

## Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District (LMLID)

Annual Membership Meeting

August 22, 2015 10:00 a.m.

McGregor Community Center

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Pat Rath.

A quorum was confirmed.

Board members present were: Pat Rath, Lee Carlson, James Bradley, Bob Bass, and Mike Zell. Cathy Larson and David Warner were absent. Also present was recording secretary, Dora Potts.

There were 34 LMLID members in attendance, representing 36 properties. Also in attendance were Benjamin Lundeen, an aquatic insect biologist from the Minnesota PCA, in Brainerd, and his wife, Melissa.

### Opening Comments

Chairman Pat Rath welcomed those in attendance and stated the purpose of the meeting: to approve the LMLID 2016 budget and to elect one director to fill the seat of outgoing director, Mike Zell.

### Financial Reports

Rath directed the attendees' attention to several agenda inserts, providing additional information about them and opportunities for questions and discussion:

- **2014 Financial Report**

\$ 32,138	Revenue from Aitkin County
\$ 16,486	LMA Harvesting Operations
\$ 10,000	LMA Harvester Capital Fund
\$ 3,040	AIS (Lake Survey and Boat Inspections by LMA)
<u>\$ 892</u>	<u>LMLID Administrative</u>
\$1,720	EOY Cash Balance

Discussion:

Nancy Karjalahti questioned the portion of the LMLID budget that was allotted to the LMA.

Director Bob Bass responded that the LMA has been the only organization to work on lake improvements and that any organization may come forward to request funding.

Tony Belz asked what the "harvesting expenses" of the LMA included, stating that his end of the lake had only been harvesting once this year. Rath responded that the money was requested for harvester operation and maintenance. Bob Bass responded that the LMLID board simply receives requests for funding and authorizes or denies them and stated that LMA harvesting operations are directed by the DNR as far as location and timing. Belz then asked if the LMLID was checking make sure the work was being done. Jim Bradley said that he has been working recently with the LMA in Belz' portion, the east end, of the lake. He

added that 2015 has been a short harvesting season due to equipment purchase and delays with that procedure, but that he was working with them on the west end.

Dale Kratochwill, of the LMA, said that this is more of an LMA issue, but that the LMA has been cutting this week and that they are trying to make their operation as public as possible. He said that harvesting is the largest part of the LMA budget and covered direct and indirect costs of harvesting. Kratochwill also stated that Robbie Danko could speak about specific numbers, but that this issue was more of an LMA rather than LMLID concern and that LMA should be contacted directly.

Rath added that the LMLID covers 70-80% of the LMA budget at the present time.

It is noted in the LMLID record that there have been a large number of concerns voiced about LMA harvester operations, as well as concern about LMLID monitoring of harvester operations.

- **2015 Year-to-Date Financial Report**  
(shortened version of detailed report that has been provided)

\$ 19,327	Revenue from Aitkin County
\$ 5,594	LMA Harvesting Operations
<u>\$ 1,316</u>	<u>LMLID Administrative</u>
\$ 14,137	EOY Cash Balance as of 8/21/2015

- **2015 Current to EOY Financial Report**

\$ 14,137	EOY cash balance as of 8/21/2015
\$ 12,800	2ndpayment from Aitkin County
\$ 500	Property owner survey
\$ 2,200	Request in the queue from LMA
\$ 9,000	Expected request from LMA for loan
\$ 3,500	Hold over to fund vegetation mapping
\$ 2,000	Minimum bank balance
Up to \$10,000	Expense requests and capital payment on loan

Discussion:

Fred Guenther asked if there is a time line during which the county money will be provided. Rath responded that, during the initial LMLID set up, there was a 5-year limit, but that the LMLID was no longer under that restriction, but is under state guidelines, which have no limit.

Guenther also asked which residents were taxed for this purpose. Rath responded that only lakeshore property owners and property owners with deeded access are taxed.

Kevin Post asked under what conditions assessment would increase. Mike Zell responded that something such as an invasive species invasion, requiring expensive chemical treatment, could warrant such an increase. He also said that this is the reason for the LMLID inspection initiative as a means of catching any problems early, when they could be more economically treated.

Rath said that any project would be coordinated with the DNR.

