

Crooked Lake Texas Annual Meeting
May 20, 2020
Virtually, via Zoom

Note: these minutes will be read at the 2021 Annual Meeting for approval, corrections, and changes. -R.K.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 P.M. by President Jim Roberts.

2019 Annual Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting were read and approved.

President's Report

New Lake Zoning: Jim told the members that the Township Zoning Board's plans for creating a Lake Zone have been put on hold.

He noted that as of this meeting, our lake was 20.5 inches above the normal high water mark. He added that without our pumping effort, we would have had another 28 inches of water on top of the 36 extra inches we had last year. The rain this last week increased the lake level by 4 inches. The pumps were turned off the day before this meeting to avoid flooding downstream from the recent storms. They'll be off approximately 6 days.

No Wake Rule: He announced we'll be starting the year continuing our No Wake Rule. The CLTA Board will revisit the rule when we reach a level that is 15 inches above our usual high water mark. Director Lesa Newby added that residents will be notified by our FaceBook page when the decision is made.

Flooding Task Forces

Long Term Plan: Vice President Russ Walters noted that Directors Chuck Buxton and Lesa Newby also attended the Task Force meetings. The petition signatures for the Long Term Plan have been submitted to the Drain Commission. The Kalamazoo County Board voted to approve our Long Term Plan project. A survey was sent out to residents of Texas Township who will be affected. The survey results plus data from the engineering study will be used to create a proposal for a legal lake level. There will be public hearings on the proposal which will then go to court. When a judge approves the proposal, it will go to the engineering firm to carry out. Russ said the plan was to get all documents and data to the court this year, but the courts being closed due to the virus outbreak will cause some delay.

Short Term Plan: Russ also reported that the pumps are running at 2000 gallons per minute without the restriction of 2 days off every 13 days. That restriction was removed by EGLE. The pumps will only stop in the event of heavy rainfall. Crooked Lake's drawdown will continue to 750 gallons per minute.

A New Pump for Eagle Lake? Russ noted that there was some discussion at the last Texas Township Board meeting about getting a more powerful pump at Eagle Lake to increase their output beyond 1250 gallons per minute since Eagle Lake is getting water from Pine Island Lake and the Vineyards. This would reduce the drawdown from Crooked Lake. Nothing was yet decided. Kevin Noe asked about getting feedback on the situation to residents. Russ suggested that residents check the township website for meeting results. Noe went on to ask about what input residents would have on such a decision, noting that he can't understand the rationale for increasing Eagle Lake's drawdown. Russ replied that the rate of drawdown from both lakes is not exactly equal, but he will be at the Task Force meeting. If Crooked Lake residents are needed at a subsequent township board meeting, he will let the members know. Jim Roberts added that the CLTA Board Members will attend the next township meeting to give our views on the subject.

Dave Stafford asked why Crooked Lake should suffer from Eagle Lake's water problems. Russ answered that the township looks at the flooding of both lakes as one problem. The Drain Commission also sees the Long Term Plan as one project.

New Pump Clarification: Texas Township Treasurer Trish Roberts added clarification of the township's position. At the end of the township's last meeting in the agenda section of "Board Comments", only one township trustee asked the township engineer about pumping more water from Eagle Lake. It hadn't been on the board's agenda. The township board didn't take any position on it. She did say it could be a topic for future discussion.

The township board meets twice a month. The next meeting is June 8. She isn't sure yet whether a new pump for Eagle Lake will be on the agenda. The Drain Commissioner assumed control of the Long Term Plan from her assistant. She will review the data we've submitted and will have a third party engineer review it as well. She'll bring the proposal to the court.

Sanjay Dalal asked whether it would make any difference if the CLTA passed a resolution opposing any increased differential in the pumping rate. Russ replied that he will find out at the next Flooding Task Force meeting if there is a proposal to change the pumping rate, and he said he would notify the membership if it was necessary to attend the township board meeting. Jim added that he'd talked to the township engineer who told him that he didn't think it was a good time to change the flow rate. Gary Steinbach asked if the Flooding Task Force meeting would be on Zoom. Russ replied that it would be, and Jim said we'd post the Zoom link on our FaceBook page.

{Secretary's Note:} At the Flooding Task Forces meeting on Thursday, May 28, CLTA President Jim Roberts discussed this new pump idea with the leaders of the Eagle Lake Texas Association. They firmly said they were not interested in a new pump or increasing the rate of flow from Eagle Lake. So, the above discussion is moot.

Boat and Trailer Washing: To help fight invasive species, Jim reminded members to tell dock and marina workers to wash their boats and trailers before launching. Residents should do the same when they take their boats, kayaks, jet skis, and paddle boards out of the lake and again when they return them to Crooked Lake.

Dead Trees: Jim said he'd gotten questions about whether the CLTA will pay for cutting down and removing the trees around the lake that have died due to the high water. The CLTA Board's position is that trees on a resident's property are their own responsibility to remove.

