

LAKE REDSTONE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Annual Meeting

August 5, 2017

1. Welcome

The Annual Meeting of the Lake Redstone Protection District was called to order at 8:30 am by Chairperson Tom Walters. Walters introduced members of the LRPD Board: Ray Damaskie, John Dietz, Chuck Ecklund, Tom Happ, Ken Keegstra, (note: Glenn Choroszy was absent/excused), and guest presenters Anders Helquist and Janelle Skoyen. Total attendance was 66.

2. Election of two commissioners

Glenn Choroszy and Tom Happ are candidates for re-election. No nominations from the floor for Commissioner. Motion to close nominations by Harlan Olson, second by Tom Wagner. Motion approved.

Motion by Terri Moeller to unanimously elect Choroszy and Happ; seconded by Jim Mercier. Motion approved.

3. Minutes of 2016 annual meeting -Discuss & approve

Motion by Dick Fish to approve minutes of 2016 Annual Meeting; seconded by Wally Moeller. Motion approved.

4. Secretary's Report

Keegstra reviewed the handout entitled "2017 Year in Review" that summarized major LRPD activities related to: Aquatic Plant Management, Whole Lake Management Planning, Dredging Planning, Sediment and Nutrient Loading, Lake Monitoring, Volunteers, and Communications. He commented on selected activities included in the handout; other topics were covered later in the meeting under Lake District Updates. He mentioned that Clean Boats/ Clean Waters was in operation again this year. He also drew attention to the new brochure designed specifically for Lake Redstone: **Shoreline Buffers**. Preparation of the brochure was funded by the current AIS Educational Grant. LRPD volunteers were thanked and new volunteers were encouraged to participate in activities that interest them. Finally, he mentioned ongoing communication efforts, including: new and expanded LRPD Website, updated Protection Connection that went out this Spring, progress in collecting email addresses for improved LRPD communications regarding Lake Redstone issues, and the Lake Redstone Facebook page.

Keegstra also summarized selected aspects of the recent LRPD Survey, noting that the last one was done 11 years ago in 2006. This time the survey was done electronically making it quicker and less expensive to compile the results. Many strong opinions were voiced, including concerns about sediment accumulation, water clarity, and shoreline erosion. The LRPD Board will be reviewing/ addressing the survey at future LRPD board meetings. Some concerns fell under the category of law enforcement, a topic where the LRPD does not have authority. These concerns will be discussed with and passed on to the Town of LaValle. Complete results from the survey are present on the LRPD web site.

5. Treasure's Report with audit

In absence of Treasurer Choroszy, Ecklund presented results of the recent audit/review of the LRPD financial records performed by MBE Accounting of Reedsburg. The audit revealed no discrepancies. This fulfills a requirement of performing an external audit/review every 3 years.

6. 2018 Operating Budget

Ecklund presented the LRPD 2018 operating budget (sent out with annual meeting notice and available as a handout at the meeting). Motion by Wally Moeller to approve the proposed budget was seconded by Bruce Vermilyea; the motion carried.

7. Authorization of the Board to exceed \$10,000 per project without Annual Meeting elector approval while staying within budget.

A motion by Jim Mercier to authorize the Board to exceed \$10,000 per project without Annual Meeting elector approval while staying within budget was seconded by Wally Moeller. The motion was approved.

8. Proposed Amendment of By-Laws

Article VIII, section 1 currently reads: "All contracts exceeding \$2,500 for work or materials shall be let to the lowest *possible* bidder."

The LRPD board proposes to change this sentence to read: "All contracts exceeding \$2,500 for work or materials shall be let to the lowest *responsible* bidder."

Motion to approve the amendment by Dick Fish was seconded by Jay Kolb. The motion carried.

9. Lake District Updates

A. Web Site

Happ gave a guided tour of the new website that provides lots of information regarding the LRPD activities. He pointed out specific area including the location of LRPD Bylaws, 2017 survey results, minutes, how to sign up for LRPD email list, links to DNR and other resources.

B. Aquatic Plant Management Program

Keegstra says that our main invasive species continue to be Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) and Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP). The quantity of the latter is increasing in the lake and will be monitored more closely.

He reinforced that the goal of LRPD is to enhance the diversity of native plants while working to control nuisance and invasive species.

During the past few years, LRPD has worked with DNR on performing whole bay treatments in the spring to control EWM. Those bays that have been treated so far include:

2013 – Mourning Dove Bay (done by DNR)

2015 – Martin-Meadowlark and Swallow Bays

2016- Cardinal, Oriole, and south arm of Chickadee

2017 Hummingbird, and part of Woodpecker

PI (Point Intercept) Surveys continue play an important role in our Aquatic Management Program. They are done to analyze bays subjected to treatments as a way to measure efficacy; they also provide information that is used to determine which bays should be treated in the following year.

