

ELK-SKEGEMOG LAKES ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING

July 16, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Bonato, Bob Campbell, Dale Claudepierre, Jan Garvey, Dean Ginther, Andrew Hogarth, Mary Beth Kazanski, Bob Kingon, Ken Krentz, Sue McCraven, Brenda Miller, Pat Pierce, Jim Sak, Nancy Schreiber, Phil Spangenberg

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ruth Bay, Dave Lawicki

Mary Beth Kazanski, Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association (ESLA) Board President, called the meeting, run virtually through Zoom, to order at 10:04 a.m.

GENERAL MEETING

Mary Beth introduced Linda Slopsema, George Seifried, Deanna Seifried and Steve Francis as candidates for the Board. The candidates briefly described their background and discussed why they desire to become Board members.

The minutes of the May 21, 2020 Board Meeting were approved after the date of the minutes was corrected.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Phil Spangenberg gave the treasurer's report. Attached are the financial statements, line item detail and Vanguard Investments document prepared by Phil. Phil noted that the severe drop in membership dues may be attributable to the timing of the dues letter sent to members.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Brenda Miller gave the membership report. Brenda noted that to date 186 members have paid their dues and that this includes 41 Admiral, 40 Captain and 3 Commodore level memberships. Brenda stated that a reminder letter will be sent to individuals who paid dues in the past and have not yet remitted dues payments. Whether the dues letter should be included with the newsletter or sent as a separate mailing was discussed. Brenda stated that the website function allowing dues payments to be made online was working, but the website is not properly displaying membership level options.

It was noted that membership issues were discussed at a recent ERCOL meeting and that other lake associations have experienced membership reductions. Whether this may be attributable to tax law changes was discussed. Bob Campbell summarized membership issues addressed recently by the membership subcommittee. Bob's summary included a return to having a December newsletter focused on membership sent to all riparians, a discussion of what can be done to improve contact with members (e.g., Board members focusing on contact with residents of their zones), targeting business

memberships and conducting Zoom interviews that can be converted to electronic files and posted on the website.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Due to Ruth Bay's absence, a communications report was not given.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The Board approved Pat Pierce's request to be placed on the Financial Committee. Pat will remain on the Safety and Recreation Committee.

FISHERIES: Ken Krentz gave the fisheries report. Ken's report included a summary of the fish plantings by the DNR. Ken also discussed bass tournaments, including the effect tournaments have on lakes, fish populations and spawning, plus DNR scheduling and registration procedures for tournaments. It was noted that bass tournaments can only be scheduled during the catch and keep seasons and Bob Campbell stated that these seasons are not uniform throughout the state and noted ESLA could advocate for a later start of the season. In response to a question by Jan Garvey, Ken stated that there is no communication process in place to notify the public of potential congestion at boat launches on days fish tournaments are scheduled. Ken's report included discussion of Atlantic Salmon planting in the Rapid River. Ken noted that that the planting is an experiment to promote the life cycle of Atlantic Salmon and that the planting should not affect the native fish population of the river. Ken stated that when the Salmon leave the river they migrate to Torch Lake and Elk Lake with Torch Lake being the destination for most of the salmon. Finally, Bob Campbell suggested ESLA might propose additional fish boxes, especially for the south end of Elk Lake which has none. Ken said he would support exploring more boxes due to their effectiveness.

SAFETY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE: Pat Pierce gave the report.

Pat discussed the Torch River no wake sign, explaining how it became loose and that it has been properly reinstalled. Pat reported that the 3 lost buoys have been recovered, that 2 of the buoys have been reinstalled and that the 3rd buoy will soon be reinstalled. Dale Claudepierre mentioned that Pat also found a loon buoy during his search for the lost buoys. Pat stated that new anchors and ropes for the buoys were purchased for \$595 and that spending for the project is well within the budgeted amount. Pat also mentioned dam readings, noting that he has taken 6 readings that are "right on" and that the dam in Elk Rapids seems to be operating properly.

