MWLA Board of Directors Meeting

May 17, 2021

Minutes

President Greg Holt called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Board Members Present: Jody Miller, Greg Holt, Mary Bowlus, Mike McKeon, Karen Dixon, Paul Puccinelli, Delp Schafer, Gale Wolf, Eleanor Butler, and Angela Dombrowicki.

Board Members Absent: Dennis Wilm, Tom Kramer, and Carla Biwan Hameister.

Paul moved to approve the agenda; Gale seconded. The agenda was approved.

Karen moved to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2020 MWLA Board of Directors meeting. Jody Miller seconded. The minutes were approved.

**Water Ecology and Safety**

Dead Pike Like Update- Gale Wolf and John Hanson, Guest

Gale emphasized the helpful support of the Town of Manitowish Waters over many years as a resource to the Dead Pike Lake Association for the water control structure at Dead Pike Lake.

John outlined the multi-year history of the Dead Pike Lake water control structure with the DNR and the Town of Manitowish Waters. There was a study done by a private firm that recommended a water control structure on Dead Pike Lake. The Town felt that the DNR should own and operate the water control structure but the DNR wanted the Town to operate the structure. A MOU was developed between the Town and the DNR. The total cost of the structure is $125,000; $55,000 was available from a private foundation. The Town applied for a grant from the DNR in 2020 but the grant was denied. Finally, Senator Felzkowski, who is a member of the Joint Finance Committee, requested $125,000 in the State Budget for July 2021-2023 to cover the full costs of the structure with the DNR required to own and operate the water control structure.

Fish Habitat and AIS Update-Greg Holt

These updates will be deferred until the June meeting since Emily and Tom ware not able to attend the May 17th meeting. Emily provided a written update emphasizing that the Discovery Center staff and interns will be spending a lot of time on Alder Lake to look for rooted Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP), given that floating CLP was found in the Lake last year.

**Administration**

Financial Report-Eleanor Butler

Eleanor presented the Financial Report for the period June 1, 2020 through May 12, 2021. It was noted that are fewer expenses in some categories because of cancelled events due to COVID restrictions. However, it was noted that there are several funding obligations for the next year in discussion including a fish hatchery and donation to the Discovery Center. Also, the MWLA has previously agreed to contribute $2,800 for half of the cost of the new Slow-No-Wake buoys that the Town has purchased. Jody moved to approve the Financial Report for the period June 1, 2020 through May 21, 2021. Karen seconded. The Financial Report was approved.

Newsletter-Karen Dixon

Possible Topics for the Spring Newsletter include: AIS, Walleyes for Tomorrow, Annual Meeting, Rest Lake Dam Lake Update, Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association Greet Your Neighbors Initiative and multi-county Zoom get together, Pike Lake update, feedback on on-line membership and newsletter, Purple Loosestrife Dig, History of the Manitowish Waters Chain of Lakes, message from the MWLA President, and thank you to members.

Town Board Meetings January-April 2021-Greg Holt

Greg updated the Board on highlights of the Town of Manitowish Waters Board Meetings regarding water- related and MWLA- related information in a written report distributed to the Board of Directors.

There was a concern expressed that the lake maps proposed by the Water Safety Committee highlight designated campsites which may encourage multi- day camping when most campsites on the lakes are single day use only. Greg noted that the Water Safety Committee will meet again in the fall.

**Old Business-Greg Holt**

Insurance for MWLA Special Events-Greg Holt

Based on Greg’s inquiries, the Trout Pond used for the July 4th event would be covered by the Chamber of Commerce’s insurance.

Cran-a-Rama Pontoon Rides- the Chamber of Commerce feels that their insurance will not cover pontoon rides. It may be possible to pursue a different option for insurance. For example, the State Historical Society used the Discovery Center’s (DC) boats in partnership with the DC as an educational activity they jointly sponsor each year.

On -line Membership-Karen Dixon

There hasn’t been any activity on this but a suggestion was made to form an ad hoc subcommittee to look into the issue of on-line membership. Eleanor will check with Larry Preston (a vendor she uses) on prices and services.

**New Business-Greg Holt**

July 4th Trout Pond and Booth

The Board briefly discussed whether to have a booth and the Trout Pond for the July 4th event. The Town and Chamber of Commerce of Manitowish Waters plan to hold July 4th activities this year. Jody moved that the MWLA host the Trout Pond and a booth at the Town’s July 4th event. Karen seconded. The motion was approved. Greg agreed to take over the planning for the July 4th Trout Pond and booth.

Event Planning and Outreach Responsibilities/Activities-Greg Holt

The Board discussed a letter Greg prepared to the MWLA membership about sharing of volunteer opportunities with the membership of the MWLA. The Board discussed changes to the letter. The changes include adding or amending the following items:

* Clarify that members wishing to assist will be able to choose the degree to which they participate and the amount of time they wish to be involved
* The MWLA email address for people who are interested in volunteering
* A change in the wording AIS compliance to AIS assistance or monitoring

The letter should be a separate email blast. Also, a question was raised as to how the MWLA was complying with the AIS Master Plan. Greg said he would speak with Emily to clarify what complying with Master Plan entails.

Board of Directors Terms-Greg Holt

Due to COVID restrictions on meetings and activities, all Directors agreed to serve in their 2019 capacities through 2020. As a result, all Board of Directors’ terms expire in July 2021. There was some discussion on Board Directors’ plans but no decisions were made. Greg asked the Directors to think about their commitment to the Board for discussion at the June meeting.

Dennis Wilm will be leaving the Board as Vice President effective July 2021. The Board of Directors wishes to express their gratitude to Dennis for all the work he has done on the Board. He has been an active participant in the MWLA and will be sorely missed.

Possible Rest Lake Land Donation-Greg Holt

In January 2021, the MWLA was approached to possibly receive a parcel of land on Rest Lake as part of the settlement of an estate. The will of the gentleman who owned the property has very specific requirements on how the land would be used, wishing it to stay in a natural state and to have existing building razed. There are monies in the will to cover the razing of the buildings. A subcommittee to further study this offer was established with the participation of Directors Delp Shafer, Karen Dixon, Jody Miller, Greg Holt and chaired by Mike McKeon.

Greg moved that the MWLA Board of Directors establish an ad hoc committee to study the questions posed by the potential acquisition of the parcel on Rest Lake. Specifically, the subcommittee will study potential uses and compose questions and a letter to the attorney representing the trustees which would be shard with the Board of Directors at a future meeting. Angela seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**Correspondence-Greg Holt**

There were several correspondences that the President handled during the winter. The major items included the following:

* A letter prepared for the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board supporting the Town of Manitowish Waters application for a Surface Water Grant for the restoration of Dead Pike Lake through the construction of a water control structure.
* Multiple correspondences and conversions with Ted Anchor of Northwoods Land Trust and Gary Wickert S.C. regarding a possible donation of property to the MWLA.
* Multiple responses to questions from MWLA members regarding the timing of the fall drawdown and the spring refill.
* Multiple responses to a MWLA member regarding concerns about the Clear Lake Channel.
* Multiple acknowledgements thanking members for their individual donations to the MWLA.
* Response to the citizen group opposing the construction of a communications tower by Bug Tussel near Island Lake indicating that the MWLA would send out an email to the MWLA membership indicating where they could get more information on the issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:37 am.

The next meeting will be June 21,2021 at the Bobcat Cabin at the Discovery Center at 9:30 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Dombrowicki,

Secretary