C. Watershed Improvement

Ecklund discussed the importance of communications with farmers in the watershed in an effort to improve water quality of Lake Redstone. Two luncheon programs (February and July) were set up with help and participation of extension folks in Sauk and Juneau County, as well as local farmers. Increasing “no-till” farming (which reduces sediment runoff) within the Lake Redstone watershed is the goal of this program; 150 acres were enrolled as result of efforts during the past year.

Walters shared information about the series of four retention ponds (created years ago as a project of LRPD) above Martin-Meadowlark bay. Several members of the board and other volunteers took a hike to view them in January 2017; the ponds still seem to be doing a good job of reducing sediment into the lake but the top one is now full of sediment and in need of dredging. The retention pond above the weir in Swallow Bay (also a prior LRPD project) seems to be full; discussions are underway with DNR regarding possible dredging to improve efficacy of sediment ponds.

D. Lake Management Program

Walters gave overview of recent and current DNR Grants:

- Small Lake-Planning Grant was completed in December 2016; the report is available on LRPD web site.
- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Education Grant 2016-2018 is in progress. \$50,000. It provides funding for the Lake Fair, Clean Boats/Clean Waters program, point intercept surveys, brochures, consultant costs, etc.
- Whole Lake Management Planning Grant (2 years) to be submitted December 2017.

Walters reviewed Water Quality monitoring:

- Water samples are taken May-Sept, testing for chlorophyll, phosphorous, oxygen, temperatures, and water clarity (via Secchi disk readings). Several readings this year show improved water clarity
- DNR approved invasive plant treatments in specific bays
- Shoreline restoration and erosion education efforts all around the lake are encouraged as important factors in improving water quality of Lake Redstone. See new **Shoreline Buffers** brochure.
- Clean Boats/Clean Water (CBCW) invasive species prevention through education/inspection at boat landings and educational gatherings.

Damaskie shared Town of LaValle efforts on behalf of Lake Redstone:

- Section 11 Boat Landing will be totally rebuilt next year. They have received a State grant and are waiting for Federal Grant approval as well.
- Road repairs continue around the lake, along with review and replacement as needed of 450 culverts around the lake.

E. Spillway Update:

(Walters consulted with Sauk County officials):

- The dam and spillway: basically no change since the LRPOA meeting in June
- Once a contractor is hired to do the borings on the spillway they may need to lower they lake
- Nothing is on the calendar yet and this boating season most likely won't be affected
- We will be the first to know along with the LRPOA, and we will get the word out immediately

Note: Ayres has been hired by Sauk County to do spillway assessment; LRPD has also hired Ayers to consult regarding dredging of Lake Redstone. This has facilitated communications regarding both projects.

F. Sediment Study/Dredging Feasibility

Walters states this is a complicated process, outlined steps taken thus far:

- Fall/Winter of 2015/2016, Ayres Sediment Study
- Annual meeting in August 2016: constituents voted to move forward with dredging possibility
- Determined priority areas based on quantity of sediment, navigation, number of people affected, critical habitat, etc.
- Contracted with Ayres Associates and Attorney Anders Helquist (both present/represented today)
- Held a pre-application meeting with the DNR, LRPD Board, Ayres, Sauk County and Mr. Helquist.
- Organized a field trip meeting (June 2016) on Keegstra's boat with Ayres, DNR, and three Board members to view areas under discussion for dredging
- Arranged for Ayres and Mr. Helquist to be here today to present a dredging plan and the legal options for financing this project.

Walters highlighted a list of things still to do for dredging to become a reality, such as zeroing in on costs, arrange financing, determining where spoils of dredging will go, obtain necessary permits, solicit and obtain contract for dredging company, and hold special meeting of LRPD for vote to approve financing.

Janelle Skoyen of Ayres Associates presented background summary of initial work with LRPD. She reviewed the sediment sampling of 26 bays done in Nov. 2015, and sampling, coring and probing of lake sediments of various trips from Nov 2015 – Feb. 2016. The report of these studies were submitted in April 2016, and from this report a total of 19 bays were included in the 2017 dredge plans. Ayres and LRPD Board met to develop a conceptual plan in January 2017. DNR Field trip in June resulted in confirmation of standard limits for the dredging plan regarding slope and offset from shore. She showed examples of what disposal site might look like and pointed out areas around Lake Redstone where those might be considered due to location, proximity to dredging areas, wetlands, 100-year flood plain, etc.

Ayres today presented cost estimate of \$2,117,000. Janelle emphasized that this is just an estimate and the final numbers will depend upon the amount of dredging performed, the locations for disposal of spoils and the final bid results.

