

LIDA LAKES IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 19, 2023 9 AM

Lida Township Hall

Members Present: David Hilber, Zachary Herrmann, David Braton, Brian Graftaas, Sheldon Poss and Mike Spangler. **Absent:** Mimsi Weckwerth.

Guests: Dave and Audrey Swang, Carol Lindemann, Bob Nielsen, Twyla Nielsen, Darrin Rude, Pat Sinners, Ron and Janelle Daugherty, Loren Klimek, Harry and Jodi Gilbertson, Jill Preston, Marshall Johnson, Deana Mosby, Sue and Craig Gast, Joel Sellin, Tony Grindberg, Mark Sjostrom, Doug Dorow, Chuck Cheney, Sheri Klein, Roger Sundby, Patsey Preston, Wade Johnson, Stephen Mullan, Laurie Hanson, Brad Bellmore, Joe Hilber, Jerome McBain, Tim Lund, Dave Cunningham, Jerry Olafson, Amy Barlow, Shane and Courtney Peterson, Gregory Slotto, Donna Anderson, Deb Toso, Jon Sundby, Peter Waller, Lee Skarloke, Pam Sucher, Bobbie Holman, Clark Holman, Violet Holman, Steve Lawrence, Phyllis Poss. Speaker Steve Kubeny with MN DNR.

Agenda Item I: Call to order David Hilber, 9:07 AM.

Agenda Item II: Pledge of Allegiance led by David Hilber.

Agenda Item III: Introductions and Announcements.

Agenda Item IV: Approval of Agenda

Two items were discussed. One to be moved to the top of the meeting and a second to be added to the agenda. Agenda Item XI. Information /Education was moved to the front of the agenda as Steve Kubeny, DNR Fisheries Specialist will make a presentation. Tent Caterpillar treatment was requested to be added to the agenda by property owner Shane Peterson. This item will follow Kubeny's presentation.

Motion to Approve Amended Agenda by Herrmann, seconded by Graftaas. Carried

Agenda Item V. Information/Education

Steve Kubeny, MN DNR

Hilber introduced Steve Kubeny, Fishery Biologist with the MN DNR. Kubeny has been with the MN DNR for 32 years and is based out of Fergus Falls. Kubeny presented highlights of the fish situation on Lida Lakes. Stocking in North Lida of walleye fry has been done on a biannual basis in 2019, 2021 and Spring 2023 with 1,190,000 walleye fry each year. The DNR had a surplus of walleye fingerlings in 2019 and stocked an additional 1,198 pounds in north Lida. The Association also stocked 720 pounds of fingerlings in 2021. South Lida was also stocked in 2019, 2021 and 2023 with 178,000 walleye fry. The Association also added 320 pounds of fingerlings in 2021.

Kubeny reviewed fish surveys of both lakes. Crappies sizes were found to be excellent, in the top three in Ottertail County. The bag limit was reduced to 10 this past year to keep a strong fishing opportunity for crappy. In 2021 the DNR did gill netting that found Lida is at a historical low in walleye count. The Northern Pike count came in higher than expected. Kubeny stated the DNR is seeing a significant shift in

fish number and the overall health of the lakes in Ottertail County. This is due to a number of issues from expanded development of shoreline, the use of fertilizers, and the lack of buffer strips have hurt lake habitat. Leaking septic tanks and location of livestock near the lake also attribute to deteriorating conditions. He also has seen people blowing leaves in the lake and placing grass clippings that generate higher phosphorous. The rock beds that used to be spawning areas for walleye are now covered with weed growth. These have all been issues that have degraded the walleye count. The increase in aquatic vegetation has changed the specie of fish in Lida with an increase in crappies and northern pike and a decline in walleye.

Kubeny mentioned Lida Lakes is part of an ongoing study of zebra mussel with data planned for release in 2024. Twenty-two lakes in Minnesota are part of the study.

Kubeny then opened the meeting for questions. A question was asked what could be done to eliminate or reduce the number of zebra mussel. He responded that they saw higher numbers of zebra mussel to start with lesser impact in following years. No board based chemical treatment is available. A question was asked about developing an artificial walleye breeding area. Kubeny stated it doesn't work. Another question was raised about changing catch limits. Kubeny feels the quality of walleye in Lida isn't ever going to be the way it was 20 years ago. He didn't feel a lower limit of walleye would help. He doesn't feel Lida has been over-fished. The change in habitat seems to be our issue. He stated the fry stocking hasn't been effective. He also felt fingerlings had questionable successful since the pike are eating them.

Kubeny discussed fry, fingerling and larger walleye stocking. The results appear mixed. Kubeny stated he wasn't a fan of slot limit and, in his opinion, wasn't protecting the walleye growth due to the habitat changes Lida has experienced.

Steve Kubeny stated he can be reached at 218-671-7660 or steve.kubeny@state.mn.us for any further questions.

