

**Cochran Lake District
Annual Meeting Minutes**

May 28, 2016

Present: Scott Craven, President; Judy Schave, filling in for Donna Mandt, Treasurer; Sue Houkom, Secretary; plus 35 other people representing a total of 27 lots

President Scott Craven called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary's Report – Sue Houkom

Minutes of the December 19, 2015 meeting were presented. Motion to approve: Pat Schwai; second, Mary Anne Boschke. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Judy Schave (substituting for Donna Mandt who was unable to attend)

Total Balance as of 5/28/2016 was \$5,030.20. Motion to approve: Deb Cook; second, Pat Buchna. Motion carried.

Town Representative and Price County Reports – Neither Jim Hintz nor Eric Lund were present.

Any town or county questions or concerns can be sent either to Scott Craven, or directly to Jim Hintz or Eric Lund, with a copy to Scott for record keeping.

Committee Chair Reports

Adopt-A-Highway – Ray Schave

Thanks for cleaning up our roadways this spring go to George & Letty Rasmussen, Ray & Diane Korinek, Rick & Pat Schwai, Mark & Myra LeGrand, Sig & Mary Kaminski, Rich Halfpap, Donna Mandt, Ray & Judy Schave.

Water Quality – Sig Kaminski

The report was based on this year's testing. There were no real changes. The lake:

- Was clear to the bottom.
- Was 68 degrees as of May 27, 2016.
- Still has blue-green clump algae.
- Was subjected to additional phosphate testing.

The test also looks at nitrates in the sample. The levels vary each year, with the highest level occurring in 2012, which was the warmest and driest in recent history. In addition, 2012 was the year the blue-green algae was first noticed.

Fisheries – Frank Sevcik (walleye update)

The lake was shocked in October 2015. It will not be shocked in 2016 since the procedure is done every 2 years. Residents report:

- huge bass
- decent sized walleyes which are hopefully eating the bluegills

Possible action for next year: survey lake fishermen about the size of the walleyes they are catching. This will help determine if the stocking plan is working.

There is no evidence that we are losing walleye in the outlet from the lake.

Lake Plants – Stan Kmiecik

There is nothing unusual to report. Plants are moving around and stayed green all winter. If anyone finds a plant of concern, give a sample to Stan. (See algae report under Old Business – Algae Observations.)

Boat Landing – Brian Mandt (not present)

The lock to the boat landing was broken, so there is a new one. Combinations were handed out and the Schwais will send a message with the combination to all members on the Google Groups mailing list when the lock has been welded to the chain.

District Website – Don Schmitz (not present)

Any changes in contact information or to the property owners' Google Groups list should be sent to Don Schmitz. (Dons@surgery.wisc.edu)

Burning Permits – Sig Kaminski

Permits are required for all outdoor burning for removal of debris unless there is at least 2" of snow on the ground all throughout the area.

- Permits are issued annually.
- Permits can be obtained from the DNR website; by calling 1-888-WIS-BURN (947-2876); by visiting a local Ranger Station; or at some area businesses
- Even if you have a permit, call the sheriff's department if you are burning brush to prevent unneeded dispatch of fire equipment.
- You must determine the burning restrictions for the day you wish to burn by visiting the website (dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestFire/restrictions.html) or by calling the number above, both after 11 a.m.
- Campfires used for cooking do not require a permit, however you should still check the fire danger status since in times of extreme conditions, no outdoor burning is allowed.
- Maximum size of brush pile eligible for regular burning permit is 6' X 6' X 6'.

Wildlife Report

Wildlife on and around the lake is abundant. This winter, there was a wolf kill on the lake, and residents took pictures of wolf packs and bobcats. An injured mother bear with two cubs and a huge otter were also reported. Residents are advised to watch out for the safety of their pets.

Old Business**2015-16 Efforts with Cochran Lake Management District (CLMD) Documents**

- Welcome Letter – Scott Craven updated the Welcome Letter for new lake property owners after receiving input from residents. Everyone received a copy with the newsletter prior to the annual meeting.
- Covenants – Since covenants are legal documents and deed restrictions, no changes were made to our document itself. Instead, clarifications were created to the different articles that will act as an appendix to the covenants currently in place for Cochran Lake properties.
- 1000 sq. ft. – In Box 4 clarification of Article 3, it was suggested that the term "footprint" be removed, and that the realtor definition of livable space be used to measure the compliance to 1000 square feet.
- For future consideration – Do we enforce covenants for existing property owners or only for new ones?
- No action will be taken until Scott Craven can check the legal extent to which the lake management district can govern properties bordering the lake.

