

Lake Minnewawa Association
2007 Annual Meeting Minutes

The annual meeting of The Lake Minnewawa Association was called to order at 9 AM by Association President Beverly Rath on August 11, 2007.

Reading of the 2006 Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the 2006 were read by Association Secretary Greg Meredyk. President Rath moved that the minutes from the 2006 meeting be approved by unanimous decision. The members present so consented, without a motion to second.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was given by Association Treasurer Pat Rath. Pat passed out two handouts that covered a banking summary and bank balances. He commented that our primary sources of income were Association membership contributions and our annual Garage Sale. Pat summarized that our bottom line had improved to \$7000.00, but cautioned that the costs of harvesting operations can vary greatly from year to year. A question from the membership arose about the \$8,500.00 grant that is not listed as part of the treasurer's report. The question was fielded by Board member Pat McGinn. Pat McGinn explained that the origin of that grant is from BSLAWMP and the MCPA. BSLAWMP and the MCPA granted \$8950.00 to the association which has been spent on materials to improve the public accesses on the lake. Pat McGinn went on to explain that the money is held by BSLAMWP and not the association and therefore would not be part of our ledger of assets.

Former board President Mike Zell commented further that the grant is tied to IN-Kind labor hours. The association donates it's time and labor to earn the grant. Mike also explained that the In-Kind Labor is based upon a figure of \$15.00 an hour and cannot be used on harvesting operations. Pat McGinn gave an example of a 3 way co-operative project between BSLAMWP, The LMA and Shamrock Township, in which rip rap was installed.

Board member Chuck Munson asked that going forward we give a more detailed listing of business expenditures such as insurance.

President Bev Rath asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Mike Zell moved.

The motion was seconded by board member Chuck Munson. The motion carried unanimously.

Membership Report:

Pat Rath, serving in the capacity as membership chairman distributed a three page hand out listing all current members of the association. The list consisted of 140 households. Mike Zell commented that the numbers were down considerably from last years report. Pat pointed out that the 2006 report listed forty to fifty people who at the time had not renewed their membership and that this year's list included paid members only. Pat also stated our business membership this year included 7 businesses compared to 9 last year. Bev also stated there were businesses that could not contribute this year but had asked us to keep them in mind for the future.

Board Member Marge Marsyla asked the membership if anyone knew of a paid member who is not on the official list that they let the board know so they too may be included.

A question from the membership arose about whether or not we sent out second notices for membership renewal. Pat Rath stated we send out one notice in the spring and another with our informational bags. In addition, a mailing with a reminder will be mailed to those who haven't paid using our list of 2006 members.

Board member Leanne Anderson asked the membership for suggestions on ways to improve communication with our membership and reminded the membership that one does not have to be on the board to volunteer for association activities and events. A follow up question made was whether or not there is an activities sign up list at the LMA garage. Leanne stated there indeed was such a list. She also reminded the membership that membership runs from January 1st through December 31st. This created discussion about changing our membership year. The consensus of the board was not to change the membership year as this had been debated in previous years and the decision to run our membership year concurrent with the calendar year was deemed the most appropriate and least confusing by the board.

President Rath asked for a motion to accept the membership report. Board Member Marge Marsyla moved. The motion was seconded by Leanne Anderson. The motion carried unanimously.

Water Clarity Report

Board Secretary Greg Meredyk delivered the water clarity report. He passed out copies of the water clarity report he had compiled for the annual meeting. He opened the presentation with comments about a recent 3 part interview in the Aitkin Age newspaper given by Pat McGinn in which Pat discussed how Lake Minnewawa water quality has been improving in recent years. Greg pointed out that one of the key factors in measuring water quality is by taking Secchi disk readings on a regular basis. Greg passed around a Secchi disk for the membership to examine. He gave a brief history of the origins of the disk and informed the membership that Lake Minnewawa has the longest continuous history of these readings of any lake in the state. He elaborated that Lake Minnewawa has had continuous readings for 28 years and cited his 2 predecessors David Warner Sr. and Paul Bredow for their service. Greg also explained how the readings are obtained by measuring the depth at which the disk disappears to the nearest half foot. He also stated that he takes readings at 2 sites on the lake. One on the south side and one on the north side of the lake. He gave a brief synopsis of this year readings at the 2 sites. In May, the first reading at site 201 on the south side was at 8 1/2 feet and site 202 was at 8 feet. He was pleased to inform the membership that as of August 4th the readings at both sites were identical at 5 1/2 feet. This being a marked improvement over last year's readings of 3 and 3.5 feet respectively.

