

## **Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District (LMLID)**

Annual Membership Meeting

August 22, 2020 10:00 a.m.

McGregor Community Center

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by LMLID President, Cathy Larson. A quorum was confirmed.

Board members present were: Cathy Larson (President), James Bradley (Vice President), Dan Westberg (Secretary), Pat Rath (Treasurer), Steve Olson, Bruce Patterson, and Jeff Johnson. Also present was recording secretary, Dora Potts. Additionally in attendance were members representing 18 properties.

### **Welcome and Introduction of LMLID Board Members and Staff**

President, Cathy Larson welcomed attendees and noted that it was nice to see some new faces in attendance and she encouraged all to remain connected to activities regarding lake care and improvement.

Larson then introduced each member of the LMLID Board of Directors and the Recording Secretary. Jeff Johnson is serving out the term of Sue Woodard who had to resign from her position due to personal circumstances.

### **Meeting Agenda and Summary of LMLID Function**

The agenda for the meeting was presented by Larson, who also specifically explained the role and function of the LMLID. It was noted that the LMLID is exclusively a funding vehicle for projects that improve the entire lake, not individual shorelines. Such aspects of lake improvement as water quality and fish stocking are eligible for LMLID funding. The LID's job is to take the \$65 per landowner and apply it to improve lake health. Such projects are not designed by the LID, but proposed to the LID for funding by other organizations, such as the Lake Minnewawa Association, which has, historically, proposed the bulk of initiatives.

#### **1) Financial Report**

Treasurer, Pat Rath, presented the financial report from 2019 and the year-to-date report for 2020. The report showed both budgeted and actual expenditures and the entire report can be found on the LMLID website. Rath stated that LMLID receipts and expenditures have been tracked in this manner since 2016 and that there have not been many changes during that time. He noted, also, that the LMA accounts for the majority of expenditures and that the cost of insurance for the LMLID was significantly reduced in 2019 by changing insurance vendors.

The LMLID is using remaining funds to establish a long-term resource to fight Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). These funds are held in \$10,000 CDs for future use, if and when needed. It was

also noted that, while Lake Minnewawa has been very fortunate in terms of not having AIS, the threat of AIS invasion is always present and the cost of dealing with it is very high. The chance of AIS introduction into the lake rises with more use and this season has brought much more traffic to the lake. Water testing for AIS and AIS preventive precautions (boat inspections and publicity, etc.) continue on a regular basis.

## **2) 2021 LMLID Budget**

Rath then presented the proposed LMLID Budget for 2021, which includes normal expenditures and the continued reserve of AIS funds in a proposed 3 CDs of \$10,000 each.

Dan Westberg made a motion to approve the 2021 budget. The motion was seconded by John Montour and passed unanimously.

## **3) LMLID Project Status Summary**

Larson listed the two main current LMLID projects as 1) support of the LMA water quality initiative that includes operation of the harvester to make the lake passable during the weedy season and 2) the establishment of emergency funds for fighting future AIS invasions.

The LMLID has also pledged to support the construction of a "Weirs Dam," a project of the LMA. The dam will involve building a "fish ladder" (a series of pools fish can swim up to) to prevent the loss of fish from the lake after spawning. Here is a summary of the project and a current progress report, supplied by Sue Westberg of the LMA:

- The LMA received a grant of \$89,000 toward the dam, to which it must contribute 10%.
- The LMLID and the Minnewawa Sportsmen's Club have pledged to aid with the LMA's obligation.
- There is also the possibility of additional expenses regarding access to the dam site.
- The project was moving well along until COVID, which has delayed it by about a year.
- Current projections set the beginning of construction at the spring of 2021.
- Aitkin County Soil and Water will put out bids for the project.

Larson thanked the LMA and Sue Westberg for the report and their efforts toward this project, noting that it would help provide a balance between lake enjoyment for recreation and fishing.

## **4) LMLID Board Member Election**

As of January 2021, there will be two expiring board seats: those of James Bradley and Cathy Larson. Both of these members filed for re-election with no other candidates contacting the LMLID with intention to run.

A vote was held and candidates Larson and Bradley received the majority of votes, re-electing both to board seats. The voting included one absentee ballot.

## 5) Open Discussion

- Rob Warner questioned the moving of LMLID regular board meetings from Saturdays to Fridays during the 2020 year, citing a difficulty caused for members who worked to attend.
  - Larson responded that the decision to change the meeting day was made by the board to accommodate board members who had conflicting schedules/events on weekends and was based on the extremely sparse attendance by guests in the past.
  - Larson suggested attending LMA meetings which are held on Saturdays since the LMA is the "project" vehicle for the lake and the LMLID is simply the funding source for lake projects.
  - She also said that the LMLID board could bring this up for discussion at a future meeting.
  - Melissa Palmer suggested employing virtual meeting attendance, but Larson noted the very limited wifi service at the meeting place (the Minnewawa Sportsmen's Club) as a barrier to that.
  
- Greg Pfeifer enlightened the group about the LMA loon nesting project:
  - Over the last few years, lake residents had noted the absence of the formerly seen groups of baby loons on the lake.
  - Further research by spotters indicated that a combination of higher water levels and other factors have caused the loon nesting spots to become more accessible to predators on land and from the air.
  - The LMA is working with students from St. Cloud State University in the construction of aluminum nesting platforms that will enable the loons to nest more safely, raised and further from shore. The plan is to introduce three of these platforms on Lake Minnewawa next year.
  - Similar projects are working well at other Minnesota lakes.
  
- Harry Rinowski alerted the group of an opportunity to participate in a lake improvement event held each year on the third weekend of August called "Starry Trek." At this time, groups of volunteers, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, conduct weed sampling at area lakes. Rinowski said that this year, the testing could not be completed at several lakes due to the lack of volunteers and suggested that a search of the event name would yield more information for interested parties.
  
- Other members provided information on the continued AIS testing efforts in Lake Minnewawa:
  - Greg Pfeifer noted that there is to be a repeat lake survey for AIS by Freshwater Aquatic Scientific Services in August or September of this year. A similar survey

showed the lake negative for AIS five years ago and will be repeated every four to five years.

- Sue Westberg provided information about the yearly zebra mussel survey. The LMA is waiting on the results of this year's study. There has been greater concern about zebra mussels because of this year's increased lake traffic and the fact that several area lakes contain this form of AIS.

Dan Westberg reported on Lake Minnewawa water quality in 2020. He said that it has been good and basically the same all year, testing at a higher quality than Big Sandy Lake.

#### **6) Future LMLID Meetings**

- The next regular meeting of the LMLID Board of Directors will be on October 23 at 10:00 a.m. at the Minnewawa Sportsmen's Club.
- The McGregor Community Center is unavailable for this same weekend (which would be August 21) in 2021 so the Annual Meeting will need to be held on August 28, pending board approval. Check the LMLID website for any updates.

Dan Westberg made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by John Montour and the meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Submitted by Dora Potts, as recording secretary  
August 23, 2020

Approved by Cathy Larson, LMLID President  
August 24, 2020

Approved by Dan Westberg, LMLID Secretary  
August 24, 2020