

ELK- SKEGEMOG LAKES ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING

December 10, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ruth Bay, Don Bonato, Bob Campbell, Dale Claudepierre, Steve Francis, Jan Garvey, Dean Ginther, Andrew Hogarth, Mary Beth Kazanski, Bob Kingon, Ken Krentz, Kate Lett, Brenda Miller, Pat Pierce, Nancy Schreiber, Deanna Seifried, George Seifried, Linda Slopsema, Phil Spangenberg

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: none

Mary Beth Kazanski, Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association (ESLA) Board President, called the meeting, run virtually through Zoom, to order at *10:00 a.m.*

Presentation

Robin Simms gave a presentation addressing the steps that have been taken on the Milton Township Wastewater Treatment Project. Robin stated that a committee was formed because Milton Township residents were concerned that aging septic systems were threatening water quality. The committee petitioned Milton Township to conduct a feasibility study regarding the development of a wastewater treatment system separate from the system operated by the Village of Elk Rapids. Robin stated that the Township approved the petition and is obtaining bids from engineering firms to conduct the feasibility study. Board members discussed the obstacles likely to be encountered if the project moves forward, whether Milton Township may develop further regulation of existing septic systems, Milton Township's existing point of sale inspection regulation, whether a sewer system may threaten wetlands, and how modular concepts can be used to construct wastewater treatment facilities. Mary Beth requested Robin to keep the Board apprised of future meetings about the project and Mary Beth stated that consideration would be given to including an article about the project in ESLA's newsletter.

GENERAL MEETING

The agenda for the December 10, 2020 meeting was approved. The Board also approved the minutes of the September 17, 2020 meeting. By unanimous vote the Board approved the addition of Kate Lett to the Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Phil Spangenberg gave the treasurer's report. Phil noted that terminology in the financial statement has changed based upon the recommendation of ESLA's accountant. Attached to these minutes are the financial statement prepared by Phil and related documents pertaining to line item detail for the financial statement, Vanguard investment performance and endowment fund balance and income. Phil discussed the aforementioned documents, noting that income has increased and expenses have decreased due to the reduction in projects during

2020. Board members made positive comments about the fact that dues have increased notwithstanding a decrease in the number of members.

Also attached to these minutes is the ESLA 2021 Budget Draft prepared by Phil. Phil noted that the financial information in the draft will change as we determine future projects. Mary Beth requested Board members to think about projects for 2021.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Brenda Miller gave the membership report. Brenda stated that currently there is little additional to report since her last report and noted that going forward we will have greater ability to identify new members and property owners. Brenda discussed ESLA acknowledgment of new members, including those who are new as a result of family property transfers.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE:

Ruth Bay gave the communication committee report. Ruth discussed the committee's work on *It's a Shore Thing* events and the annual meeting, noting that the tentative plan is to conduct these activities via ZOOM and that facility availability will have to be confirmed when in person meetings resume. Ruth stated she would contact the facility where *It's a Shore Thing* events are conducted and apprise its managers of the tentative meeting dates. Bob Campbell raised the question of whether the annual meeting should be delayed due to pandemic concerns and Mary Beth stated that this is an issue which should be addressed in committee.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Nancy Schreiber summarized what occurred at recent meetings of the finance committee. Nancy stated that committee members had a lengthy discussion with Phil regarding the procedures and process he follows to develop financial statements and related documents. Nancy also stated that committee members reviewed past financial transactions and found 2 minor discrepancies that have been corrected. Nancy confirmed that the committee concluded that financial transactions through November 2020 were appropriate and that a complete audit will be conducted in the future. In response to an inquiry from Bob Kingon, Nancy stated that the committee reviewed investment strategies and policies, concluding that the current policy is excellent and that current strategies will be continued. Vanguard performance data will be reviewed so that fund changes can be considered.

FISHERIES COMMITTEE:

Ken Krentz gave the fisheries committee report. The report focused upon mayfly hatches and DNR fish surveys. Ken noted that at a previous ESLA Board meeting, there was discussion about whether there has been a decrease in mayfly hatches. Ken stated he discussed this question with the DNR and was advised that such decreases were not uncommon occurrences. However, 2020 was different because (1) the decrease was widespread with many lake associations reporting decreases and (2) mayfly hatches were later. Ken stated that the DNR

did not know the cause(s) of the 2020 aberrations and speculated whether they could be weather related or connected to environmental habitat changes. Ken discussed what ESLA should do regarding this issue, concluding that ESLA should (1) continue to monitor hatches and report to the DNR, (2) continue to promote natural shorelines to hopefully induce property owners to refrain from armoring shorelines, and (3) include an article about shorelines in the spring newsletter. Regarding DNR fish surveys, Ken stated that the big lake survey planned for 2020 was postponed to 2022 due to pandemic concerns and that the survey planned for Rapid River was not conducted.