He went on to explain the seasonal trends of these readings and how they deteriorate throughout the summer months but then improve slightly as autumn approaches. Greg also pointed out that the historical data for Lake Minnewawa can be found at: www.pca.state.mn.us. Greg also reported the average reading for site 201 last year was 4.7 feet and for site 202 the average was 4.9 feet.

Greg also reported this year to verify the improvement of our water quality that the state has asked the association to take temperature and dissolved oxygen readings and phosphorus and Chlorophyll-a samples as well. These readings and samples have been taken at site 201 as it is deemed the more representative of the lake as a whole. Greg also provided historical data of these reports taken from the state web site.

He also mentioned that we were taking readings on Horseshoe Lake of the same nature plus Algae readings to help the State set a baseline for that lake. He commented that the readings were not on the same par with Lake Minnewawa and that was due primarily to its smaller size and closer proximity to the tamarack swamps that feed into Horseshoe Lake and Minnewawa.

Finally Greg mentioned some of the factors that can impact Secchi disk readings such as weather conditions and lake traffic.

A comment from one of our members pointed out that our improved clarity readings this year might be linked to the draught in our area. The point being that less of the water was feeding from the tamarack swamps and there by staining our water less.

President Rath Thanked Greg for his report and called next upon Harvesting Manager Steven Olson to deliver the Harvesting report.

Harvesting Report:

Harvesting manager Steven Olson reported that to date a record 274 loads of weeds have been harvested from Lake Minnewawa. He commented that he and his crew can finish a section of the lake and a week later it would be difficult to tell that the harvester had ever been there. He stated that as quality and clarity of our lakes water improves, the environment for weeds to grow unfortunately improves as well. Steven also stated that if it were not for needed repairs to our equipment which is quite old and in need of replacement. He and his crew would have harvested well in excess of 300 loads of weeds from the lake. Finding parts to replace broken and worn out parts is a time consuming proposition. Inclement and windy weather has also had a negative impact on the hours spent on actual harvesting operations. Steven gave examples of replacement of a snap ring and Hydraulic lines on the harvester that took time away from harvesting operations. Steve also stated that in addition to these issues our truck is burning oil at a rate of 2-3 quarts of oil a day. Board Vice President Ron Conzet pointed out that repair and or replacement of the rear seal of the truck was necessary.

Steve reported that this year we hired Don Carlson of Ironton to operate our harvester. Steven thanked Don for his tireless efforts. At the start of the year we had 15 applicants for the harvesting positions. We currently pay \$10.00 an hour for our harvesting crew. We also carry insurance on the crew members with the exception of Don Carlson who is a sub contractor and therefore carries his own insurance.

LMA President Bev Rath noted that upon former LMA president Mike Zell's recommendation the position of harvesting manager was created and that Steve had been "volunteered" for the position. She thanked Steve for his hard work.

Steve Olson also singled out Lyle Marsyla and Jerry Maxwell for their hard work in keeping the harvester and the truck up and running.

Steven went on to say the goal is to spend 12 hours a day on the harvester but with maintenance the actual figure is closer to 8 hours a day actually harvesting weeds.

One additional issue that Steven pointed out was our fuel storage tank has been leaking. This necessitated the need to borrow one from Willy's. Pat McGinn asked why a new one hasn't been purchased.

Lyle Marsyla reported that we have a donor who is willing to donate 100 gallons of diesel fuel for our operations.

