on the eastside. Chuck stated that the numbers were correct. Don asked on the transporter that needs repair is there any chance an outside vendor could give an estimate? Chuck stated that he was working on obtaining an estimate. Chuck stated that this will be done in April.

Bill stated that it is obvious that we have a lot of work to do and that we really don't know yet how much work there is, Bill said that it was fantastic that there are a lot of new people coming up with great ideas and skills. Bill asked that these people step up and help out. Bill stated that there are a lot of mechanical problems that we don't know about and the new people with their skills could be a great asset to the District. Someone mentioned that he has noticed guys on cell phones instead of cutting. Chuck stated that they could be waiting for the transporter or talking to the lead cutter. Bill from the harvesting crew stated that they could be checking weather or communicating with the transporter. He stated that they are too busy cutting to be on the phone while they are cutting. There was a complaint that the cutters are on their cell phones and not cutting weeds. The Board stated that they would look into it. Jim stated that they could be on the cell phones while they are waiting for the transporter. Chuck stated that he wants the cell phones turned on in case there is a weather problem, breakdown or emergency.

There was a question as to how many board positions are open. Ro stated 2 and that she wanted to put the word out via Facebook, website and email so that if people were interested in running, they could put their hat in the ring. Vikki explained that those positions were to the board and that the board members decide who is Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. These are nonelected positions. Who ever gets appointed will serve one-year term and a two-year term. There was a question as to how many Board members there are. Vikki stated that there are 5 that are elected and then two appointed, 1 from the County (Jon Sheller) and 1 from the Town of Parckwaukee (Judy Nigbor) for a total of 7 Board members.

There was another harvesting question, that was asked if the Board ever considered an outside contractor. Ro stated that she contacted a few of them but they were not able to provide an estimate prior to the annual meeting because of their work schedule. We are hoping to meet with them soon. Bob L. asked what the ideal amount of equipment that we should have? Vikki stated what is ideal for this year may not be ideal for next year. It depends on the growth of weeds and weather conditions. Vikki stated it depends on how much membership is willing to pay. Chuck stated that his opinion on the amount of equipment needed in the next 2 years if the lake is like this year, we may need 3 cutters on the east end and 1 cutter on the west end. If it doesn't rain and the water level drops, we could use 4-5 cutters on the east end and 2 on the west end. It all depends on the height of the weeds, weather conditions and sunlight. It is like the growth of your lawn. It was mentioned by a member that we should be looking at increasing assessments in the future. Bill Lewis clarified that he thought Tom was elected last year so that one appointed position is a 2-year term and the second appointed position is a 1-year term. Bill mentioned that we should be looking at our processes so that we are more efficient. He stated that you can always adjust them from year to year. Having a process will help in keeping costs down. Bill stated that the District use to use Buffalo Lake Lodge to haul weeds from. Ro asked the new owners of Buffalo Lake Lodge to introduce themselves. The new owners of Buffalo Lake Lodge are Todd & Donna which is now called Todd's Buffalo Lake Lodge. They stated that the District was more than welcome to use the lodge location for unloading weeds. Bill stated that he would have someone speak to them so that they would know what the process was with unloading weeds. A member asked if he could have the cut by the new dock (N/E corner where the old marina use to be). The past 2 years we haven't been cutting a lateral in that area. There was discussion about the Lotus beds over there but that we will report it back to the Harvesting Committee.

d) Technology Newsletter

No report

There was a question about who oversees the website now that Tom is no longer on the board. Ro stated that was something that the Board will have to discuss. Karyn mentioned that we should be using technology much more than we are. Karyn asked members to sign up for emails. Karyn stated that sending emails is another way that doesn't cost money to get information to membership. Someone mentioned that they didn't get the annual newsletter in the mail. Vikki stated that we use the tax information that the county gives use. Ro stated that she personally placed all the newsletters in the mail. All we can do is put the newsletters in the mail, what happens after that is not in our control. Vikki stated that you have to notify the County if your mailing address changes. Someone mentioned that maybe it's because Packwaukee doesn't really have mailing addresses.

Vikki stated that information should be updated with the County and that it should be correct. Vikki stated that if you get a tax bill then you should be getting the newsletter. It is the same list we use. Someone from the audience stated if you are not getting your mail, you should be talking to your post office.

Someone asked when the newsletter is sent out. Vikki stated that the newsletter is sent 2 weeks prior to the annual meeting. The annual meeting is usually in October.

e) Ecology Committee Report

Rich talk about the importance of the lotus beds. He asked people not top boat through them. Rich stated that we were getting additional buoys to help mark the location of the expanding lotus beds.

Rich discussed shoreline restoration and the grants associated with that. Rich introduced Karyn by saying that she is the first volunteer of the Ecology Committee. Rich stated that there are about 8-10 people that are committed to applying for the \$1000 Healthy Lake grants. In addition to harvesting, the health of the lake is important. By involving ourselves with activities pertaining to the health of the lake and following through with the lake management plan, we are more likely to receive grants from DNR. Rich discussed the restoration fund line item. Rich talked about saving the Dredge Island. Rich stated that the Island has lost about 40 feet within the last 3 years. When we had the draw down the trees were lost on the island. Rich stated that people use the in the summer time and park their boats and swim with their kids. Rich also works with the Montello High school kids who use the other half of the island for ecology projects like a bird sanctuary. Rich stated that to apply for grants, there has to be matching funds budgeted. Someone asked how much money is in that line item. The Board stated that there is \$5000 and that the line item doesn't accumulate if the money is not used.

