

MWLA Board of Directors Meeting  
May 18, 2020  
Minutes

President Greg Holt called the meeting to order at 9:31 am. Due to COVID -19, this was a phone meeting.

Board Members Present: Greg Holt, Delp Schafer, Paul Puccinelli, Carla Hameister, Jody Miller, Eleanor Butler, Dennis Wilm, Angela Dombrowicki, Mike McKeon, Karen Dixon, and Mary Bowlus

Board Members Absent: Tom Kramer, Gale Wolf

Jody Miller moved to approve the agenda; Dennis Wilm seconded. The agenda was approved.

Paul Puccinelli moved to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2019 Board of Directors meeting. Mike McKeon seconded the motion. The minutes were approved

Greg will follow-up on sending a letter to the Manitowish Water Chamber of Commerce about changing the date of Cran-a-rama to the last Saturday in September or earlier as opposed to the first week in October.

## **Committee Reports**

### Administration

#### Financial Report-Eleanor Butler

Dennis Wilm moved to accept the financial report; Karen Dixon seconded. The financial report was approved.

#### 2020 Meeting Dates/Terms of Office-Greg Holt

Members should review their terms of office for discussion at the next MWLA Board meeting.

#### Water Ecology and Safety-Emily Heald

#### Interns for the Summer of 2020

Due to the ongoing effect of the COVID-19 virus on the safe and ethical conduct of NLDC programming for both staff and the community, the NLDC Executive Committee and Executive Director, with guidance from the Vilas County Health Department, have made the difficult decision to allow for only one seasonal Water Program staff ( instead of the usual 3) this summer to assist Emily. The intern's name is Jarod Scheff.

## AIS

As a result of the reduction in staff, tentative plans for the Manitowish Waters/Boulder Junction areas are as follows:

- Continuing to work with the consulting company, Onterra, to do early-season AIS surveys for the entire Manitowish Chain. The North Lakeland Discovery Center (NLDC) splits this monitoring with Onterra to ensure our work is done early enough so that we have time to hand-remove any curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) we find.
- Continuing to work with the professional hand-pulling company, Aquatic Plant Management, as needed to hand pull CLP. As in other years, NLDC and Aquatic Plant Management will split this work to ensure a thorough hand-pulling of CLP is completed.
- Monitoring the Chain (and Manitowish River) for purple loosestrife – clipping flower heads, releasing beetles, etc. The Manitowish River and a few select sites on the lakes will be priority.
- Decreasing the time, the NLDC staff spend with Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW). This is the area of the program that will likely see the greatest decrease in time spent. Past data have indicated that Rest Lake boat landing is one of the top 3 busiest in the entire county. Because of this, the summer intern will be stationed at Rest Lake on most Saturdays practicing social distancing and conducting the same activities as in past years with boaters except that brochures will not be distributed in June and possibly longer depending on the status of COVID-19 developments.
- Conducting AIS identification trainings on-line especially for the month of June. Due to the difficulty of practicing social distancing at these hands-on trainings, Emily will keep the Board informed of on-line AIS trainings and volunteer opportunities.
- Continuing to accept suspect specimens, pictures, etc. For at least June, this will likely be handled by placing a cooler outside for people to put their plants in, which Emily can view later and contact the person who dropped off the specimen by phone or email.
- Continuing to manage open grants, doing all the reporting and financial obligations.
- Continuing to monitor for spiny water flea on the Chain lakes on a rotating basis. For this monitoring, the NLDC prioritizes Wild Rice Lake every year because it is connected to Trout Lake via the Trout River. The other lakes are sampled for spiny water flea on a rotating basis to ensure full coverage over the years. Because the lab that looks through our spiny water flea samples is the same lab that analyzes COVID-19 tests, the 2019 samples will not be analyzed until early fall 2020.

## Canoe Trips

All river trips may be changed to lake trips due to social distancing. Options were discussed for Sturgeon Lake, Wild Rice, or Island Lake. Emily will

decide on which lakes to use for the trips with the caveat that plans could change depending on what activities remain in place this summer.

### Management Plan

There will be a meeting on June 15, 2020 with Onterra to go over the management plan with the MWLA Board as part of the regular June Board meeting. MWLA Board members should pay particular attention to the implementation plan. Karen suggested that we plan on a virtual meeting and most Board members agreed. Tim from Onterra will send out information about the virtual meeting.

### Community Outreach

#### Newsletter-Karen Dixon

Karen has started work on the Summer newsletter. Topics include: a message from the President and thank you to volunteers, the date and status of the annual meeting, AIS news and intern, water safety patrol article, water safety committee, Walleyes for Tomorrow, Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association Neighbors Program, reminder on dumping lawn waste in lakes, Rest Lake Dam update and membership renewal information.