Casey Jelinski asked if a neighborhood group could form and come to the LMLID to request funding, if their needs were not being met by the LMA operations. Rath replied that any initiative that the LMLID funds has to be toward the health improvement of the entire lake and not just one portion of it. The LMLID desires to work on things together and this is why the LMLID will distribute a lake owners' survey in the near future, so that it can take all needs into consideration and find ways to help everybody.

Several other members voiced concerns that their portions of the lake were not being taken care of. Rath stated that he would be in contact with them to better direct their concerns to the appropriate source of help. When asked again if a group could request LMLID funding, Rath said that if the request was determined to indeed improve the health of the entire lake, it would be considered.

Robbie Danko reminded the group that LMA harvesting is done at direction and with approval of the DNR. She advised the concerned group to contact the DNR with their concerns and a request that their area be added to the list of harvested areas.

It is noted for the record that there were about half dozen people with specific area harvesting concerns and that Rath will respond to those concerns within the next three weeks. He invited interested parties to record their names and contact information on a form provided at this meeting. Four property owners shared their names.

Mike Zell applauded the LMA efforts as the only organization to improve lake conditions that he said could be substantiated by data.

LMA representatives invited all concerned to attend LMA meetings and be a part of its efforts at lake improvements.

A west end land owner stated that LMA has been asked to provide a report of its activities and this report will be forthcoming. He also encouraged interested parties to work with the LMA to improve conditions.

## Approval of 2016 LMLID Budget

\$ 2,000	LMLID administration (D&O insurance, mailing; annual meeting; meeting notes, web site...)
\$ 2,500	Documentation of Lake Management Plan
\$ 3,500	Vegetation mapping project
\$ 3,000	AIS Survey (if State law is changed to cease funding for this)
\$11,500	Vegetation management
\$ 9,000	LMA Harvester Loan
<u>\$ 2,170</u>	<u>Contingency -cover overruns; unbudgeted items</u>
\$33,670	518 property owners @ \$65 = \$33,670

Rath explained each listed item on the 2016 budget.

Bob Bass moved to approve the budget. Chuck Munson seconded.

Discussion:

Nancy Karjalahti stated that a letter must go out to every property owner because every property owner has a right to vote on this.

Rath responded that notice of the meeting should have been sent to every property owner 10 days in advance of this meeting. He acknowledged that this had not been done for the present meeting due to online mailing service malfunction combined with his error and apologized for that. The mailing service was the same one used last year when the notifications were mailed on time. This year, when the error was discovered, no time remained to reschedule this meeting and still hold it within the state required time frame of July and August. The only other option would be to vote authority for the board of directors to reschedule a meeting outside of July and August, which would probably be in June 2016. Rath also stated that other statute-required methods of notification, such as public notice, were provided on time and noted that the attendance was far greater this year than in the past.

Addressing Karjalahti, Rath suggested that the voting scheduled for this meeting take place and that any irregularities be addressed after post-meeting consultation with the appropriate legal authorities.

Rath invited questions about budget itself in preparation for a vote. He added that the LMLID would get clarification on the matter and schedule another meeting, if it is necessary to be in compliance.

Rath called for a vote.

The majority favored passage, with one member opposed. There were no abstentions. The LMLID 2016 budget was approved.

## **Board Member Election**

Fred Guenther reminded the membership that they elected board members to represent them and that their concerns should be reflected in the persons they elected through their membership.

Chairman Rath introduced and thanked the two candidates, Sue Woodard and Al Eld, asking if they had any additions to make to their previously published statements, which were present on the LMLID website and given to attending members. Woodard offered her assistance in helping the total membership work together to solve all issues, including ones that only affect part of the membership. Rath then invited the membership to voice questions to either candidate. There were none. The invitation was given for any member to step up and be added to the ballot. No members chose to do so.

The vote was conducted by secret ballot, with one vote being given for each property owned.

Carol Bradley voiced her concern about holding budget and director votes in light of the lack of notification for the meeting.

Melissa Lundeen and Vernice Bautch served as ballot counters.

Sue Woodard received the most votes (23-9) and was elected to the LMLID board.

