

Annual Meeting of the Five Lakes Association July 2, 2011

The Annual Meeting of the Five Lakes Association was held at the Grant Township Hall. President Dave Southworth called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Report from the President: President Southworth stated the old and new business portion of this agenda will be addressed at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting on August 8th. This modification to the Annual Business Meeting agenda provides time for the discussion of the rampant weed problem. The agenda will include calendar updates (garage sale, kids fishing tournament), area representative reports, elections of Area Representatives and the weed control discussion.

Election: Secretary Butche verified membership as members arrived at the meeting. Ballots were distributed prior to the meeting. Secretary Chris Butche asked each of the candidates to introduce themselves and gave an overview of the ballot construction.

White Birch Area Candidates:

Ray Brusseau – Introduced himself and wife, Irina, who live on Pebble Creek drive and have property on White Birch. He believes the Area Representatives have the responsibility to represent the interests of all property owners in the area, assure the funds are spent to those interests and to support the covenants, although some modifications are necessary to make them readable. He'd like to see the picnic and Oktoberfest return and fishing improve to 3-4 year ago levels.

Chris noted although Ray doesn't live in the area where he is running for Area Representative, he owns property there which is an acceptable criteria for the office.

Ralph Greenfield – Introduced himself and noted he and his wife purchased property on White Birch drive 6 years ago and has lived there full time for 2 years. He stated over the last 6 years he has actively supported the area through involvement in Board meetings, supporting the enforcement of the Constitution and the By-Laws, engagement in the restoration of the west bay silt trap, responsible for the marking of boat hazards, instillation/removal/reconstruction of the loon buoys, and taking the pictures of the loons off the nests which is required to procure the deviation for weed control spraying from the DEQ. Ralph also stated he participated in a boat trip to identify areas on the lake where weeds should be maintained for fish bed habitats. He believes maintaining good water quality will enhance our lake for swimming, boating and fishing and supports doing what is necessary to enhance the health of the whole lake, addressing any weak areas.

Pebble Creek Area Candidate:

Tim O'Neal – Tim has been on the lake for almost 39 years and is the current Area Representatives. Tim is actively working with Guy Savin (Savin Lake Services) to resolve our current weed problem on the lake. He stated in his 39 years on the lake he has seen a lot of change and is actively supportive of the covenants as a way to keep the lake area as it is.

Five Lakes Drive Area Candidates:

Bob Chamberlain – Stated he has been a resident for 34 ½ years, although that doesn't make him more qualified than someone who has been here for 34 days. He noted his kids grew up on this lake and now he has grandchildren growing up here as well.

Bob Jeffords - Bob stated him and his wife, Renee, have lived on Five Lakes Drive for 11 years and he has been on the Board for the last 4.

Pennisular Drive Area Candidate:

Dick Haynack – Dick has been on the Board since 2007 and would like to continue for one more term. He enjoys the Board membership, discussions/feedback from area residents, and appreciates the information he receives from previous Board members. His goal is to continue to represent Five Lakes and utilize his experience to make things better.

Lone Pine Area Candidates:

Frank Oles – Frank stated he has been in the area for 10 years. Previously, Frank lived downstate and was an executive fire chief. In that experience, he worked with DEQ and DNR. Frank has served previously on the board as Area Representative. He stated he would like to see a few things done for the back lot owners to improve access. He stated there has been a hemorrhage of money in the past, some of which has been necessary, but believes could have been lessened by a more common sense approach. He would like to bring/maintain a common sense approach to the future and repair some of the financial damage of the past.

Peggy Connelly – Peggy stated she has lived on Lone Pine since the summer of 2006 and believes we need some balance on the board (keep Chris company). She agreed with all previous speakers and thanked the current Board for volunteering. Peggy stated she loves this community; there is a nice system of restrictive covenants. She believes the Area Representatives should work with both current and incoming residents to see that they improve their property in accordance with the covenants.

Chris thanked the candidates and Linda Verardi for providing the ballot and asked the Membership to now vote for one representative in each area.

Roll Call of Board Members was taken:

Present: President Dave Southworth, Vice-President Cory Gingery, Secretary Chris Butche, Area 1 Representative Tim O'Neal, Area 2 Representative Dick Haynak, Area 3 Representative Bob Jeffords, Area 4 Representative Ralph Greenfield. In addition, one hundred and two (102) association members were in attendance.

Absent: Treasurer Steve Cohoon.

Minutes: Chris Butche read the 2010 Annual Meeting minutes into the record. Dave Southworth asked for additions/corrections to the minutes. Onita Oles asked if the verbiage of "cleaning of the silt trap" should be modified to "digging of the silt trap" for a more accurate description of the status of the silt trap discussion (page2). There was agreement to the change, Dick Haynak motioned, Bob Jeffords seconded to approve the minutes. The membership voted unanimously to approve the Minutes, motion carried.