Tent Worm Treatment

David Braton addressed the question regarding tent worm spraying. The tent worm infestation is usually in a 10–15 year cycle that lasts 3-4 years. Currently about 15% of the beaches on Lida hire an aerial sprayer on their own. Tent worms usually impact trees in late May until early June. There was a small outbreak in 2013. The peak years recently were 1969, 1978, 1998 and 2001. The year 2001 was one of the larger outbreaks. In 2001 7.8 acres of hardwood were infested across Minnesota. Tent worms thrive on Ash, Oak and Basswood but can also be found in shrubs and even on siding. Braton discussed natural controls and weather conditions that affect numbers. There are two ways to address an outbreak, either mechanical or chemical. Mechanical is simply brushing them off or washing them away as the worm is in the larvae stage. The other is through the use of insecticide spaying through the use of aerial application. Braton talked with West Central Air-Ag Spraying who currently sprays Lida and Ottertail Lake. With over 50% of South Lida shoreline being State Park that area would be excluded from any spraying. The executive board also recognizes we have property owners that oppose aerial insecticide spraying. Braton requested an estimate for tent worm spraying and the owner of West Central Air-Ag gave a rough estimate of \$25-\$30 per LLID property. An estimated cost for overall Lida spraying with the exclusion of the State Park could be in the \$20,000-\$25,000 range.

Braton made the motion not to include tent worm spraying expense in the 2024 Budget. Seconded by Herrmann. Carried.

Agenda Item VI. Approval of June 3, 2023 Board Minutes

Braton presented the Saturday, June 3, 2023 minutes. Braton asked for changes or corrections. None. **Braton made the motion to approve the Saturday, June 3, 2023 minutes, seconded by Herrmann. Carried.**

Agenda Item VII. Treasurer's Report

Herrmann presented the August 16, 2023 Treasurer's Report. The LLID has received the first of two payments from Ottertail County in the amount of \$25,259.13. That is roughly 60% of the total we will receive. We expect a \$10,000-\$12,000 carry over. The amount of Curley Leaf Pond treatment is always a factor. The 2023 treatment costs were \$13,862.74. Herrmann also discussed the sampling and water analysis.

Graftaas made the motion and seconded by Poss to approve the August 16, 2023 Treasurer's Report and pay outstanding bills. Carried.

Agenda Item VIII: Board Activities Report.

Administration/Communication

Braton discussed that Katie Gall now has website administrative rights. He also discussed we plan to develop another newsletter in January/February of 2024. Herrmann provided information on our By-Laws and how they are important for operating procedures. By-Laws are available on our website.

Lake Management

Graftaas reported Steve Henry has left RMB Labs and resigned as LLID Lake Coordinator. Both he and Herrmann reviewed the role of Lake Coordinator and have had preliminary discussions with a potential replacement for Steve Henry. This will be part of our October 2023 Board meeting.

Graftaas discussed 2023 treatment of both North and South Lida and lack of surveying following Henry's resignation. Hilber reviewed we did our first treatment in 2019 of South Lida. Since our first survey and the latest survey this year and we were able to treat all areas needing treatment where in 2019 we were able to afford 25% of the area needing treatment.

Graftaas reviewed the status of developing a lake management plan. We plan to apply for matching grants for the plan in 2024.

Graftaas updated the Moonlight Bay Project. Since one bid was received it was decided by the West Ottertail Soil and Water Conservation to delay the project to 2024. Herrmann shared a potential Mud Lake project on Ditch 51 on Mud Lake. Graftaas will review alternatives for both Moonlight Bay and Mud Lake. Graftaas will have an update for our October meeting.

Communications

Braton reviewed his meeting with MN State Highway Department regarding the 2026 resurfacing of Highway 108. This included access to bike trails and cross walks at Ohana Beach and Maple Beach.

Braton received an update from Ottertail County Park and Recreation that the State Park bike trail is near design completion with plans to let bids this fall and construction in 2024.

Agenda Item IX: 2024 Budget Consideration (Membership Vote)

Herrmann reviewed the budget up for membership vote that was sent in June. Herrmann summarized the Administration, Clean Water, Recreation, Aquatic Invasive Species and Planning/Research items and costs for 2024. One new item is the Clean Water Initiative that has been developed statewide to assist in keeping our iced over lakes clean in winter months. LLID hopes to partner with area groups and the CleanMN.org. Income is estimated to be \$54,100 including a Carry-Over of \$12,300 and 2024 LLID User Fee (\$50/Parcel) of \$41,800. Estimated Expenses total \$54,100. Administration expenses account for \$5,640; Clean Water Projects, \$7,500; Recreation, \$10,000; Aquatic Invasive Species Treatment, \$26,340; Planning and Research, \$3,750; and Contingency Fund, \$870.

A question was asked regarding board insurance and coverage for the LLID through MCIT. A property owner requested an increase in fish stocking. Spangler reviewed the past issue with acquiring walleye due the severe winter kill last year. Hilber stated the Board could increase the budget for walleye stocking based on funding and lower costs in other categories.

