

Minutes of the Lake Owen Association Annual Meeting
Cable Community Center
Cable, WI
August 20, 2005

Opening Remarks: The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM by President Steve Gall. Mr. Gall welcomed all, and gave a synopsis of the meeting agenda with its focus on water quality reports. He urged all to share their feelings and opinions. Steve thanked past President Dorothy Behling for her efforts in securing the water quality study grant from the DNR. He also thanked social chair Terry Miller for organizing several past and future social events. Steve noted there was a dues holiday for calendar 2005 and asked that the members consider the dues question for 2006. Steve concluded his welcome by introducing the board members for 2005 as well as the slate for 2006: Dorothy Kerekes and Ken McKivett have agreed to join Ralph Owen, Will Danker, Patty Anderson, and Steve Gall. Bill Hannaford has also agreed to run for a second term.

Treasurer's Report: Bill Hannaford noted that the current net worth of LOA is \$12,662.36. This includes accounts receivable and accounts payable as well as the current cash balance in the checking account.

Social Report: Terry Miller noted the golf tournament is today (August 20) at 12:30 PM at Telemark, to be followed by the social hour and group dinner starting at 5 PM. Terry noted we had a summer solstice party in June, and that was such a success we will follow with a fall solstice party in September. Early September we will visit the Buff-a-Wool Ranch. The Ice Cream Social in July was a big success. Terry asked for ideas for next year, mentioning a Namakagon River canoe trip as one possibility. Terry thanked all who had helped with the many social events of the year.

Fisheries Report: Gary Nei reported that bluegill fishing has been excellent. The DNR was scheduled to do a study of the lake last spring, but for political reasons they returned our check and declined. Now the study is slated for 2007 and will include fike and gill netting, boom shocking, and a creel survey. The Red Cliff Band also had agreed to stock the lake last spring, but that effort never materialized. Walleye fishing remains difficult, smallmouth bass are good but are being displaced by largemouth. The crayfish population seems low.

Water Quality Report: Joe Dorava of Vierbicher & Associates summarized his report. His efforts focused on measuring surface water quality, which typically reflects what happened to the lake over the last few weeks. He compared that to the fisheries report, which could reflect trends over months to years, and to core sampling studies (also done this year), which can reflect decades. He stated that Lake Owen is in the fortunate position of needing protection as opposed to repair. The lake is in a glacial basin on the shore of old Lake Superior. It is relatively undeveloped, with about 75% national forest, 18% wetlands, and 7% development. The lake is generally oligotrophic, but is showing signs of transition to mesotrophic in the deeper water areas. There are 185 – 200

dwelling on the lake and that is expected to be near the maximum. Not many lawns front the lake, which is important as that minimizes fertilizer runoff and shoreline erosion.

There are no real problems, and nothing is substantially wrong with the lake. This is unusual. The Garrison Core Sampling Study (done by Paul Garrison of the DNR in Fall, 2004) noted that the water quality is different than 100 years ago as evidenced by the presence of more diatoms, probably because more phosphorus and nitrogen nutrients are in the water. Sister Bay and the North end were especially noted as having more diatoms. The question is why. We should try to determine the source of the nutrients in the north end. The Sister Bay nutrients are probably due to heavy development.

He concluded by noting that the water quality is good, that the 100 year change is to be expected, and that there is no heavy weed growth. But we should continue to monitor the water quality. Look to the DNR for further grants, and engage in self-help monitoring. Expand it to go beyond Secchi disk readings. Do it every other year at least. Try to participate in the annual lake monitoring day in July. Monitor shoreline erosion and prevent soil and sediment from falling into the lake. There is a need for comprehensive planning to protect the lake. LOA should use its influence to influence behavior: to discourage lawns and fertilizing, to monitor septic system discharge, to discourage gassing boats on the water, to do a formal study of the north end, to encourage voluntary septic inspection. Work with county, town, and WAL, national lake associations. Survey association members to determine future plans for their property.

Invasive Species report: Jane Swenson reported on invasive species monitoring in Bayfield County. Certain lakes are already infested with Eurasian Water Milfoil. Lake Owen is at risk. She painted a grim picture of what happens when a lake becomes infested, and she recommended that we mobilize to fight this threat.

Roger Dreher, Wisconsin Association of Lakes (WAL): Roger noted the cost of fighting milfoil can be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. WAL exists to lobby to generate funds that lake associations can draw on to protect lakes. WAL is currently fighting for a share of the gas tax revenue for lake protection. Minnesota spends 4 to 5 times as much as Wisconsin on lake protection. He urged LOA to send representatives to the WAL conference at Telemark in June, 2006. WAL needs support from individuals, associations, and businesses to continue its work.

Old Business:

- Dues discussion: There was no objection to reinstating dues for 2006.
- Informational mailings: we will do at least 2 informational mailings over the next 12 months.
- Buoys: Steve explained the board's decision to no longer support the maintenance of slow-no wake buoys. A resident from Otter Bay noted that habitat throughout the bay had degraded since they were removed from the opening. Others disagreed, stating that boats have always had the opportunity to travel at high speed once through the opening. Otter Bay residents indicated they were ready to reinstate the buoys. Steve

Gall indicated that we can revisit this issue. Patty Anderson recommended that a committee be formed to look into the issue. It was moved (D Behling) and seconded (D Kerekes) that such a committee be formed. Passed unanimously

- Snowmobile/ATV trail update: The Bayfield County Tourism Committee is looking into it. No progress appears to have been made. The issue remains where it was a year ago: in committee.

New Business: Steve Gall moved (Patty Anderson second) that we form a Water Quality Committee to implement the Dorava recommendations. Passed unanimously. The slate of proposed officers was accepted by acclamation. Don Leahy moved that we accept the minutes of the August 2004 meeting. Passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Hannaford
LOA Secretary