

Austin Lake Riparian Board of Directors
2013 Annual Meeting-May 22, 2013
Austin Lake Meeting Room, Portage Public Library

Present: Kirk Wolf, Gary Hahn, Jim Pearson, Pat Guilford, Larry Pio, Brian Johnson, Win Larsen, Dan Peacock

Absent: Brett Grossman (Alternate), Steve Higgins

Also present: Norm Young (Website/Newsletter Editor), Dani Kinder (Social Committee Chair)

1. Open

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Board President Kirk Wolf.

2. Pledge of allegiance

3. Introduction of Board Members, Other Positions and Guests

Kirk Wolf introduced all members of the Austin Lake Riparian Board of Directors (ALRB) as well as Norm Young, the Website/Newsletter editor and Dani Kinder, the Social Committee Chairperson. Our guest speakers for the meeting were introduced: Marty Sepanik of the Portage Environmental Board, Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones of Restorative Lake Sciences, LLC, John Tucci of Lake Savers and Tom Kannally of the Marine Patrol Division of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department.

4. President's Report

Kirk Wolf reported on important events on the lake and changes the Board has made over the past year. President Wolf's major concern is lake safety. He encouraged all owners to be vigilant in our efforts to improve safety on the lake by approaching unsafe boaters directly, if feasible, and to call Marine Patrol when appropriate.

Kirk also outlined the new pontoon trailer purchase and rental share arrangement which the ALR Board hopes will provide funds for our treasury. The new trailer should pay for itself within 2 years and then provide ALR with an income for many years to follow.

5. Treasurer's Report

ALRB Treasurer, Larry Pio, reported the following:

- a. General Fund: The Treasurer's report indicates there is a total of \$1,804.11 in the general fund. The largest expense has been the new trailer at a cost of \$2014.00
- b. Lake Improvement Fund: The Treasurer's report shows \$113.70 in the lake improvement fund.
- c. Social Fund: The social fund shows a balance of \$500.00.

d. The total bank balance is \$2417. 81.

Treasurer Pio also encouraged lake residents to buy the Austin Lake Burgees to help our lake association finances.

6. Secretary Pat Guilford outlined the concept of dividing the lake into 20 neighborhoods each with a contact person who will be responsible for collecting and maintaining email addresses. Having the ability to contact most lake residents by email will make communication more efficient and less costly.

7. Norm Young reported that we sent out 435 newsletters at our latest mailing. He also outlined how lake residents could use our website to advertise items and events free of charge. Businesses could also advertise for a nominal charge.

8. A question was posed by a lake owner regarding the issue of trespass on bottomlands in response to an article by Attorney Clifford Bloom which is posted on the ALR website. The resident wanted to know how to put in a dock so you don't trespass on the bottomlands of another riparian. Brian Johnson said it is very complicated and there is no clear answer. Jim Pearson responded that he had asked the Portage City Attorney who said that it depends upon many factors in state and local law including the plat in which your property is located. Gary Hahn said it is extremely expensive to determine and is very subjective. Kirk Wolf supported the notion that it would require the opinion of an attorney. Brian Johnson summarized the comments by noting that this is not a ALRB issue but a personal property issue.

9. Social Committee Chair Dani Kinder announced the following social events that have been scheduled for this summer:

a. June 9, 2013: Boat Brunch. Meet in front of the public assess at 11 a.m. with a dish to pass.

b. July 20, 2013: Boat Parade. Meet in front of 10073 Woodlawn at 4 p.m. for judging. Dinner and entertainment will be provided after the parade at 10077 Woodlawn. Last year's raffle raised \$1800 for Pretty Lake Camp.

c. August 24, 2013: Progressive Dinner Party. We are looking for volunteers to host the 4 stops.

10. Guest speaker: Marty Sepanik described the impact of purple loosestrife in our environment. It chokes out the wetlands where fish and waterfowl feed disturbing the entire ecosystem. The Portage Environmental Board has been involved in a project to eradicate this plant for 6 years. Last year they ordered live beetles from Montana and released them directly to plants in Portage. These beetles eat only loosestrife. Marty asked if ALR would combine efforts and consider releasing beetles this year at Lakeview Park. Gary Hahn reported that ALR ordered one box of beetles at a cost of approximately \$80 and released them directly on the purple loosestrife plants that grow in the southwest cove. He checked the plants 4 times last summer and saw no evidence of damage to the plants by the beetles. Also saw no positive evidence previously with the Nature Center project transplanting live

plants with beetles on them. That project of 10 plants cost \$450. Larry Pio mentioned beetle release is documented as an effective measure for loosestrife control. He motioned that ALR order 1 pot of beetles to be added to Marty's order. Motion seconded by Gary Hahn. All voted in favor.