Anders Helquist of Weld Riley in Eau Claire presented financial options for dredging of Lake Redstone. These include: borrowing/financing, special assessments, special charges, a general tax increase, using savings, and/or obtaining gifts or grants. Because bonds involve bidding, use of auditors, and special bond legal counsel he suggested borrowing would be preferred choice. If funds are available from State Board of Commissioners of Public Lands in Wisconsin, getting a loan from this source is a good option. Current rates for a general obligation loan through the State Board are 4.00 % for a loan term of 11-20 years and 3.5% for a loan term of 6-10 years. The LRPD board cannot apply until approval is obtained from constituents at a special or an annual meeting. Using this option requires levying of a tax to pay principal and interest. Once approved, the LRPD board will have 4 months to start drawing funds.

Another option to consider: The LRPD can levy a special assessment against property owners for the dredging project. (This is how the district financed the last dredging project on Lake Redstone). This

approach requires the LRPD Board to determine the entire cost of the project to the district, to examine each parcel and make a determination of the benefits from the dredging project and make multiple notices to constituents. Helquist advises this is a more cumbersome process than borrowing funds from the State Board. Also, property owners can appeal assessments, including the possibility of going to court, which puts added burden and costs onto District.

Another option is that special charges may be imposed for services identified in the annual budget. In this case, the LRPD Commissioners allocate costs of those charges to the properties, however these charges cannot exceed the rate of \$2.50 per \$1,000 of assessed evaluation.

The District could increase general property taxes provided that the dredging project falls under its "operations" for the coming year. However, the tax is capped at a rate not to exceed \$2.50 per \$1,000 of equalized valuation and this approach requires the approval of electors and property owners at the annual meeting.

The District could also use some of its savings to offset the amount of money that would need to be borrowed, assessed, charged or taxed. The District could seek donations or apply for grants to offset the costs. One source of grant funds is a Recreational Boating Facilities Grant through the WDNR; the deadlines are Nov 1 and Feb. 1 of each year. State funding for this program is limited, but this might be an option for the areas around the county boat landing.

All of these options need to be studied as part of a comprehensive approach/review for funding a dredging project.

10. Introduce new board members

This was done earlier when commissioners were re-elected.

11. Public Question and Answer

Q: Terri Moeller - Is riprap going to be a requirement in selected bays prior to dredging?

A: Skoyen/Walters – The district can require it but doesn't have to; riprap requires separate DNR permits.

Q: Tom Kelly –What is being done to reduce sediment into north end of Lake Redstone?

A: Walters – working with DNR and Juneau/Sauk County on this issue; projects underway and more anticipated in watershed above wetlands by tubes. Wetlands can't be used as sediment ponds. DNR might allow dredging of sediment ponds above Martin/Meadowlark and Swallow, which could help.

Q: Tom Kelly- What is the likelihood the lake will be lowered 12 feet for spillway repairs?

A: Walters - Preliminary reports show it won't likely be necessary; this is a worst case scenario. It is more likely to be 6-12" this year to allow testing on the spillway. If repairs are needed and depending on level of spillway that needs repair a larger drawdown may be required in future years. They will need to lower further so that a large rain won't swamp the equipment. Level will depend on the borings (not done yet). If repairs are not critical, can be done in the off-season so that it won't affect summer-time boating.

Q: Ted Guss – What is functional quality of spoils?

A: Skoyen –The slurry will de-water fairly quickly; silty, sandy, fertile loose topsoil. After dredging is complete, the area will need to be seeded to prevent erosion.

Q: Cary Dudczak – What are homeowners options to supplement dredging done by LRPD?

A: Skoyen – Individual sediment permits are available through DNR to remove specific amount of sediment; can't dredge area with lily pads, downed trees. Possibly coordinate with LRPD dredging.

Q: Jay Remala – How many landowners within Lake Redstone Protection District?

A: Al Baade – The district contains about 1500 properties with about 1200 landowners.

Q: Steve Hinkle – Lake used by others outside of district; can they help cover cost of dredging?

A: Walters – Not unless we assess fees of some sort.

Q: Terri Moeller – Are special tax assessments tied to landowner or to property?

A: Ecklund – If special assessment funding mechanism is used, the assessment will be tied to property; payment options will be available to landowner.

Q: Jeff Rastocan – Can we increase retail tax or initiate Town of LaValle levy to capture business which profit from Lake Redstone?

A: Helquist – Interdepartmental cooperation between local governments is always a plus. Launch fees, Township levy, other options can be considered.

Q: Jim Mercier – He estimates 50% of people that use the lake don't live in the township or the county. He advocates for a boat landing fee.

A: Ecklund – This is a long and complicated process and many aspects are still under consideration. Suggestions are welcomed.

12. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Pat Hafey, second by Stan Williams. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.