Pat's report included discussion of a recent letter to the Elk Rapids News expressing concern regarding the no wake buoys near Risenga Island. The letter indicated the buoys are not in the proper location to reduce sediment wash out from the island. The discussion about the buoys included speculation regarding who places the buoys, because they are not ESLA buoys and are not installed by ESLA. Pat agreed to inform the author of the letter and that they are not ESLA buoys and that he will investigate to determine who places the buoys. In response to Mary Beth's question about whether ESLA can assume responsibility for the buoys, Pat noted that there is an application process and Dale Claudepierre mentioned that buoy placement entails obtaining permission from multiple agencies (i.e., county, sheriff and DNR).

Pat discussed the ski slalom course on Elk Lake near the Battle Creek natural area. Pat stated that an anonymous person claimed that the permit application for the slalom indicated ESLA had taken a position on whether the 2020 permit application should be approved. However, Pat determined that the application did not incorrectly indicate that ESLA was involved in the application for the permit, noting that the box on the application addressing lake association approval or objection was not checked.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE: Jan Garvey gave the report.

Jan began her report by requesting Andy Hogarth to discuss water sampling activities. Andy reported that samples were taken from two locations, Williamsburg Creek and Spencer's Bay creek (Burnette Foods). Both of these areas had high *E.coli* levels in 2019. Andy and Samantha Krause also plan to take samples in the Ridge Road area. Andy and Samantha do not have data from the sampling yet. It was suggested that Samantha take videos when obtaining samples from Spencer Bay creek like she did last year. It was noted that the Burnette Foods permit was up for renewal June 1, 2020 and its application for a new permit has not yet been acted upon, thus Burnette is operating under its old permit. Kevin Kalchik of Burnette Foods has been invited to make a presentation to ESLA at ESLA's September meeting.

Andy mentioned the Google Drive account he created for ESLA because of the need to properly store data and reports. The Google Drive account needs to be associated with an email address "ESLStorage@gmail.com." The email address will not be used for emailing, except for attaching files and documents that will go into the Drive account. Andy is working on a file hierarchy.

Jan discussed swimmer's itch (SI), noting that 10 water samples are taken every Tuesday morning in July as part of a collaborative study with several lakes (Lime, Platte, Glen, Walloon, N/S Leelanau, Elk and Skegemog). The 10 spots were determined using 2018/2019 data to get hot spots, cover most areas of the lakes and see diversity of cercariae. John Reid, Dale Claudepierre and Bob Campbell have volunteered to drive their boats and Bob Reider has volunteered to fill in for Jan as the data collector the one week she will not be available. One sample to the collection was added at the Torch Bayou. That location had SI cases and was not sampled in 2018 or 2019. SI cases have been reported on Skegemog Point, Miami Beach Road, the Palaestrum neighborhood and the west side of Elk Lake (near Townline road). Last year there was a greater number of cercariae from Canada Geese/*Helisoma* snails than from Common Mergansers/*T.stagnoli* snails.

Samantha, with Andy Hogarth volunteering his time and boat, conducted a 6+ hour water fowl survey of Elk Lake and Skegemog Lake on July 2nd. The survey resulted in the following data:

- In 2018 there were 1 or 2 broods of Common Mergansers.
- In 2019 there were 4 broods of Common Mergansers that were trapped and relocated.
- No Common Mergansers were seen in 2020.
- In 2019 there were twice as many geese as in 2018.
- In 2020 there were more total waterfowl (266) than in 2019 (211 and 195 on two different days).

- In 2020 the dominant species was mallards (182) with geese being next most common (84).
- 8 loons and 5 swans were sighted on Elk Lake and 1 loon, 9 swans and 1 bald eagle were sighted on Skegemog Lake.

No Common Mergansers were seen during the 2020 survey, but that may be attributable to high holiday boat traffic. Jan reported seeing a new brood on June 21st and received reports of a couple of females in late June. Jan mentioned a report of a nest in a tree being used by a female, but no brood was spotted.