The member asked if there could be a line item could be designated for grant matching and if there is no grant couldn't the money be moved elsewhere in the budget to be used for something else. Vikki stated that the restoration fund is not only used for grants, it is used for other things.

Roger stated that the money if is not used could be allocated to something else. Roger stated that members voted on a budget not the line items. The Board has discretion to move money around in the budget providing it is the money that was approved by membership. Karyn mention that her email address was on the newsletter under Ecology news. Karyn encouraged members to volunteer. She stated that if you would like to volunteer to please email her. Karyn stated that she had a talk at her house about aquatic invasive species and had Pat Kilby come and talk about the Healthy Lake Grants. Karyn stated that if members want more informational programs to please let her know and she will work on setting them up.

7. Election Results

Ro announced Bill Lewis as the District's new board member. He will serve a 3-year term. Congratulation to Bill.

8. Permits for individual herbicide application.

Nothing to report yet. The board is looking into that. As soon as information becomes available it will be posted on the website. Ro believed that the harvesting committee would be talking about individual herbicide application.

9. Marquette County Lake Group/County /Town Report

Marquette County Lake Group

Al Rosenthal stated that the association is made up of 20 lakes. They meet twice a month as a group. Their annual meeting was September 20th and there was 32 people there. Everyone is invited to attend the meetings. It's on a Thursday evening at 6:00pm at the Human Service Building on Underwood and they have pizza and pop. At the last annual meeting they raised the dues from \$30 to \$50 per lake. The \$20 increase is to go to the AIS program. AIS is Aquatic Invasive Species. An AIS coordinator is hired through Golden Sands. Al asked if each lake could donate money. It is important to have an AIS coordinator. Al stated that they had Tom Onifry talk about what changes have been made regarding property owner rights. Next discussion will be in June. If you would like more information, please contact Al Rosenthal

Marquette County

No Report

Town of Packwaukee

No Report

10. 2018 Annual Meeting Date

Next year's annual meeting will October 12, 2019 at Montello High School

Vikki stated that the Board wanted to meet more frequently. There was a question about how information would be given out to the public regarding the equipment repairs. Vikki stated that the Harvesting Committee should be giving reports at every Board meeting and that we can post on the Facebook page, website and email.

Vikki made a motion that the next annual meeting will be October 12, 2019, seconded by Roger all were in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

Ro stated that the board was going into a quick closed session but then it was determined that a closed session was not needed.

11. Public Comments

Bill Lewis mentioned that it was stated in last year's minutes that we would be voting for a draw down for the lake. Bill stated that we needed a vote at annual meeting to do a draw down. Bill was talking about the Lake Plan. Roger stated that the plan was never really approved. Bill stated that there should be a committee to review the lake plan. Vikki stated that the lake plan from Onterra was just a suggestion for us to manage the lake. There is no draw done plan or draw down required. It was just a suggestion. Vikki stated that before a draw down would be done there would have to be a study as to where the weeds are and then if determined that a draw down was necessary, it would have to be voted on by the membership at an annual meeting. Vikki stated that nothing could be voted on at this year's meeting and that just that it would be revisited in 2019. Bill thought it was a mistake that the Lake Plan was not on the agenda. Vikki stated that Tom was the one who put the agenda together and because he wasn't there, there was nothing we could do at this time. Bill stated that we needed to put a committee to review and administer the Lake Plan. Bill stated that our harvesting permit expires in December. Ro stated that we had until April to apply for a new one.

Someone asked about the trees in the lake and shed in the lake due to the storm. The Board stated that they would notify the property owners that those items need to be removed from the lake.

Someone asked about how the causeway has been constructed. It is the County responsibility to maintain the causeway. Al Rosenthal spoke about the reasons the culverts clog up.

He stated that the reason the road dips down is because if there is flooding, the water will not take the causeway out. Al stated that the causeway was constructed properly at the proper grades. The causeway was funded by an 80/20 grant. 80% was funded by the Federal Government and 20% was fund by the County. Al stated that the Feds had most of the say in the construction of the causeway. The county is going to place some grates over the culverts so that they don't clog up. Al stated that the county is finishing up with the disaster relief and hopefully they will be doing that soon. Someone asked that if the road was built properly why was it still blocked off. Al stated that the road is so saturated from all the rain and high water and that they are hoping to have the road open in a few weeks. The County is waiting on the State to test the base. Highway 22 is open. The State wanted to make sure that 22 was open prior to opening the causeway because the causeway wasn't really constructed to have big trucks driving over it, especially with all the water saturation. Judy stated that lightweight vehicles can get across the causeway through those barricades.

Ro asked if there was any other business., none being had, Ro asked for a motion to adjourn Al Rosenthal moved to accept the motion and Bernie seconded. All were in favor none opposed.

12. Meeting was adjourned at 11:28am

This document is not intended to be a word for word transcript

Respectfully Submitted
By
Ro Klecz