Treasurer's Report

Membership and Budget: Treasurer Rodney Nimtz reported that as of tonight, the CLTA has 115 members. He presented a comparison of our 2019 budgeted amounts with the its actual expenditures to our 2020 and the expenditures to date. {See documents posted on the CLTA website and FaceBook pages for details.}

Budget and Expenditures for Apartment Rental: Rodney said he had \$9600 set for out loan payment which he makes twice a year. There have been a number of property maintenance expenses including a new water softener and a new refrigerator which were not in the budget. The apartment is currently rented to the third set of tenants at \$1400 per month. He noted that there are currently 4 lake members who are delinquent on their ramp / maintenance fees.

Boat Ramp Gate: Director Sandy Steinbach reported that the new gate is working as expected. She has not heard of any issues with it. She added that there are 12 unclaimed cards for the gate. If one of them is yours, you can contact Sandy at her home. She reminded members that they need to pay their membership dues plus the maintenance fees for the ramp and gate. Cards can be de-activated if the fees aren't paid.

Reduced Taxes? Director Judy Ford asked Rodney if there were any long range forecasts for property tax reductions on the former store property. She wondered if they shouldn't be reduced because it's no longer a store. Rodney replied that the township

assesses the value on what we paid for the property, but we don't pay personal property taxes on it since the building is no longer a store. Jim gave a hearty thank you to Rodney for all of his efforts at managing the rental property and Sandy for her efficient handling of the gate cards.

Committee Reports: Welcome; Boat Parade; Fun Day

Welcome Committee: Chair, Director Lesa Newby asked that lake members notify her when new neighbors move in so they can be officially welcomed to the lake.

Boat Parade: Chair, Director Lesa Newby announced that the boat parade would be held Saturday, July 4 at 3:00 P.M. She said that residents could dress up as much as they want and decorate their boats if they desire to. But, costumes and boat decorations aren't necessary. She would like to see as many residents as possible come out and show some Crooked Lake Pride.

Fun Day: Chair, Director Lesa Newby noted that sadly, we can't do the usual kids' games and potluck. She asked the members attending the meeting if they would like to at least have a band that residents could listen to on their boats. Jim held a straw vote via Zoom with the help of his office manager, Lauren, and the results were an overwhelming 80% "yes" for a band. Lesa said she would find a band.

Short Term Rentals

Director Chuck Buxton brought the membership up to date on the state legislature's proposed bill last year that would forbid local governments from banning short term rentals. Chuck said the bill made it to a committee which held a hearing where it received 95 public comments, which were mostly against the bill. Chuck will monitor the progress of the bill. Jim asked if short term rentals were possible given the restrictions of the Covid 19 pandemic. Chuck replied that they were.

Laminar Flow Aeration Project (LFA)

Jim announced that the LFA couldn't run last year since the high water damaged all of the equipment. John Tucci of Lake Savers, which runs the project, told the board that he wanted to get the project operating at least in the West Basin in which our lake evaluation saw a growth in phosphorus level. That will lead to accelerated weed growth. Tucci will repair and replace the equipment at no cost to CLTA this year.

Lake Manager's Report

Herbicide Treatments: Jennifer Jermalowyz-Jones of Restorative Lake Sciences (RLS) reported that her assistant will be on the lake next week doing a survey of weed growth and taking water samples. She said that the phosphorus levels in the West Basin rose without the Laminar Flow Aeration. She said that it was necessary to address the Eurasian Milfoil and Curley Leaf Pondweed with treatments. Notices will go out before the work is done with RLS supervising the treatment application. She noted we had a late spring this year with weed growth which has compressed the schedules.

Health of the Lake: Overall, Jennifer said that the lake testing results from last year were pretty good. The lake was doing a good job of processing sediments that have been washed into the water. This year she doesn't have to report in to EGLE on our LFA project as she had to in previous years. She had already pulled permits for herbicide treatments of the Eurasian Milfoil. She also noted that there wasn't as much Milfoil as she'd expected last fall, but there was more Starry Stonewort. This was worrisome since it is harder to treat.

Lesla told the Zoom attendees that invasive weeds were already clogging the end of her dock and were prevalent throughout the Cove. Landon Kovacs echoed her observation, adding that weeds were growing out where his kids swim, and that such growth seemed early. Jennifer responded by saying she will try to get her assistant on the lake sooner to do the survey and

order the treatment soon after. She added that RLS may have to get on the lake more often with the long range weather predictions.

Member Kevin Noe asked if she was monitoring the water flowing in from Eagle Lake to see if we are getting any bad inputs. Jennifer replied she was, and that she was the manager of Eagle Lake, too. Noe further asked if we could cut off the flow from Eagle Lake if something bad was found. Jennifer said she'd take a sample and report it to EGLE.