SI rack cards will be included in the mid-July dues reminder mailing. The cards address how to minimize the chances of getting SI and are a collaborative effort between several lake associations.

Jan discussed Purple Loosestrife, noting that CAKE CISMA has a grant from the Dole Family Foundation to treat Purple Loosestrife on the Elk River chain of lakes. Since this is not state money, it was thought that Elk and Skegemog lakes could not be included in the treatment. Attempts are still being made to tap into the Dole Family Foundation grant. Samantha is continuing to work on obtaining “consent to treat” forms from areas where Purple Loosestrife was seen last year.

Jan discussed Eurasian Milfoil. Two of the three areas treated in the past have Eurasian Milfoil. PLM treated the two areas on June 16 at a cost of \$786.63 for each location. Each location/association will reimburse ESLA for ½ the cost, thus ESLA’s total cost will be \$786.63. Jan also stated that there is now Eurasian Milfoil in front of her house and the conservancy just north of her property.

ERCOL: Mary Beth reported what occurred during the most recent ERCOL meeting, mentioning there was discussion about multi-year memberships and blue-green algae appearing in some lakes.

TOM: Bob Kingon reported that the annual TOM meeting will be conducted via Zoom on July 23, 2020. Bob also reported that the TOM Executive Director plans to retire in 2022.

Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation:

David Mengebier, the President and CEO of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, made a presentation about the Foundation. The presentation included a description of the Foundation’s mission and information about the Foundation’s creation, structure, activities, assets/funds, gifts and grants. There was specific discussion about the money ESLA receives from the Foundation annually. There was also discussion of whether donations to the Foundation in lieu of payment of membership dues to ESLA may affect ESLA and ESLA membership levels.

OLD BUSINESS

Bob Campbell reported that boat wash activities encountered a problem because the TOM boat wash unit broke down. A boat wash is scheduled for August 9, 2020 at Whitewater Township Park and attempts are being made to schedule an additional date for the Elk Rapids marine harbor.

Campbell also reported that there has been an increase in volunteers for township positions and that this is likely attributable to an article in the May newsletter encouraging volunteer activity and more

involvement by riparians in township government. Sue McCraven noted that there are no riparians on the Whitewater Township Board and opined that ESLA members have to become more involved in the township.

Mary Beth mentioned that core sampling has begun on Rugg Pond and the importance of the Rugg Pond project.

Bob Reider provided information about the Water First Action Group (WFAG). Bob discussed the history of the WFAG and the action plan to be created and implemented. Bob stated that the first stakeholder meeting occurred June 25, 2020 and Bob mentioned the seven high impact urgent issues that were identified at that meeting. A follow up survey identified 2 issues, septic tanks and shoreline degradation, as being of utmost importance. Bob Campbell and Ruth Bay will serve as the initial ESLA representatives for WFAG.

Due to hacking concerns, Ruth Bay will be asked to remove references to Board member email addresses from the website. References to email addresses will also be removed from the newsletter. Bob Kingon stated that the email addresses should also be removed from electronically archived past issues of the newsletter. There was a discussion about steps that may be taken to decrease hacking, such as the creation of separate email addresses for ESLA business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dean Ginther stated that mid August was a reasonable deadline for the next newsletter.

There was discussion of the Watershed Council water monitoring results report and it was noted that the public can access the youtube video entitled "How to Access Shoreline Survey Results." Sue McCraven expressed her dismay that the report indicates Elk Lake and Skegemog Lake had the most shoreline degradation. Dean Ginther noted that in the past TOM made a presentation to ESLA about the water monitoring results report.

It was noted that Paddle Antrim is trying to garner public input on its plans for Rotary Park. Paddle Antrim has a meeting scheduled for July 24, 2020.

There was a brief discussion about the RV park planned for Milton Township and what ESLA's involvement should be in local political issues. Bob Kingon noted that opposition to the RV park greatly outweighed those in favor at the recent township meeting. Dean Ginther stated that ESLA has generally confined its comments on local issues to those directly affecting the waterfront and water quality.

The next ESLA meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Donald Bonato.