Graftaas and Herrmann reviewed the opportunity for increasing funds for walleye stocking through a separate funding mechanism such as the former Lida Property Owners Association.

Another property owner asked if the slot limit should be removed. A property owner also asked if we could have a walleye stamp added to capture additional funds from Lida fishers to pay for additional stocking. Herrmann stated he liked the idea of using the LLPOA as an opportunity to capture funds for stocking. A property owner would like the Board to put more pressure on the DNR regarding stocking. Another resident requested developing a solid Fish Committee to review opportunities to deal with the issue. Hilber stated we could and asked this to be an agenda item in October and anyone interested give their name and contact information to Herrmann at the end of the meeting. A property owner asked about the quantity of northerns and how we can reduce them in our lake.

Attending property owners agreed to a hand vote vs. paper ballot to approve the 2024 Budget of \$54,100 in Income and \$54,100 in Expenses. The majority approved through a raise of hands with three votes against. The 2024 LLID Budget Approved.

Agenda Item X: Election of Directors (Membership Vote)

Hilber reviewed the process of electing board members each year. He asked those in attendance to consider serving on future boards of the LLID. Graftaas reminded those in attendance our By-Laws allow board member to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. The question was raised as to number of residents and seasonal property owners serving on the board. Hilber stated the requirement of having a majority of board members be residents is a state statute.

Spangler served as election judge and announced voting results:
David Braton 103 votes

Brian Graftaas 82 votes

Shane Peterson 29 votes

Three write-in names were cast. Three for Cindy Traine and one each for Roger Sundby and Byron Nelson.

Spangler provided the secretary documentation of the vote.

Agenda Item XI. Confirmation of appointment of Mike Spangler to the Board.

Mike Spangler was appointed to the Board by the Directors at the October 29, 2022 meeting when Robert Neilson resigned. Spangler was appointed to fill out Neilson's remaining year of his first term. Spangler will be eligible to run, and serve, a three-year term at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The property owners, through a raise of hands, voted Mike Spangler to serve the remaining year of Robert Neilson's three-year term through FY 2023. The vote was unanimous in favor. Carried.

Agenda Item XII. Public/Membership Comments

Hilber asked if there were any public comments. A property owner asked about outlet dams to hold water. Herrmann stated it was a DNR question that we will request clarification. The group also discuss fish movement and the potential of adding sturgeon to Lida to control Northern Pike.

A question was asked about the Pelican River change from a structured dam to a rock flow. Does this impact Lida water levels? The changes have had no change in water level for Lida.

Agenda Item XIII. Next Meeting Dates

October 21, 2023 9 AM Lida Township Hall

January 13, 2024 9 AM Lida Township Hall

To: Jim Wolters, Area Fisheries Manager

Denise Legato, Human Resources Administrator

David Huber, Lida Lakes Improvement District

We are writing to you regarding comments made during the presentation by Steve Kubeny at the August 19th annual meeting for the LLID (Lida Lakes Improvement District).

Our email to you on this matter has been delayed due to personal travel. Please don't confuse this delay with a lack of concern. It has been the subject of conversation among LLID members.

Mr. Kubeny, a representative of Minnesota's DNR, opened his remarks at the August annual meeting with an unprofessional, offensive and misogynist 'joke.' He told a room full of men and women a degrading and explicit story about a man's preference to go fishing over having sex with his (tied up) wife.

It was outrageous. And it was shocking that a state official would resort to such behavior, a clear violation of MN's policies of diversity, equity and inclusion.

We urge you to speak with Mr. Kubeny directly about this matter. In addition, we ask that you assure the LLID board and members that this kind of behavior will not happen again. Mr. Kubeny owes the group a written apology.

Sincerely,

Pamela Hovland + Steven Lawrence

24245 Isle View Trail, Pelican Rapids MN 56572

From: Kubeny, Steve J (DNR) <steve.kubeny@state.mn.us>

Date: Wed, Sep 13, 2023, 7:05 AM

Subject: RE: August 19th LLID Annual Meeting Concern

To: Pamela Hovland <prhovland@gmail.com>, Legato, Denise (DNR) <denise.legato@state.mn.us>, Wolters, Jim (DNR) <james.wolters@state.mn.us>

Cc: eyemaj@gmail.com <eyemaj@gmail.com>, Steve Lawrence <lawrence.sv@gmail.com>

Pamela – I would like to respond to your e-mail regarding my joke at the August 19th meeting for the LLID. First and foremost, I sincerely want to apologize to anyone in attendance who was offended by my joke, it was not intended to be malicious, degrading, or derogatory in any manner. It was meant to be an “ice-breaker” to relieve tensions among LLID members that were present about upcoming discussions regarding the state of the Lida Lakes fishery and DNR fisheries management. Again, I want to apologize for any misinterpretations and hopefully look forward to working with the LLID in the future to help manage and improve the fisheries resources of the Lida Lakes as I have diligently done in the past.

Steve Kubeny

Fisheries Specialist | Division of Fish and Wildlife

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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