Algae Observations

Rich Halfpap reported on a comparison of Cochran Lake and Himley Lake in Forest County, similar lakes which both have the same species of blue-green algae. The primary difference between the two is that there are 42 residences on Cochran, and only one seasonal one on Himley which leads to the conclusion that residents are not the cause of the problem. He also found that the algae is found in other countries, such as Denmark. Discussion followed. We have been given conflicting reports about whether or not the algae is harmful to people and pets. Owners were also wondering if some mechanical means is available to remove it. A motion was made by Mark Luoma to reconvene the Algae Committee; second, Ray Schave. Motion carried.

Committee Members: Mark Luoma, Mike Buchna, Donna Mandt, Rich Halfpap, Warren Johnson, Rick Schwai, and Scott Craven (ex officio)

New Business

2016-17 Lot Assessment (currently \$25.)

Mark Luoma made a motion to keep the current assessment; second, Frank Sevcik. Motion carried.

2016-17 Budget

The proposed 2016-2017 budget was presented. Motion to approve the budget with the addition of \$1,000 maximum for use by the Algae Committee was made by Ray Schave; second, Deb Cook. Motion carried.

Possible newsletter editor

Scott Craven will continue to do the newsletter; the layout will be left to his discretion.

Election of new Secretary

Rich Halfpap was nominated and agreed to serve as the new secretary. Motion to elect Rich Halfpap as secretary, Carl Schmetzer; second, Mark Luoma. Motion carried.

Fishing Contest – More information will be sent at a later date.

- 7 a.m. – 10 a.m., Sig and Mary's home, Sunday, July 3rd
- 11 a.m. meal
- \$10/person (children and adults) -- do not need to fish to come
- catch and release, no live bait

Chet Anderson – Gave his name and number to Stan Kmiecik as a possible source of stories and pictures about the early days of the lake as his family knew it.

New Owners were introduced; Tom and Terri Murrin, Warren and Sandy Johnson.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Houkom, Secretary

Lake District Board

In the 2 months since our annual meeting, I have been doing a bit of follow-up on the covenants and other issues that were not resolved at the meeting. My assessment of where things stand is presented below. We will need to have a meeting around Labor Day. As soon as I know when I will be around the lake, I will send out a notice and an agenda. At that point we can also discuss a December meeting (likely to be a conference call).

Per the Welcome letter: The revised letter seemed to be well received at the meeting. Comments received were included in the letter attached to the Newsletter. Everyone should now have a copy for their use. I hope it is used to inform guests on the lake and to actually welcome new neighbors. In the absence of further comment, I consider that task completed.

Per the Covenants: The bulk of discussion at the meeting focused on enforcement and authority rather than content. The content issues (e.g. the 1000 square foot issue) have been revised as the membership requested (and approved by vote). I will post a clean copy on the website – FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES. The matter of authority has great bearing on the covenants – see below.

I have had several very productive discussions with Eric Olson, Director of the UW-Extension Lakes program at UWSP. He has files on the formation of the CLMD in 1998 and was quite familiar with the kinds of issues we were addressing.

As it turns out, the deed covenants are of no great relevance to the lake management district. Matters such as rentals, building plans, noise, etc. are within the preview of a lake association (AKA a homeowners association) which we do not have. Such a voluntary organization could be formed and some lakes have both associations and districts. Covenants and issues that affect the lake (fisheries, water quality, water levels, safety, speeds, recreational equipment, etc.) are of concern to the lake district and within the lake district authority to address. Complete and easy to read descriptions of what lake districts and lake associations can and cannot accomplish are contained in “People of the Lakes” available online at: <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/uwexplakes/> and click on “bookstore”...download as a pdf...or you can google People of the Lakes. The document is essentially a user-friendly version of Wisconsin Statutes...chapter 33.

In the absence of a lake association, conflicts like zoning issues go through the county, which is why I asked Evan Lund to provide the relevant county regulations for the Covenants clarifications. They were included in the newsletter and are attached to the covenants on the website. The county can be influenced by any/all individuals on the lake and decisions that adversely affect neighbors or the entire lake can be taken to the courts by individuals or an association – NOT the CLMD.

Bottom line – This needs more discussion and understanding. For now, the covenants have been clarified and vetted and will be posted on the website along with the original Covenants document. The Covenants absolutely remain in effect. The Wisconsin Lakes program does send

staff to Lake District meetings to explain the different types of lake organizations and their authority. I think we should do that. When? The board will address that issue at their next meeting. We are caught between a rock and a hard place. The annual meeting is always on the memorial Day weekend to maximize attendance, which is good. However it is a poor time, in my opinion, to expect non-lake residents to attend. I believe that is why we rarely get the county or town staff to attend and I would be reluctant to even ask a lakes program staffer from central or southern Wisconsin to speak on a holiday weekend. Perhaps there is an electronic alternative. The Board will consider the options.

For now, some tasks have been completed while some remain a work in progress. Summer is going by very quickly. Enjoy what is left of it. As always, please send your concerns or comments to me or any board member. Thank you,

Scott Craven
CLMD President