Little Sand Lake Area Association

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2021

**Attending:** Larry Odegard, MaJeana Hallstrom, Punky Catlin, Karen Netland, Glenn Gapp, Steve Trutna, Jane Amble and Christine Hobrough

**Absent with notice:** Cindy Nollette

**Guest attending:** Jacob Nollette

**Meeting was called to order at 9:20a.m.**

The **Secretary’s report** was provided by Christine Hobrough. The minutes from the July 5th meeting were reviewed with minor changes. MaJeana motioned the minutes for the July 5th meeting be approved with changes as discussed; Steve provided the second; with no objections, the minutes were approved and will be posted on the website.

Punky provided an update on the **Treasurer’s report:**

* Punky reported paying HC COLA for 121 memberships totaling $484; this is the largest number of memberships to date.
* We have 12 memberships paid so far.
* We also have a couple of memorials to be added; and need to add another plaque to the kiosk. Punky spoke with Mark & Nancy Doda on this.
* Punky is pleased with the general fund at $6,251.45 currently; our AIS fund is at $7,117.27. She said this is helpful to pay inspection hours bill in January. She also said Memorial Fund is at $1,300. The total balances are $14,762.43; we also have $8,640.48 being held in Certificates of Deposit.
* Punky said we are in one of the best places we’ve been at this time of year. Steve made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s report with MaJeana providing the second; no further discussion; the report was approved.
* Christine will be added as a signer sometime this spring.

**Unfinished/on-going old business:**

1. Glenn reported we had 4-5 **tree orders** this year; the information came late giving us a short window to gather orders. Punky said we had questions if members could place their Restore the Shore order through the website; she explained we do not have our Stripe agreement set up for this plus there would be a 3% fee. The lake associations help COLA with the program by gathering the order forms from members to submit one order form from the association. We will continue to accept checks for this so we can pay the Restore the Shore program.
2. **HC COLA update** from MaJeana included the meeting summary she shared with the Board. The Restore the Shore funding was restored to 2019 levels. Our payment will be due in January. MaJeana shared will be able to fund at previous levels due to the Lake Emma grant. No new infestations in 2021 but Belle Taine is being watched for Zebra Mussels. The cost of treatment for an infestation is approximately $2,000 per treatment. A couple of years ago, Mantrap had milfoil and hired divers to remove it. They haven’t had any new infestation sighting but are watching closely. She also shared many years ago, Dan Kittleson and others did the vegetation study in the early/mid 2000’s. Lake Kabekona did this recently at a cost of $4,000. COLA does have a grant program that can provide up to $2,000. She suggested the board consider obtaining an estimate and/or submitting a grant request by April 15th if interested. The purpose of the study is to document the vegetation in the lake and how it changes (since the last study). It can help monitor the integrity of the lake vegetation. MaJeana suggested we could locate and share the previous study with the board. The board could identify how often this type of study could/should be done based on funding. The pricing is based on how many “points” are studied.
3. **Water Quality Testing** was explained by Larry. The testing is done 5 times each summer (May through September); 4 different tests. Larry said this summer would be great to train new volunteers. It is very important work and a 2-person job:
	1. The water quality testing itself is sent to the State to be analyzed (this is day specific)
	2. The dissolved oxygen tests are done on an excel form and emailed to the DNR
	3. Secchi discs are sent to the DNR twice a month (this done on a calm day or time of day); 10 tests/summer
	4. Veliger sampling a couple of times each summer using the net to catch the sample

They use a pontoon, taking about 1 ½ - 2 hours each time. The results then are taken into Park Rapids. They store the equipment for the association too. Mark Doda has shared the role and Wayne Swanson has participated on occasion. The detail is in the chart MaJeana provided last summer. We will ‘advertise’ the volunteer opening to our members. Jacob suggested a blog post on the website might be helpful.

1. **Other volunteer needs** – Larry and Steve will roll off the board this year unless they take a different role; Punky would consider training a new Treasurer if possible. Glenn suggested Greg Dravis expressed interest in learning more.
2. Punky shared kudos for all of the work Jacob has done on **the website** to help bring it current. She asked about the discussion in July, asking for clarification. GravityView was a plug in we could use for the directory – to maintain the directory, recurring memberships, updates by members and auto-billing. It is a $1,200 lifetime license or an annual fee of $200. The GravityView license would be owned by LSLAA. Jacob uses his own license of GravityForms for the work he does for the association for free. Christine and Jacob would dig into this topic and come back to the board with more information relating to modernizing the directory.

**New business:**

1. **Membership drive** – our fiscal year ends August 31 of each year. We should begin sending email messages encouraging members to pay their dues and/or join for the first time. Christine agreed to send a winter newsletter to the membership. She will include a request for volunteers and encourage credit card payments for dues. Punky asked if information entered when members pay their dues is captured? With the current billing form, members enter their information – it does not link to the directory currently. Jacob said if we wanted to update the directory so billing could be recurring, we would need to actually “launch” the directory with GravityView and pre-register members. Then, members could update their information on their own (all of this is done manually by volunteers currently). One concern would be for property owners who aren’t members and how we would retain their information. Jacob shared the plug-in would enable search for member, view a map and even print a directory. Jacob will share the link for the test site for board members to review for input.
2. Jacob also shared a “Year in Review” **website usage data**. We have had 1,500+ users this year with 2.9 page views when someone visits on average (3 pages per session). We don’t have a lot of new users. About half of our users are visiting with a mobile device (phone, tablet, ipad). Looks like many people are MAC users through Safari. Average load time is 2.6 seconds. Top two sites are welcome and on-line dues (link to annual dues from Facebook). The calendar of events is getting hits as well as the DNR links.
3. **2022 Inspection hours** reported by MaJeana with the funding being restored to 2019 levels. She recommended our payment of $2,730. The inspections start at the fishing opener and run through Labor Day. Once we submit our payment, the DNR will provide a schedule based on anticipated traffic. Previously, the DNR tracked traffic at the launch to better schedule inspection assignments. Karen asked if that is something that will be updated at some point. MaJeana will share the schedule once it is received. She also suggested we could have our DNR contact join a board meeting. We could invite our new contact to a board meeting once the position is replaced; Assistant Environment Services Director, Brian Haugen, is our contact during the interim. The budget needs to be approved. Punky will update the budget draft from Christine (originally from MaJeana), add the 2021 actuals, and send back to Christine to send to the board for electronic voting through email.
4. Steve shared he had a meeting on November 3rd for the new **loon recovery program**. They are going to be hiring two individuals to help with the program and will assist us in updating our plan for loon management. Thank you to Steve for leading this!
5. Glenn asked about the **boat launch ramp**, suggesting it needs attention by the county. Punky shared we need to send the request to the county to improve the launch and grade the road. Christine will reach out to the DNR on this topic.
6. MaJeana asked if we wanted to address building up our **emergency fund for AIS.** Big Sand is working to build their fund to $100,000. She said we could think about this as a formal presentation to our membership at the annual meeting. Jacob shared we could create a special e-form for a designated fund drive for this to go along with a special blog post.

The final item discussed related to the frequency of board meetings. Per the by-laws, the Board of Directors should meet quarterly. The board will try to meet: February, May, August and November. **The next meeting will be February 16th, 6:30-8p.m. via Zoom.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37a.m.