Calendar:

Chris Butche noted the Garage Sale will be July 14, 15 and 16 from 9:00am to 5:00pm. A notice will be in the newspaper as well as signs posted.

Corey Gingery discussed a Children's Fish Tournament to be held September 3rd (Saturday of Labor Day), 7:00am to 11:00am. The tournament is for children up to age 16. Children can fish from boat or shore. It is preferred the fish be released but, can be kept as long as they are of legal size. The children will document their catch and report to the Picnic area at 11:00. This data will also serve as a krill survey of the lake and a science project for the kids.

Treasurer Report:

Copies of the Treasurers Report were available at the sign in table. President Southworth stated, due to the absences of Treasurer Cohoon, the Budget approval will be moved to the August meeting, allowing for questions and discussion.

Area Reports:

Ralph Greenfield: Ralph noted he has been getting a lot of complaints about the milfoil and pond weed in the lake. That topic will be discussed later in the meeting.

Tim O'Neal: Nothing to report

Dick Haynak: Nothing to report

Bob Jeffords: Nothing to report

Weed Control:

President Southworth recognized Board members, and subsequently Membership, to speak regarding the issue of the Five Lakes Weed and Milfoil problem – comments limited to 3-5 minutes. President Southworth recognized himself first stating he has seen fishing deteriorate since he moved to the area in 2003. Dave noted the health of our lake can enhance or deteriorate the value of our properties. In a recent lake tour with Tim O'Neal, Dave saw areas of the lake clogged with milfoil, impassable in some areas. Dave stated he is unsatisfied with the quality of work by Savin Lake Services, noting the examples of Savin ignoring the expectation of maintaining some natural fish habitats and the “desert like” bottom in many areas of the lake. Vice President Gingery was recognized; Corey stated weeds are required in a healthy lake for marine life habitat. Required, good weeds, include perch grass, pond weed and coontail. But, some weeds, including milfoil (Northern, Eurasian) are invasive and not healthy for the lake and must be eliminated. Corey noted the DNR and DEQ do not support the use of chemicals as a tool to eradicate the weeds although at this point, there are no other options. Corey will be meeting with John Baker, Michigan Fisheries, to discuss other options. Secretary Butche was recognized; Chris stated we must determine what we want our lake to look like, i.e. enjoyable for both fishing and water sports. We must find a company with a plan to get us to our expectations then hold them accountable for the plan and execution. If we start directing the plan, our contracted source loses their accountability. Area Representative Tim O'Neal was recognized; Tim also commented on the tour of the lake with Dave, stating it was disturbing to see the current state including milfoil in areas it has never been in before. Tim explained there were areas in the lake 14 feet deep, very clear, and areas 12 feet deep with milfoil growing. With that level of sunlight penetration, we will have significant weed growth. Approximately 70% of our lake is devoid of weeds, a contributor to the poor fishing. So we have some areas of the lake over treated and some under treated. Currently, we are in a catch 22 – if we continue to treat the milfoil, over 90% of the lake will be devoid of weeds, which is not good. Tim stated we should get an independent biologist to come in and survey the lake to tell us what harm we've done, how do we correct it, and how do we maintain it in the future. Representative Bob Jeffords was recognized; Bob stated he agrees with all that has been said and reiterated the lake has gotten progressively worse in the 11 years he's been here. He also noted the Board is very much aware of this major problem and looking at all possible solutions. It appears there is a consensus to get others in to help us understand and resolve those issues. Representative Dick Haynak was recognized; Dick stated he felt the same as the other Board members, and believes our supplier is not giving us what we paid for. Dick believes the supplier is violating his contract, and we should get someone else in here to provide us good service. Representative Ralph Greenfield was recognized; Ralph stated he also agreed with the Board members relative to the status of weeds/milfoil on the lake. He commented we are and must continue to look at alternative solutions like milfoil weevils. These weevils are non-invasive and DEQ, DNR approved. Ralph also reiterated we need to look at solutions benefiting the entire lake, addressing specific areas as necessary to make the whole of the lake healthy.

Audience comments – Weed Control:

Ray Brusseau asked the Board to take a vote to hire an independent Biologist to provide direction on lake treatment instead of relying on a company who makes their living treating lakes. Dave responded the Board has identified two individuals to come and speak to the board. Post their discussion, the Board will determine next steps. Corey Gingery noted the Board has also been discussing using college graduate students, majoring in fisheries, to assist in lake treatment evaluation. This could be a lower/no cost possibility.

