

ELK- SKEGEMOG LAKES ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING

November 3, 2022

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Kate Lett, Andrew Hogarth, Nancy Schreiber

Samantha Krause Ogle, ESLA's lake biologist, was also in attendance.

Bob Campbell, the Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association (ESLA) Board President, called the meeting, run virtually through Zoom, to order at 9:32 a.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT

Phil Spangenberg gave the treasurer's report. Attached to these minutes are the financial statements, financial statement detail, Vanguard investment information and Endowment Fund information distributed and reviewed by Phil. Phil advised that the Huntington Bank savings account was closed. Phil also stated that he planned to prepare a new budget before the next meeting and expressed his hope that Board members would provide him with their input. There was a brief discussion of the endowment fund and how the monetary amount of distributions to ESLA from the fund are determined. In response to questions from George Seifried, Phil explained that Bloomerang and website maintenance expenses are annual fees, rather than fees based upon usage or some other factor.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Deanna Seifried gave the membership committee report. Attached is the written report submitted by Deanna. Deanna began by discussing the template created by Nancy Schreiber for thank you letters to business donors. Deanna noted that her report emphasizes transactions of \$250 or more and Deanna discussed the number of transactions and donations that equal or exceed \$250. Pat Pierce noted that the \$250 threshold is important because the IRS desires a written acknowledgement or receipt for taxpayers claiming a donation of \$250 or more. It was agreed that a small group of Board members, rather than the entire Board, should create the "thank you" letters sent to donors, especially donors of \$250 or more, and Steve Francis volunteered to draft a thank you letter.

Bob Campbell asked Samantha to discuss overall membership and how it compares to last year. Samantha stated that the current membership is 439 and that at this time last year membership was 488.

FISHING REPORT

Ken Krentz gave the fishing report and stated that he only had one item to discuss. Specifically, Ken stated that he just learned that the Little Traverse Band of Odawa are gill netting on Elk Lake for research purposes. Ken stated that they would be engaged in catch and release activities at night for the next two weeks. Ken also stated that this activity was being done to determine the size of the whitefish population and the spawning locations of whitefish. Ken mentioned that he learned the band has a data sharing agreement with the DNR and Ken stated that he plans to learn more about what the band is doing and conduct additional research. Bob Campbell mentioned the federal court case addressing gill netting years ago and stated that the federal court decree may be in the process of being rewritten. Ken stated that the DNR believes this tribe is doing a good job on their research activities. Tribal gill net fishing regulations are different on inland lakes from the Great Lakes.

Mary Beth Kazanski mentioned that she recently heard a complaint from a neighbor who stated that there was a problem with algae on the Torch River and that there weren't any fish in the Torch River. In response, Ken noted that the water remained warm for a longer time this year and that there was a lot of heat energy on the lakes this year that affected fishing.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Jan Garvey commenced the environmental committee report. The written report submitted by Jan is attached to these minutes. Bob Campbell asked Jan to give a quick summary of her written report to determine whether any Board members had questions, and Jan stated that Samantha would provide the summary and focus on critical issues. Samantha then proceeded to comment upon the written report, mentioning that there are multi year treatment plans for purple loosestrife and Eurasian milfoil and that ESLA would not be working with CAKE CISMA this year to address invasive species. With respect to that aspect of the written report pertaining to water sampling and Burnette Foods, Bob Campbell inquired about the cause of the decrease in EGLE's report of violations. In response, Samantha stated that the cause might be multi-faceted and noted that the fact that it was a dry summer might have had an impact. However, Samantha stated that she was not sure, because Burnette Foods violations were usually attributed to discharging more water than Burnette Foods should have discharged.

Deanna Seifreid commented upon the shoreline consultations mentioned in Jan's report. Deanna stated that the consultations had a positive impact on membership and also said that she planned to focus upon where Samantha did consultations to encourage membership. Mary Beth Kazanski noted that TOM has debated whether there should be a charge for non-member consultations and this led to a brief discussion

of whether ESLA should charge non-members and how consultations positively impact membership.

Linda Slopsema provided an update on Whitewater Township Park, a topic which is also addressed in Jan's written report and the attached status report submitted by Linda. Linda stated that the township is considering revising its plans for Whitewater Township Park for budgetary reasons. Linda noted that she is continuing to work with the township to get a water-based boat wash instead of the pressurized air boat wash in the current plan. Jan Garvey stated that the goal is to have four boat washes on Elk and Skegemog Lakes and Linda noted that grant work is being done which includes a determination of where the highest numbers of boat launches occur. Jan added comments about the high cost of installing high pressure water-based boat washes and the possible need for a paid position for some of ESLA's capital projects. Jan said the Board should start thinking of including a 10% project manager fee on projects. Linda added that we need to build a volunteer base of people interested in the lakes to provide needed manpower and there was a discussion about other lake associations which have employed individuals to provide manpower on projects and operating boat washes. Mary Beth Kazanski raised the question of whether boat washes should be a topic for an *It's a Shore Thing* event and Bob Campbell mentioned that we may need a subcommittee to address topics such as the type of participation that is needed, fund raising to pay for projects/boat washes and potential sources of revenue. Linda added that some lake associations have paid for boat washes with grant money from a tribe.