SAFETY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE:

Pat Pierce gave the safety and recreation committee report. Pat reported that the Elk Rapids dam site “has been on the mark.” Pat also reported that the buoys and sign have been removed for the winter and that 1 buoy is missing. There are 5 old buoys, 12 new buoys and 1 missing buoy, so the plan is to install 13 buoys next year. Pat discussed damage to the sign and stated that he would work on the anchoring system for the sign to avoid future damage.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE:

Jan Garvey gave the environment committee report. Jan noted that she recently sent an email and documents to Board members related to the committee’s activities and referred to these in her report. Jan stated that an effort is being made to align future activities with Board members based upon their areas of interest and that the committee plans to meet before the next ESLA Board meeting to develop an action plan regarding projects ESLA should consider.

Jan discussed swimmer’s itch, noting that Mary Beth previously supplied Board members with the report from Freshwater Solutions. Jan stated that there have not been many sightings of common mergansers, but there have been many sightings of migratory birds which contribute to swimmer’s itch. Jan discussed the water sampling project conducted last summer, noting that she does not believe much new information was obtained from the sampling. Jan said that two additional samples, which were not in the original report, were analyzed—one from the Torch Bayou and one from the south end of Elk Lake. The Torch Bayou sample indicated the presence of the new “Nov.sp.” cercariae species which cycles through geese and the Elk Lake sample showed large quantities of an unidentified cercariae species.

Jan discussed golden brown algae, noting that John Reid compiled a summary which is now stored on the Google Drive.

Andy Hogarth discussed *E. coli* water sampling. Andy stated that he has been compiling reports about the sampling conducted this year and noted that not much *E. coli* was found. Andy said he did not know why the reduction occurred, mentioning the timing of the sampling and reduced presence of residents as possible explanations.

Andy also discussed plantings undertaken as part of a pilot study of sorts directed at reducing shoreline erosion and lake sedimentation. Andy and Sam planted different types of plants at

seven areas with exposed soils. These areas will be assessed in the spring to determine if the plantings have reduced erosion. In response to a question from Bob Kingon, Andy stated that different types of plants might be needed if plantings were considered for ditches created by governmental projects.

Andy discussed the recent email he sent to Board members regarding accessing Google Drive.

Jan provided an update on boat washing stations. Bob Campbell discussed the letter he submitted for TOM's grant proposal. The grant would allow TOM to continue its effort to schedule events at northern Michigan lakes that have a portable boat washing station and promote education and awareness of how boat washing helps reduce the spread of invasive species. Linda Slopsema noted that Whitewater Township is still working on expansion of its boat launch and that the current plan appears to call for only 1 boat washing station. At the next township meeting, Linda plans to address ESLA's request that there be 2 stations.

ERCOL

Mary Beth stated that there were no new ERCOL activities to report.

TOM

Bob Kingon stated that TOM's field staff has continued to be active notwithstanding Covid concerns. Bob also reported that there has been discussion about collaboration for grant requests.

OLD BUSINESS

Mary Beth reported that there has been some movement and clarification from the county regarding the permits needed to address sedimentation in Rugg Pond.

Regarding the RV park proposed for Milton Township, Bob Kingon reported that the township Board recently agreed to hire outside engineers to study the proposed project.

Jan and Linda will discuss water sampling data with TOM.

NEW BUSINESS

Mary Beth stated that PLM will start the permitting process in January so ESLA's contract with PLM needs to be finalized by then. Jan stated that it makes sense to go forward with the contract with PLM because money from the Dole Foundation grant to CAKE SISMA will not be available.

2021 meeting dates were discussed. The planned dates are: February 18, March 18, May 20, June 18 or 25 (annual meeting), July 15, September 16 and November 18.

Dale Claudepierre and Bob Kingon will collaborate regarding placing sedimentation studies done in 2011/2012 on the Google Drive.

Ken Krentz inquired about whether the recent Rugg Pond studies included the dam structure in addition to sedimentation at the bottom of the pond. Ken stated that someone from the DNR opined that the dam structure should be prioritized over sedimentation removal. Mary Beth said that there are two separate issues and that the State of Michigan now mandates repair of dams prior to sediment removal.

Brenda Miller reported that Mitchell Graphics advised her that the newsletter is scheduled to be distributed on Wednesday December 14, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Donald Bonato.