Thanks to Karen on the special edition newsletter.

#### Government Relations-Greg Holt

Town Board Meetings-The following topics of relevance to MWLA were discussed at recent Town board Meetings:

- April 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting-Purchase of Material for Floating Docks at Koller Park
- January 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting-Interview of a Potential Water Patrol Officer
- January 14, 2020 Meeting-Recommendations from Room Tax Committee on a New Pontoon Boat for use by the NLDC for AIS training

#### Town Water Safety Committee-Carla Hameister and Greg Holt

The Committee will work on simplified information on no wake zones, survey results on town views on water safety issues, on-line media to update folks on safety concerns, and maps of lakes with no wake zones. The survey was developed by the Water Safety Committee. Karen Dixon will electronically forward the Chamber News to MWLA Board members. The Chamber News includes the survey questions.

#### Rest Lake Dam/ MOU-Greg Holt

The MOU for the period of April 2016- April 2020 was extended for one-year until April 2021. It is likely that another MOU covering several more years will be agreed upon in the coming months.

## **Old Business**

Membership Outreach Initiative- This will be discussed at future meeting. Ability to pay on-line for MWLA Membership-Karen Dixon is continuing to research this possibility.

## **New Business**

### Planning for MWLA Events in 2020- Greg Holt

Greg is talking to the Town Board and Chamber of Commerce about summer events. There is a meeting of the Chamber next week to decide how to handle the Town's July 4<sup>th</sup> activities. They are waiting for the MWLA Board to decide on pontoon rides and canoe trips. Mike suggested that we should wait to see what Chamber says about those events and go from there. The MWLA should also have their own opinions on its participation in 2020 events.

### June Pontoon Rides-Dennis Wilm

Other considerations were raised legally about someone who may get COVID-19 while on the boat. Eleanor mentioned that MWLA has liability insurance for MWLA Board members; however, the policy may not cover COVID-19. Dennis will check with his insurance and Eleanor or Greg will check on the MWLA policy. There was discussion about holding off on this decision for a few months.

### July 4<sup>th</sup> Trout Pond and MWLA Booth

Trout Pond- Board members felt it would be difficult to maintain social distancing at this event. Dennis moved that we do not sponsor the trout pond this year and continue for 2021. Karen seconded. Motion was approved.

The MWLA Board will wait for the Town's decision on the status of July 4 activities to decide on whether to have a MWLA booth. We will not ask for volunteers at this time. Karen will mention this decision in the newsletter. Greg will convey this decision to the Chamber.

### Annual Meeting-July

Greg mentioned that we are not obligated to have an annual meeting. Karen notes that Papoose Lake is postponing their meeting until September. Jody mentioned that the Lioness have suspended all activities regarding food. A

suggestion was made not to serve food at the annual meeting. There was concerns about social distancing and postponing the meeting until fall. There was discussion among Board members about having a pared down meeting with no food or raffles just votes on the budget and officers.

Dennis motioned that we make a decision on annual meetings, July 4<sup>th</sup> booth, canoe trips, and pontoon rides by the June 15 board meeting; Jody seconded. The motion was approved.

#### Town Ground Water Initiative-Greg Holt and Emily Heald

##### Summary:

The University of Stevens Point (SP) has a program where if at least 40, and up to 200 home owners, agree to test for several metal, nitrates, and bacteria in their well water. SP will provide results and staff will review them with homeowners individually and at a meeting. SP staff will also create maps of the results anonymously.

The MWLA role would be to promote the testing. Total cost is \$107 per test. Currently we would promote by newsletter and email and taking samples to SP. There would be a day in September set aside for testing, gathering, and driving water samples to SP. The SP would try and get a geographical representation from the town of Manitowish Waters; however, the testing is open to anyone in Manitowish Waters. MWLA Board members could also volunteer to have their wells tested. There is no enforcement of negative findings. Karen asked if this was a one-time or ongoing event. Emily mentioned that the hope would be that people would continue this testing on their own every few years.

Dennis motioned for MWLA to support the Town Ground Water Initiative and Mary seconded. The motion was approved.

#### Request to Help Publicize Initiative Supporting Local Businesses During Pandemic- Greg Holt

The Board decided that there would be an article in the newsletter reminding the MWLA membership to support local businesses during the pandemic.

#### Vilas County Lakes and Rivers "Greet Your Neighbor" Initiative-Karen Dixon

This will be discussed at a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am by President Greg Holt.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Monday, June 15, 2020 and will be by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Dombrowicki,  
Secretary