The environmental committee report concluded with comments from George Seifried to put ESLA's invasive species eradication efforts in perspective. George noted that a nearby lake association has chemically treated 21 acres of Eurasian milfoil and also uses an underwater diver in its eradication efforts.

GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

The governmental committee report was given by George Seifried. Attached to these minutes is the written report submitted by George. George stated that we need the support of municipalities and townships and George requested Board members to contact him if they know individuals interested in governmental and community affairs.

SAFETY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Pat Pierce gave the safety and recreation committee report. Pat stated that the Elk River dam site is "right on the mark" and noted that efforts to draw down the lake water level by 7" commenced yesterday. Pat stated that buoys are still in place and that ESLA's contractor Mark Short has not pulled buoys yet because he has been busy due to favorable weather. Pat also reported that he has been trying to contact the installer regarding the no wake sign.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Bob Kingon gave the communications committee report stating that the first focus group meeting with new riparians regarding a shared new riparian manual was held and that he would report more fully at ESLA's December meeting.

ERCOL/TOM

Mary Beth Kazanski reported that ERCOL's meeting focused upon the hydrology study and briefly mentioned Christine Chrissman's shoreline work. Mary Beth also reported that TOM may be considering a change in its fee schedule.

OLD BUSINESS

Bob Campbell provided a Facebook and website update.

Bob Campbell asked Dean Ginther to provide a status report regarding the next newsletter. Dean reported that he has all the information needed for the annual membership newsletter and that he did not know of any impediments. There was a brief discussion of a printing error in the last newsletter attributed to a technical error. There was also a brief discussion about problems with mail forwarding of newsletters and Samantha stated that the problem has been addressed so there should be fewer newsletters returned due to forwarding issues.

Dean Ginther stated that there has not been any change in the number of Champion status members since the last meeting, but another Champion status member may be added before the end of the year. With respect to the thank you letter to donors that Steve Francis will draft, there was a question whether a different letter should be sent to members with Champion status. Also mentioned were the recognition hats that may be obtained for Champion status members.

NEW BUSINESS

Bob Campbell discussed the email blast that will be sent soon. Bob stated that he wants to focus upon getting people to volunteer. Bob said that this focus is needed so there is less reliance upon Board members. Bob requested Board members to provide him with their suggestions and to also mention what they think should be included in the blast email.

Bob Campbell stated that he had recently talked with Antrim County Manager of Dams Mark Stone, Three Lakes Association president Fred Sittel and Tom Joseph, a Torch Lake Protection Alliance board member, about collaboration on various water quality issues in the watershed. Bob Campbell remarked that Stone's impending year-end retirement makes the selection of Mark Stone's successor by the Antrim County Board of Commissioners critical. There was a brief discussion about Leslie Meyers, an applicant for the position. There were several positive comments about Leslie. Mary Beth Kazanski opined that she thought it would be appropriate for ESLA's president to write a letter to the Antrim County Board of Commissioners recommending Leslie Meyers. George Seifried added that if such a letter is sent, it should emphasize that the Manager of Dams position involves a watershed issue and is not limited to riparian issues. Since Mark Stone is also vacating his position as Drain Commissioner, there was

a brief discussion about the fact that two individuals, rather than one, may end up holding these positions. Dean Ginther raised the question of whether the Drain Commissioner, rather than the Manager of Dams, is in charge of the dam in Elk Rapids.

There was a brief discussion about possible expansion of the ESLA Board and what the bylaws say about this topic. Bob Campbell stated that the bylaws do not prohibit an expansion. Also discussed was the zones comprising ESLA and the Board members in those zones.

The bayou was briefly discussed. Dale Claudepierre mentioned that in the past someone in the bayou desired the bayou to align with the Three Lakes Association and that this did not occur because that association failed to treat Eurasian milfoil. Mary Beth Kazanski noted that there are ESLA members proximate to the bayou and Mary Beth opined that it is important for the bayou to be connected or aligned with a lake association. The Board then briefly discussed ways for ESLA to connect with the bayou and the possible impact upon membership if that occurred.

Bob Campbell addressed the importance of focusing upon major projects for 2023 at the next ESLA meeting. Issues such as boat washes, Bloomerang and environmental issues previously identified by Mark Stone were mentioned.

Bob Campbell stated that he and Jan Garvey will be meeting with Samantha to discuss her contract and that he would present a contract proposal at the next ESLA meeting.

With respect to the need for volunteers, Bob Kingon stated that a general request for volunteers is not sufficient. Bob opined that we need to focus upon the specific jobs and tasks that are needed and pursue volunteers based upon that information. Bob Campbell added that this should be a watershed wide project.

Bob Campbell referred to beginning an "ice in/ice out" contest or activity documenting when walkable ice first appears and then disappears. Bob said that doing so would engage people in helping ESLA and could also create a data point for climate change.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Donald J Bonato.