Q and A: Kristina Lemmer noted that the members paid into the Special Assessment District (SAD) last year, but we didn't have any LFA going. Russ answered that the money is in township funds. Tucci and Lake Savers will not charge us for this year. Kristina asked if we'll have to pay the SAD assessment again this year. Russ said that the last time he asked, the township will collect the funds and use them for future LFA payments. Township Treasurer Trish Roberts added that indeed the SAD would be on the tax bills for 2020 since we have a contract with Lake Savers.

Roy Holmberg asked if we had to be concerned over the effects of the herbicide treatment with our pumping. Jennifer said, "No." Roy also asked if the phosphorus in the West Basin will lead to weed growth. Jennifer said that it would.

Diane Parrish wondered whether the green film on the water was safe to swim in. Jennifer said it was algae and was safe. If the algae color was bluish, it wasn't safe. Diane also wanted to know if the brown, globular things floating in the water were a problem. Jennifer said that they weren't. When Diane also asked if it was safe to remove Zebra Mussels, Jennifer replied, "Yes, the more removed, the better."

Purple Loosestrife Project

Jim announced that our usual project of putting out beetles to eat the Loosestrife is on hold until we see a problem. Last year the project chair, Arleigh Smyrnios noticed that the plants seemingly destroyed by beetles were growing again.

Landscaping and Erosion Control

Secretary Rod Krapf talked about a webinar he'd attended about lake flooding, erosion control and landscaping sponsored by the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. The presenter was Jennifer McKay, the council's Policy Director. The webinar provided information about how solid barrier sea walls are not the best solution. They reflect waves which can erode neighboring property and will scour the bottom. This removes the environment for native plants and animals but provides the perfect growing spot for Eurasian Milfoil. Rip rap, stacked and staggered stones, are better protection. Rod added that last year some native grass he'd planted on his shore came up through the flood waters and kept the soil from eroding away. He again encouraged residents to plant native plants along the shore which have much deeper roots than lawn grass. He noted that many lake residents were left with mud flats after the highest flood waters had been pumped down.

The webinar information will be posted on our FaceBook page and on the website.

Election of Officers

Jim announced that the following CLTA Board Members were all running for re-election: Chuck Buxton, Roy Holmberg, Rodney Nimitz, Jim Roberts, and Sandy Steinbach. Kevin Noe was nominated from the floor. He said he'd like to bring a younger generation viewpoint to the board. The election was held via Zoom with the expertise of Lauren Stone. The five incumbents won. Jim thanked Kevin for running and encouraged him to volunteer for CLTA committee work and appreciated his willingness to serve.

DNR Boat Landing?

Member Michael Leinwand asked if the DNR still wanted to open our lake to the public by creating a boat launch. Jim answered that the DNR considers our lake a high priority for a boat launch, so it is still a possibility. The residents of East Crooked Lake Dr. are still working

on making the road private. Though the DNR has given up on the initial properties offered for sale by the owner, there are still a number of properties that would be suitable for a boat launch along the road.

Lily Pad Treatment?

Leinwand also asked if there had been any lily pad treatment in the Cove. Russ replied that the CLTA has never treated lily pads. Also, you will be notified of any treatments the CLTA authorizes.

Eagle Lake Pump Off First?

Jim announced that in the event of storms or other reasons to shut off our pumps, he will ask the township to turn off Eagle Lake's pump first. Currently, the maintenance company turns off our lake's pump first, and there is a half hour lag while the crew drives to Eagle Lake while their pumps are running.

Long Term Plan Cost?

Member Joanne Potts, a local realtor said that there are a number of properties on Eagle Lake that are not selling because potential buyers aren't sure how much the new SAD will add to the tax bill. Jim said that the actual cost isn't known yet, but it should be within the estimate of \$3700 - \$4000 per property. And, that amount can be spread out over 10 years or more. Russ added that the exact cost won't be known until a judge OK's the new SAD. Joanne also asked if the tax would be assessed by lake frontage. Jim said that all lake front properties will be assessed equally.

No Wake Violators?

Michael Leinwand asked what we were supposed to say to people who aren't following the No Wake rule. Another resident asked if we could ban jet skis until the No Wake Rule is lifted. Director Chuck Buxton answered that the rule is a "gentleman's agreement". We don't have the authority to ban jet skis nor any way to enforce a ban. Russ added that most lake residents have honored the rule but acknowledged that some haven't.

Board Member Comments

Secretary Rod Krapf noted that residents who have sand bags left when the water level drops can use the sand to set landscaping bricks, something he's already done. The sand can also be used to raise the level of resident's immediate shoreline. Topsoil can be spread on top for growing plants, hopefully native species whose long roots will anchor the new soil and sand in place. The sand is not suitable for kids' sandboxes.

Director Lesa Newby assured members that the board will exert our best efforts to defend Crooked Lake. Members should feel free to contact her or any board member for questions to be brought up.

President Jim Roberts told the meeting that we've done a good job working on our problem. He noted that the residents of Crooked Lake Delton have no solution to their flooding. He added that other lakes in the state are looking at our process. He thanked fellow board members, and especially Roberts Construction Office Manager, Lauren Stone who facilitated the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

