

Minutes of the meeting of the Lake Iola Lake Commissioners held at 6:30 p.m. March 21, 2023, at the Iola Village Hall.

Present: Dave Harper, 270 Mill St.; John Bertelson Jr., 165 Pond Court; Ricky Ertl, N7056 State Road 49, Iola; John and Laurie Birno, 185 Sunset Drive; Sandy Bostwick, 150 Island Drive; Tracey Ambacher Jr., 350 E. State St.; Oscar Knoeck, E1802 Lakeshore Drive; Mark McCoy 160 W. State St., Jeff Louison, 315 Blaine St., and Judy Enz, 100 Wintergreen.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman John Bertelson. He read the public meeting statement. He introduced himself as chairman. Then he introduced the other commissioners. Oscar Knoeck, harvester manager. Judy Enz is treasurer. Dave Harper is secretary and Village of Iola representative. Ricky Ertl is the Waupaca County Board representative. Chairman Bertelson then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ricky Ertl/Oscar Knoeck moved and seconded, respectively, a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Passed.

Ricky Ertl/Judy Enz moved and seconded a motion, respectively, to adopt the minutes of the October 18, 2022, meeting as written. Passed.

Chairman Bertelson announced that this was the first quarterly meeting of 2023. The April meeting will be the budget meeting. The annual meeting will be held the first Saturday in June. Then there will be quarterly meetings in August and October. He then read the treasurer's report.

The general fund checking account starting balance was \$10,797.59. Deposits included \$19274.84 and \$11941.09 from Waupaca Co. for the tax levy. Bills paid include \$261.30 returned to DNR for the aquatic plant survey grant last year (less than half of the available points surveyed due to excessive surface weed growth). \$13,228.55 was paid to the Village of Iola as reimbursements for lake district wages and other weed harvesting costs incurred in 2022. (This contrasts with \$28,000 that the district used to pay to Cliff Schmidt for his 160 hours of weed cutting.) With our own cutter, the district cuts for 40 hours per week all summer, he said. The Village of Iola clerk does the clerical work for the district to save money and pays out the wages. Other checks paid included \$348 and \$346 to McClone (quarterly insurance bills), \$1125 Cason & Assoc. (aquatic plant survey report revisions requested by the DNR). The ending balance was \$26,704.67.

The brat fry checking account balance is \$859.32. \$1,400 of the \$2,000 sum authorized to pay for the expenses of the ice fishing contest in February was transferred in from the brat fry Wisconsin Local Government Investment Account. Money raised by Tracey Ambacher was \$1,499 from a 50/50 raffle. An ice shanty and ice auger were among the donated prizes. Cash donations at the event were \$250. Expenses were \$2504.09. The current balance in the brat fry checking account is \$1,504.23. Most of this the treasurer can transfer to the interest paying LGIP brat fry account. Tracey Ambacher said we gave away about \$4,000 in prizes this year, much donated, and we can only have two brat fries at Sentry this year.

The interest bearing LGIP general fund account started at \$39,692.74 and has a current balance of \$40,334.88. Five monthly interest payments totaled \$642.14, with rates from 2.91% to 4.54% (pretty darn good.) In the brat fry interest-paying account, the starting balance was \$1,639.60 and the current balance is \$251.31. Five monthly interest payments totaled \$11.71, and \$1400 was transferred to Bank First. In the interest-paying LGIP Harvester Capital Fund for the Lake Iola Lake District, the starting balance was \$27,157.83. Five monthly interest payments totaled \$439.35. Current balance is \$27,597.18.

Ricky Ertl/Dave Harper moved and seconded, respectively, a motion to accept the treasurer's report as read. Passed.

Chairman Bertelson then gave his report. He began by explaining where he was taking the district. Under a proposed and then withdrawn proposal before the DNR board in 2022 was an item that would combine cutting and chemical application fees into one per acre schedule. This would raise costs of the Lake Iola district to approximately \$5,680 for five years compared to \$300 paid for the current weed harvesting permit. This fee change proposal (and other APM regulation changes) was withdrawn from the August DNR board meeting after it recorded 99 objections, with 10 of those, recognized to speak at the meeting. Chairman Bertelson expects this DNR proposal to return, but the consideration process takes two or three years. For Iola, he wants to see more open lake area. Our consulting firm, Onterra supports this position. He is in discussions with the DNR. Our current cutting permit runs through the 2025 season (three more cutting years under its authority). The district has a plan to buy new cutting equipment in 2030. Brand new equipment is expensive, but the state currently has a WWC grant program that pays half the cost. It is expected that this program will continue and be in effect in 2030. The cutting equipment the district currently has was purchased used from Clifford Schmidt. It is well maintained and is expected to last until 2030. The district paid \$32,000 for the equipment. The Village of Iola is title holder for insurance purposes, but the lake district has a long-term lease for \$1 for its use through 2030.

