

Lake Virginia Management District Quarterly Meeting 12/15/18

Location: Excelsior Town Hall, 100 E. Broadway, Rock Springs, WI

Call to order: 9:01 am

Open Meeting Compliance: Sandy Meyer Swanson stated that the meeting was in compliance.

Roll Call: Mike Pariza, Ed Rogers, Sandy Meyer Swanson, Eric Larson

In attendance: Dan Biermeister, Phyllis Both, Marti Prorok, Judy Rogers, Mark Sadler, Byron & Evelyn Tetzlaff, and Deb Vanderthout

Opening Remarks: Pariza expressed thanks for the Tetzlaff's participation for the past 29 years. Byron served as Lake Management Commissioner and Evelyn served as Town of Excelsior Treasurer and election judge as well as volunteered countless hours on community projects.

Adopt Agenda: Swanson stated that there should be one change on the agenda – Glen Johnson's first name is spelled with one, not two "n's." Rogers moved to make the change and Larson seconded. **AIF O NAY.**

Approve Minutes from 06/02/18 quarterly meeting: Rogers moved to approve the minutes and Larson seconded. **AIF O NAY.**

Appoint Marti Prorok to act as Recording Secretary: Larson moved to appoint her and Rogers seconded. **AIF O NAY.**

Treasurer's Report: Rogers moved to accept the quarterly treasurer's report and Larson seconded. **AIF O NAY.**

Lake Report: Rogers stated that last spring he attended the DNR's Spring Fish and Wildlife Conference annual meeting. They decided to reduce the number of pan fish that could be caught and kept in a day at Lake Virginia from 25 to 10. They will vote on it next spring. The Fisheries Biologist Nathan Nye is in favor of this change and will speak at that meeting. The DNR is also considering reducing statewide bass limits from 14" to 12" with a limit of three caught per day. The North aerator pump on Lake Virginia has been shut down for winter. He stated that he saw seven ice fisherman on the lake the other day and expressed concern about the thickness of the ice.

Pariza reported that Gale Holloway, PE, RLS said that he found new products to seal the dam this spring. Rogers stated that water is still going over the top of the dam. "We're four inches over previous limits, even the Big Flood. There were standing pools of water in Toeder Park."

Old Business, Convert Melcalf back to wetland prairie: Ms. Both reported on her research: She stated that “It has been mowed, so as high is the grass, the roots go that deep, 5-6’. This project will take 2-3 years, especially forbs, i.e., flowers. I contacted Muffy Barrett, owner of Bluestem Farm in New Freedom, who is a source for reasonably priced seeds. Marty Krueger agreed to help and can find a work crew. We can apply for a grant up to \$5000 from the Arts & Culture Council.”

She distributed a handout from Prairie Nursery and asked the Lake Management Board to read it and let her know how many acres they want to convert at first. She also need to know whether they want a no till prairie which will save a lot of money or one in which a machine cuts ridges and then the soil is seeded. She explained, “Forbs will be seeded in Fall as they need cold to end their dormancy. Grasses such as Joe Pye must be planted after the forbs or they will take over all other plants in spring. Big Bluestem which is native to Wisconsin along with Indian Grass will also be planted but this will not be a flower field or a weed patch. Planting prairie wetland seed will cost \$159 per acre as opposed to planting established plants at \$1299 per acre. This was done at Log Cabin who received a grant for established plants but thick stems were difficult to remove.”

Another alternative is to plant buckwheat the first year which might be more cost effective. Marty Krueger will talk with Reedsburg Fire Chief if we want to do a burn in early spring before weeds set seed.

Pariza asked her explain the term “matching funds?” Ms Both replied, “labor in kind. Plowing is necessary if it is being converted into prairie, once a week for three weeks. Sauk County Master Gardeners would be happy to help reclaim the prairie as they need to volunteer 24 hours each year to maintain their certification. She went on to say, “Deep roots will help with the flooding. My backyard is a mess; the mower gets stuck all the time. It is a marsh and also a prairie. The mosquitoes have been horrible this year. We should establish borders along our shoreline. Metcalf used to have a lot of wildlife, such as deer, geese, mink, and weasels. After four years, Metcalf will require little maintenance. One alternative I don’t like is using weed killer.”

Larson suggested the land be tilled early before rains. Ms Both added that “A burn would get rid of annual weeds. Before maples bud is a good time to burn. The furrows can left or they can be leveled. The Log Museum weeds were fantastic with bees. The Master Gardeners collected and sold Buckwheat honey. Eating local honey builds resistance to bee stings. Rogers stated,” We sowed 100# of buffalo grass seed years ago; it was sturdy but slow growing.” Ms Both said she will “check out *Bouteloua dactyloides*. A machine can make

ridges to plant forbs. Buffalo Grass won't interfere. This should be a tall grass prairie. [She later reported that Buffalo Grass is very aggressive.]