## **Projects Status**

Pat Rath stated that the LMLID needed documentation in order to fulfill its purpose of promoting lake health. He said that one way to get the needed facts was to conduct surveys to acquire current data.

- **Vegetation Mapping**

One proposed survey involves using Biobase technology to take readings on all areas of the lake in order to map existing vegetation densities. He said that personnel to do this had not yet been secured and the opportunity was open for interested parties. All results would be posted for public view on the LMLID website.

When asked if this survey would be a one-time effort, Rath replied that it would be an ongoing project to keep track of changes in lake vegetation as time passed.

A question was also posed concerning coordination of the LMLID survey with DNR operations. Rath assured members that working with the DNR regarding this seemed like a positive step and was definitely planned. Bob Bass reiterated the importance of this.

- **Property Owner Survey**

David Warner is to have this ready to go by September 20, 2015. There will be online and paper components available to all property owners. Rath invited all to

submit survey question ideas to Rath or to Warner and they would be included on the survey. Results will be reflected in future lake management plans and will be coordinated with state and county plans.

Chuck Munson invited interested individuals to apply to the DNR for lakeshore chemical treatment permits in order to, perhaps, interest the DNR in participation in the maintenance of troubled areas. He added that attendance at LMA meetings would be the first step in this process. Tim Rinowski confirmed this information by citing existing chemical permits around the lake.

Rath encouraged members to stay informed of lake initiatives through the various websites, including the LMLID site.

Richard Biernat asked for clarification of the various organizations involved in lake improvements. Rath stated that the LMA has been working on lake improvements on a volunteer basis for many years. When the LMA expenses began to exceed what they could fundraise, another source of funding was sought and the process to create the LID was undertaken. The LMLID is a separate organization, in spite of the LMA's 30-year history of water monitoring and their continued efforts, including AIS monitoring. While the LMA is a valuable partner in lake improvement efforts, the LMLID remains strictly a funding organization for all lake improvement initiatives and welcomes other organizations to come forward with funding requests.

Robbie Danko again invited additional volunteer membership to the LMA, including board members, stating that manpower is currently the most needed LMA commodity.

## **LMA Partnership**

Chairman Rath provided additional details about the LMA operations:

- Long history of dedicated service
- Demonstrated ability to run the harvesting program
- Hard core team of volunteers
- Innovative commitment to the health of Lake Minnewawa
- Website: <http://www.lakeminnewawa.org>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LakeMinnewawaAssociation>

## **Mississippi River Grand Rapids WRAPS Presentation**

Benjamin Lundeen, an aquatic insect biologist from the Minnesota PCA, in Brainerd, gave a presentation about PCA involvement in lake health. His entire presentation can be viewed on the LMLID website.

Highlights included:

- WRAPS funding comes from a small fractional percent of a penny of each tax dollar.

- Public engagement in WRAPS activities is being sought.
- WRAPS primarily deals with the water use category of Aquatic Life and Recreation.
- They deal with 81 watersheds, on a rotating basis, during a 10-year period, taking on about eight watersheds each year.
- WRAPS procedures include both flow- and biological-monitoring.
- The local watershed is in its first year of the current monitoring process. It will take several years for the complete report to become available and it will be released in the winter of 2017-18, after all required post-evaluations and assessments are complete and there has been a public meeting for review.
- Citizens can contribute to the studies by attending WRAPS meetings, doing individual monitoring, and participating in discussions about WRAPS activities.

Lundeen was asked if he had any current information on the Enbridge project. He said that he had none.

Mr. Lundeen can be contacted through: [Benjamin.Lundeen@state.mn.us](mailto:Benjamin.Lundeen@state.mn.us)

### **Open Discussion**

There was a motion by Pat Rath to hold a vote that would allow the LMLID board to change meeting dates. Some discussion ensued and it was decided to table the motion until more procedural information could be obtained regarding this issue.

Jim Bradley provided information concerning bullheads as a possible cause of the spring 2015 fish kill in the lake. He said that information from the DNR has proven this to be inaccurate, so there does not seem a need to pursue any netting procedure, as previously discussed.

Jim Bradley made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mike Zell. The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Submitted by Dora Potts, as recording secretary  
August 24, 2015

Approved by Robert Bass, LMLID Secretary  
August 25, 2015