11. Kirk Wolf presented an update on the lake rates from Pfizer. The rate averages between 200 and 800 gallons a day. In April it was 500 gallons a day.

12. Guest speaker: Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones of Restorative Lake Sciences LLC reported on the 2012 laminar flow aeration results. She said that the mean losses of sediment were 0.9 ft. near the diffusers and 0.5 ft. at control sites. The amount of milfoil present declined from 86% to 23% of the sampling sites after 4 months of operation. Sag pondweed also declined. Measurements will be taken again this year and posted on the website.

13. Guest speaker: John Tucci of Lake Savers presented an overview of the 2012 aeration project. He began with a slide indicating where the diffusers had been placed and the rationale for moving the diffusers closer to shore and reducing some in the middle. He will be teeing off existing diffusers to add more diffusers in the lily pad area. Lake Savers clean and maintain diffuser about once a month. The bacteria and enzyme dosing for this year will go in mid to late June so that the water will be very warm. A temperature of 70 degrees or higher is best in order to achieve maximum benefit from these additions. John Tucci estimated that the amount of sediment that was lost this year, approximately 130,000 cubic ft., would have cost over \$3 million to dredge. In response to a resident's comment that weeds were not plentiful outside of the bay where there was no treatment in 2012, John stated that the south bay acts like a huge compost pile sending nutrients to other parts of the lake. If we reduce the amount of nutrients produced and see less weeds everywhere for several years, the south bay aeration may be helping to control weeds outside the bay as well.

14. Questions posed by lake owners: (1) Is there a law of diminishing returns as this project goes on? Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones said Austin Lake's south bay sediments are homogenous so that the results should be fairly consistent each year although it will take another year's readings to make any projections. (2) If successful, will the project extend to the north basin? Jennifer said that would be an Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board (ALGLB) decision and we don't know if the sediments are the same in the north bay. Many core samples would have to be drawn. Brian Johnson, lake owner representative on the ALGLB, suggested that if this project is successful they will want to do more to improve the quality of Austin Lake. Ed Sackley, Chair of the ALGLB, said that extending the project outside the south bay would require a separate decision-making process. The current feasibility and practicability study is only for the south bay. However, all the elements needed to do other projects are in place since the ALGLB is already

established. Such projects can only start by a resolution from the Portage City Council (as it did in the current case) or by a petition from riparian landowners. Mr. Sackley said he would prefer that the north bay project be initiated by a petition of the landowners who will be paying for it. (3) Will there be an assessment refund for those who have paid it off in full if the project is terminated after 30 months? Since total costs of the project will not be known until it is terminated or completed, the amount of refund cannot be determined ahead of time. Send a letter to the City of Portage requesting a refund if the project is terminated and you have paid in full.

15. Guest speaker: Officer Tom Kannally of the Marine Patrol Division of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department recalled many amusing and alarming incidents that he saws observed on Austin Lake in his years on the Marine Patrol. He also emphasized the importance of lake safety. Officer Kannally brought attention to several points of law. One new law is that all persons born after July 1, 1996 must have a boating safety certificate on their person to operate a boat with a motor of 6 hp or greater. Personal watercraft (PWC) laws are all misdemeanors meaning one must appear in court if cited. Children under 6 years of age must wear a Type I or Type II life vest while on the open deck of a boat. Always maintain the 100 ft. rule—stay 100 ft. away from other boats, rafts, docks, skiers, tubers and swimmers. The surface of the water is state property so people can come right up to your shore. However, if they cause any damage, you can make a claim against them by noting their boat license number.

16. The final business of the annual meeting was the election of officers for the open ALR board positions. Members elected are Jim Pearson, Gary Hahn, Win Larsen, and Scott Gignac. Congratulations to all.

17. Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia M. Guilford, Secretary