Rogers stated, "We had a lot of problem with willow trees and the elderberries were cut down." Ms Both stated that the willows absorb water but they aren't typical of a prairie. She suggested a path be made from the street down to the water to avoid walking on the seed.

Rogers reported that "[Alliant] Power and Light will give us a grant." Ms Both noted that the hillsides of newly widened Route 12 has been planted with prairie grass.

Ms Both declared, "We will write the grant if funded." Rogers suggested that "Perhaps Joe Molianen could do the plowing." Larson said that a plow with a disk could break up the soil. He went on to say, "We gave Mr Zobell \$1500 last year to mow who graded from the lake to the road." Ms Both stated that clay soils need a disk plow. She reminded the Board that the lake has at least 12" of muck on its bottom. "It should have been dredged years ago. Pariza replied that there was concern that the heavy equipment would break through the limestone bottom of the lake.

Everyone present was in favor of reclaiming Metcalf Prairie. The Board determined that "Since no money is involved at this time, there is no need to make a motion." Ms Both will look into planting buckwheat first and Prorok will draft the grant.

New Business, Town of Excelsior: Larson reported that "the Town of Excelsior changed garbage collection and recycling services from Peterson to LSI starting January, 2019. He stated, "The item is listed on the tax bill as a single item budget item split among the residents which is considerably lower than Peterson's bid. LSI quoted \$12 per resident per month, which is \$1 in savings. They will follow the same collection schedule; however, they will pick up both garbage and recycling in one truck at one time which would cause less wear and tear on the roads. They will replace the 14 yard dumpster at the Town Hall with one that has a 30 yard capacity. This receptacle is to be used by Excelsior road crew and is not for private use."

Larson provided an update on ATV use in Excelsior, saying, "A non-binding ATV referendum was recently passed; a proposed draft is currently being considered by the Board. All roads in Excelsior would be open to ATV use; however, if the Sheriff recommends the closure of a road due to safety issues, we will close that road to ATVs. This will be renewed every year. We can put in our own times of operation. In Sauk County, ATVs can be on the road a half an hour before dawn until half an hour after dusk. Operators of ATVs must have a driver's license and liability insurance. Their vehicles must have

headlights, tail lights, and brake lights. Turn signals are not mandatory so be careful when passing them. Sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds must wear protective head gear. We cannot stop them from driving on a frozen lake. The town lawyer stated that a case review would be necessary to prohibit driving on the lake. Dane County prohibits vehicles over 750 lbs. from driving on frozen lakes but the vehicle must have floatation devices. Swanson stated that “The town should be specific about times of operation.” Larson replied that, “It prevents driving at dark.”

Swanson asked, “Should we chain off the dam to prevent ATVs from riding down to the lake [on the ice]? Larson stated that “The ramp cannot be closed off with a chain. We could adopt Sauk’s ordinance without lawyer.” Pariza said, “That could be challenged.” Larson replied, “If the Town approves this, DNR has no problem with it.”

Sadler asked, “Isn’t it only battery operated vehicles on lake?” Larson stated that he would discuss this with the Town Board.

Larson said the Town made no provision concerning disabled drivers. Rogers noted that “The DNR doesn’t enforce against disability. No proof is necessary. For the record, [Lake Management’s] number one priority is the safety of the people; this is why we don’t want ATVs out on the lake.”

New Business, Sauk County: Commissioner Glen Johnson could not attend the meeting and sent over comments regarding the county’s draft of an ordinance which would describe ATV use. He also stated that county taxes would be lower than the previous year.

Communications: Rogers received a thank you note from the 6th grade football team who were allowed to use Toeder Park for practice as their school field had flooded. Pariza received a holiday greeting from Wetland Specialist, Jim Scharl.

Adjourn: 10:00 am Larson moved to adjourn and Rogers seconded **AIF O NAY**.

Respectfully submitted: Marti Prorok

Notes

Do you want to include the follow addendum? “Ed Rogers responded to a question from Paul Prorok and clarified that the new limits will be a statewide regulation that the legal limit on bass is 12” three per day, a protected slot limit of 15-18” and one fish allowed to be kept over 18.”

The following paragraph is extraneous and therefore, not included in the minutes: “Residents whose basement in their Lake Virginia house flooded

requested access to the dumpster for items the garbage truck would not accept. Their request was granted by the Town Clerk.”

Does the Committee want to clarify concerns about and possible accommodations for disabled ATV drivers?

DRAFT