Onita Oles informed the Board of previous Board discussions regarding the use of weevils for lake weed control. The example she reference was Bear Lake, a small lake with approximately 8 homes who pay for the weevil treatment. She stated the use of the weevils does not produce the immediate results as in chemical treatment. Also, using weevils requires constant maintenance, the replacement of those who don't survive the winter. Onita can provide a contact for additional information. She also took exception regarding the comments of Savin "not doing his job". Savin is in the business of chemical lake treatment and that is why we hired him. She stated our sporadic approach to weed control (fire fighting), boat traffic (chopping the milfoil, carrying it throughout the lake where it propagates), and timing of treatment can all be contributors to the state of the lake. She stated, "We", as good citizens of the lake, need to be aware of our contribution to the issue. Dick Haynak appreciated Onita's comments but, stated Savin is not following the directions regarding location of treatment and that is why it is believed he's not doing his job. Ralph Greenfield commented Lake St. Helens had a 3 year treatment program utilizing weevils. That program ended in 2003, since that time, no additional weevils have been added and they have significantly reduced the milfoil. Based on this success, it is worth investigating utilizing weevils in our lake. Dave Southworth informed the group the company representing weevil treatment is going to make a presentation at our September Board meeting.

Karen Whittich asked if the weevils only target milfoil – answer, yes. She also stated we should get several estimates from Biologist and, if we're also considering getting an independent fish census completed, these both need to be documented and included in the proposed budget for August approval. Dave Southworth agreed. Corey stated independent fish census needs to be approved through the DNR.

Deloris Jarvis, stated she also had noted the lack of vegetation and fish in the lake and applauds the Board for taking action.

Mike Goin asked if we could plant we could plant low growing, controllable weeds in the lake. Corey stated it is but we would need DNR approval.

Mike Vitalli asked if only the shoreline could be treated vs. the center of the lake. Corey stated we had asked Savin to spray shorelines, boat lanes, and to not spray some areas from 6 to 14 feet (break lines). Vitalli stated Savin didn't spray in front of his shoreline, as viewed by a neighbor. Dave asked if Tim O'Neal if Savin followed our request of spraying specific area's as documented on our gridded map – Tim stated he did not.

John Wischmeyer stated we've spent significant time discussing this issue. What we need to do if find out how to solve it, how much it's going to cost and bring the solution and costs back for a vote. Dave reinforced having this open discussion provides input and potential solutions for the issue.

Len Whittich asked is we should police Savin Lake Services during the next treatment. Tim stated if we believe we need to monitor the application, maybe we don't need that Service, we need someone we trust. A group of Board members took the people doing the application on a boat tour early this spring and discussed where treatment was to/not to take place, based on the state of the lake, that direction was not followed. Ralph Greenfield suggested the Area Representatives be available to monitor the

application for their specific areas. Dave noted this was a good idea and asked the Area Representatives to monitor the next application, based on the gridded map.

Linda Verardi asked if the gridded map could be posted on the Web site. All members could help monitor the process. She also asked if it was necessary for the membership to make a motion allowing the Board to begin the process of finding a new lake treatment service – answer, No. Dave stated the Board will be putting together a bid document and begin the search for a new vendor. Karen Whittich stated if we are considering breaking our contract with Savin, we should document our dissatisfaction and what we believe are the contract breaches (additional cost, ignoring direction) through a letter – a paper trail.

Tim Meskin asked what is the current status of the lake treatment plan. Dave stated the lake has been treated, albeit not to our expectations.

Rich Henk asked if we Savin was invited to this meeting so he can address our issues. Dave stated Savin has been invited to our August meeting. He will be provided a list of our issues and questions so he can be prepared for the discussion. Rich noted we are all speculating right now and supported the plan to get an independent analysis completed on the lake. He also supported the termination of Savin's contract if he has not fulfilled his obligations.

Steve McNaughten asked if Savin was legally responsible for damages to the lake. If so, we should ask the independent biologist if the damage is measurable.

Chris Butche made a motion to table the discussion of lake treatment with any additional membership comments communicated through their respective Area Representative. Dick Haynak 2nd the motion – Motion carried.

Dave asked Chris to announce the results of the Area Representative elections. Chris stated one hundred and two (102) members signed in at the meeting and we had 102 votes. She then announced the election results, and administered the Oath of Office to each of the elected Board Officials as follows:

White Birch – Ralph Greenfield
Pebble Creek – Tim O'Neal
Five Lake Drive – Bob Chamberlain
Pennsula – Dick Haynak
Lone Pine – Frank Oles

Association members responded with a round of applause.

Additional Comments:

Dave Southworth announced the next Board meeting is August 8, 6:00pm at the Farwell Middle School Media Center.

Onita Oles asked for the timeline of silt trap cleaning. Corey stated he is in process of finalizing the August / September timeframe.

Loretta Wischmeyer asked if we could modify the Area Representative voting process where residents would vote for their respective representative only vs. current process of the membership voting for a representative in each area. Dave stated the Board would review the By-Laws and Constitution.

Adjournment: Moved by Member Ralph Greenfield to adjourn the meeting; supported by Member Bob Jeffords. The membership voted to adjourn, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Minutes recorded by:

Chris Butche, Five Lakes Association Secretary