

MWLA Board of Directors Meeting
August 17, 2020
Minutes

President Greg Holt called the meeting to order at 9:33 am. Due to COVID -19, this was a phone meeting.

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

Board Members Absent: Eleanor Butler, Paul Puccinelli, and Gale Wolf

Tom Kramer moved to approve the agenda with several additions noted in the minutes; Dennis Wilm seconded. The agenda was approved.

Mary Bowlus moved to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2020 MWLA Board of Directors meeting. Jody Miller seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Committee Reports

Administration

Financial Report and Budget-Greg Holt

Greg Holt will verify some of the numbers on the financial report with Eleanor Butler for review and approval at the September MWLA Board of Directors meeting.

Water Ecology and Safety

AIS Update- Emily Heald

Purple Loosestrife (PL) was found on Rice Creek (heavy, as usual – being clipped), Stepping Stones (pulled by NLDC and homeowners), wetland near Rest (volunteer addressing), Spider-Manitowish Channel (NLDC pulled/clipped), Manitowish (NLDC pulled/clipped), Fawn (NLDC pulled/clipped), Stone (NLDC pulled/clipped), Wild Rice (NLDC pulled/clipped). The NLDC staff still need to do the two sections of the Manitowish River, Volunteers are doing Fawn, Clear, Little Star, Alder, the Rest-Stone Channel. The good news is that the NLDC staff are not seeing PL in any new areas this year.

The NLDC staff are taking spiny water flea sediment samples on the lakes on a rotating basis. In 2018 Emily sampled all of the lakes to get them on an even playing field. This year she is sampling Rest, Island, Spider, and Wild Rice. Results should hopefully come back later this fall or early spring 2021. The NLDC still has not received 2019 results because the lab that processes these samples is the same that processes COVID tests.

The NLDC staff did AIS monitoring snorkel surveys on Clear, Little Star, and Manitowish Lakes and found nothing new.

Emily will make her usual end of summer funding request and presentation to the Manitowish Waters Town Board.

Ground Water /Well Testing Initiative Update-Emily Heald

Kits will be picked up in September. John Hanson will drive sample kits to Stevens Point in September the day after the samples are collected by individual homeowners. Individual homeowners will receive their own results per well. There will be a map with results by region/legal description for the public without individual homeowners' names. There are approximately 65 wells in the sample.

Fish Habitat-Tom Kramer

Tom will apply for permits for fish sticks. There is \$10,000 grant from Walleyes for Tomorrow to use for fish sticks on the Manitowish Chain. The MWLA could use their donations for fish habitat for fish sticks. A suggestion was made to use MWLA fish habitat donations to help expand the parking lot to allow better access to Clear Lake for boats.

There are also safety concerns with the traffic patterns at the Clear Lake parking lot/boat landing and the limited space there for fishing boats and snow plows. The Town may want to look for a new public access location.

Tom will report at the next MWLA Board meeting on the status of improvements to the Clear Lake boat landing and the MWLA will discuss its possible involvement.

There was also discussion about the safety concerns with the passage between Fawn and Clear Lake. Greg will bring this issue up with Bob Becker for the Town Board's Water and Safety Committee to discuss. Several suggestions were made by Board members for improved signage, a motion sensor, and/or a red/green light.

Walleyes for Tomorrow-Tom Kramer

Due to the COVID-19 there is no fish hatchery on Alder Lake. Fish hatcheries around the State are increasing walleye populations. The tribes are willing to work with Walleyes for Tomorrow on reductions in spearing on the Chain.

Donations and Expenditures for Fish Habitat and Stocking-Greg Holt

Eleanor Butler prepared a report that showed the donations to the MWLA for fish habitat and stocking for the past three years.

The Board discussed how the donations should be used. Tom Kramer mentioned that the category of fish stocking is misleading because the DNR will not likely allow fish stocking on the Manitowish Chain, due to its designation as a naturally reproducing chain of lakes. The donations could be used for fish habitat projects defined broadly such as tree drops and sticks, shoreland development, AIS and related research.

Tom Kramer and Greg Holt will write an article to be sent to the MWLA along with the 2020-2021 budget that explains how the possible use of prior donations to the categories of fish habitat and stocking can be used more broadly for projects related to fish habitat. The term "stocking" will also be removed from the membership sign-up/renewal donation form.

Newsletter-Karen Dixon

The next newsletter will be in September or early October. The newsletter will explain what happened this summer. There will also be an article highlighting a volunteer, possibly on shoreline preservation/restoration. Emily will look for a volunteer who is involved in water monitoring. There may also be an article on water safety.

Government Relations-Greg Holt

The following topics of relevance to MWLA were discussed at the August Manitowish Waters Town Board Meeting:

- Platforms for docks were installed at Kohler Park. The docks will be finished this Spring.
- The MWLA Board sent a letter opposing ATVs/UTVs on town roads to the Manitowish Waters Town Board. There will be referendum on ATVs/UTVs on the November 2020 ballot. The referendum will ask whether the Town should open all town roads to ATVs/UTVs. There will also be a survey of residents who are non-voters and those results will be tallied separately from the November ballot results.
- Dead Pike Lake-The Town of Manitowish Waters will own the water control structure being built on Dead Pike Lake and is working with the DNR on a MOU. There was a public hearing on this issue on August 18th and there will be a period for written comments from the public after the hearing. The Dead Pike homeowners appreciate the support of the MWLA. Greg will talk to Gale Wolf after the August 18th hearing about what additional things the MWLA can do to assist Dead Pike Lake.
- Water Patrol-The patrol spent 172 hours on the Chain in July; issued 176 verbal warnings, 20 written warnings, and one citation.

MWLA Insurance- Greg Holt

As a follow-up to prior MWLA Board meetings, Greg has contacted several different insurance companies and non-profit groups about MWLA insurance for pontoon rides. Dennis contacted his State Farm Insurance agent who indicated that as long as Dennis didn't charge for the pontoon rides, he would be covered.

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) "Greet Your Neighbor" Initiative-
Karen Dixon

The VCLRA will meet again in September. Karen will find out what they expect the MWLA and real estate agents to do regarding outreach to new lake property owners and will get back to the MWLA Board at a future meeting.

Membership Outreach Initiative - Greg Holt

The MWLA received two new memberships from the newsletter membership form. There was some discussion about sending out information on new memberships with the budget or as part of an email announcing an all-digital newsletter. Karen will send out an email on the digital newsletter.

Correspondence

Town of Newbold-The Town of Newbold declined a permit for a resident on shoreland property to divide 300 ft of frontage into two lots The MWLA Board decided not to get involved in what appears to be an individual zoning dispute.

Swimmers Itch-On behalf of residents of North/South Twin Lakes, Vilas County asked if the MWLA wants to join with other lakes in hiring a consultant to help address problems with swimmers' itch. The MWLA Board declined given that swimmers' itch is not a major problem on the Manitowish Chain.

Fireworks-Greg will send an email/letter to the Manitowish Waters Town Board forwarding complaints the MWLA received from some members about shooting fireworks over the lakes.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 am by President Greg Holt.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday, September 21, 2020 and will be by phone.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Dombrowicki,
Secretary