President Rath Thanked Steve for his Harvesting report.

Board Elections:

Board Members Pat McGinn and Art Orosco are stepping down from the board. There made a total of 5 positions open. Chuck Munson and Margie Marsyla agreed to serve another term on the board thus filling 2 of the positions. Tony Pagen, Thomas Leach, Steven Roach and Jay Robinson were mentioned as possible candidates. None of which were present at our meeting.

President Rath asked for a motion to re-elect Chuck Munson and Marge Marsyla to the board. Mike Zell made the motion. Leanne Anderson seconded the motion. Marge and Chuck were re-elected unanimously.

This still left 3 positions open on the board. President Rath stated that the board would address the vacancies at our September meeting and also called upon any members who have expressed an interest in serving on the board to contact her.

The Presidents report:

President Bev Rath opened by thanking the board for their commitment and continuing efforts to the betterment of the Lake. Bev also thanked the harvesting team of Jerry Maxwell, Lyle Marsyla, Steven Olson and Don Carlson for their hard work. She also thanked retiring board member Pat McGinn for his tireless efforts and involvement with many initiatives including his involvement and liaisons work with BSALWMP and several other water conservation projects. Pat was given a warm round of applause by those present.

Bev went on to give a synopsis of the many initiatives and improvements that the association has been focusing on. These include: Continued focus on weed harvesting operations. A collaborative initiative to bring about a new lake management plan with the DNR and the Minnewawa Sportsman's Club. She stated that as of late June the DNR was reviewing the new plan. She also mentioned that one proposal brought forth by the committee to initiate wide spread off shore chemical treatment was denied by the DNR as it is not their policy to allow it. Some discussion followed about permit costs where and how chemicals may be used, and the Sportsman's club's involvement with permits. Once the management plan has been approved it will be available on the LMA website.

The LMA web page has also been updated and continues to be on an on-going basis, she also asked for a member volunteer to take charge of this important communication link. Currently the site is being managed by Pat Rath. A membership database has also been created and is being updated on a regular basis. Those members on the data base should be receiving two membership news letters a year, in addition to the annual informational packet hand outs. Bev also stated that we have changed our mission statement which now reads: "The purpose of the Lake Minnewawa Association is to promote positive lake stewardship by providing education and services about Beautification, pollution control, water safety and clear passage. In general, it is dedicated to improving the natural resources of Lake Minnewawa by educating , creating, promoting and implementing methods of improving and preserving the over all condition of the lake."

Bev also mentioned the ongoing BSLAWMP grant, with the collaborative initiative of repairing and restoring the public accesses on the lake and our collaborative efforts with other organizations such as the Sportsman's club, the DNR, Shamrock Township and our recent joining of Minnesota Waters, which is a state wide organization of lake associations. In addition we are active with Aitkin County Lakes and Rivers association. We have also recently joined the McGregor Chamber of Commerce.

Bev also mentioned our continuing priority initiatives of membership and fund raising. She also thanked The Sportsman's club for their recent donation of \$3000.00.

Following the Presidents report an open forum was held. Board member Leanne Anderson mentioned a green alternative for Chemicals is the use of a weed roller. The State currently allows weed rollers to be used in a 48' x 48' area. Harvesting Manager Steve Olson stated there are some areas on the lake that this is still not allowed and sited the Wild Oaks development as one such area.

Retiring Board member Art Orosco thanked the board for their efforts and friendship during his term on the board. Board member Leanne Anderson also mentioned there is a sign up sheet for the Garage Sale and reminded the membership that he Sale will be 2 days only this year. We will be open from 9-5 each day. A call was made for set up volunteers for the Thursday before the sale at 9 AM.

There being no other questions or discussion President Rath asked for a motion to Adjourn.

Chuck Munson made a motion to adjourn.

Lowell Bartel seconded the motion

The Annual meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:45 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg R Meredyk
Secretary, Lake Minnewawa Association.