For cutting season 2023, the district needs operators, Chairman Bertelson said. This topic will be on the April agenda. This person must be at least 18 years old. Pay will be \$15-\$20 an hour depending on experience and/or training required. Oscar Knoeck and Eddie Bonikowske will make the determination. Sandy Bostwick suggested talking to the high school counselor and putting a listing on Headspring. Chairman Bertelson said as part of the permit review by DNR Ted and his boss, Andrew, will come to Lake Iola in July to consider seven areas for additional cutting.

Chairman Bertelson said he will speak at an Aquarius safety seminar in May on the topic of who owns millponds. He will focus on explaining Appendix I in our current LMP, which summarizes how the DNR unexpectedly took away our permitted weed harvesting area during the last lake management planning process, but was reluctantly agreed to by Bertelson in order to get our own harvester program going.

Mark McCoy asked whether there is a red line where we change plans if we cannot get the cutting area increased. Chairman Bertelson said the current permit gets us to the start of

the cutting season in 2026. That is decision making date. The next date for possible change would be in 2030 when a decision is required to purchase new equipment.

Oscar Knoeck said three other lake districts have come to Iola to see how things are done.

Chairman Bertelson walked through some lake history. He had special newspaper sections that were printed in the past to promote the lake and lake property. He said the lake was dredged in 1965. He had a 1968 Iola Herald supplement printed for the Milwaukee Sports Show to sell lots.

Mark McCoy asked about homeowners getting their own chemical treatment permits. Chairman Bertelson said he works with homeowners as a group because otherwise the DNR would have to process many more permits. John Birno suggested muck pellets for individual homeowners because they contain enzymes rather than herbicides.

There will be no district chemical spraying this year due to the planned DNR visit in July, Chairman Bertelson said. Oscar Knoeck said we haven't gotten up to the LMP max allowed four acres for application in quite a while, so one year off would be a good test on the effectiveness of repeated chemical treatment in a common use area.

Chairman Bertelson said Tracey Ambacher would oil goose eggs this year. John Birno said he would help. Tracey said he may get some other volunteers. John Bertelson said he would apply for the permit.

Tracey Ambacher said there were 110 kids at the ice fishing contest in February and \$4,000 in prizes. A summer trip for a family of four to the bay of Green Bay was given away as was a Matthew's bow. He said he received 40 percent discounts on fishing equipment that was purchased. Niemuth's did not provide hot dogs, so Nueske's will donate them next year. Wrapping a shelter with plastic with a heater inside worked well with Jerry Knutson's drop-down ice shelter. Caught were 16 northerns, 28.25 inches the biggest; three bass, 17.5 inches the biggest; six perch, 8.5 inches the biggest; 18 croppie, 10.25 inches the biggest, and 33 bluegill, 8-5/16ths the biggest. The 50/50 raffle was \$1 per ticket and a \$250 top prize. This was covered by the Lions Club raffle license. An ice shanty and two ice augurs were also raffled off. The permit from the DNR is free if the event is for kids. He sent in the application and will file a final report. Monogram Foods donated 90 pounds of cheese curds. A lot of other free food was given.

Chairman Bertelson talked about what looks like a dead-end Iola township road. Oscar said it is not a road. It is private property. On behalf of the district he asks permission to park the harvester there. It is kept there to help ensure security of the equipment. It is not a public boat landing.

Tracey Ambacher is looking into stocking fish this year. He said he was exploring \$3,000 in minnows and crappies. The DNR fish biologist must sign off on this before it can be done. Tracey is talking to two or three hatcheries to find the best one at the lowest cost.

John Birno said he had not heard anything about the information kiosk project. It has been

hoped that it will be a high school shop project.

Sandy Bostwick asked those present to consider volunteering to help staff the Iola Lions Club beer stand at the Thorson Food Stand (Car Show). She needs to turn in names in May. Chairman Bertelson said he would put a request for volunteers on the June annual meeting agenda.

Chairman Bertelson said he would get together with Judy Enz and Oscar Knoeck to run through the budget figures in preparation for the April budget meeting. Ricky Ertl/Oscar Knoeck moved and seconded, respectively, a motion to adjourn. Motion passed. Chairman Bertelson adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.