

Silver Lake Association
Minutes of Meeting Held
August 31, 2013

A meeting of the Silver Lake Association was held at the Bank of Turtle Lake – Island City Branch in Cumberland, Wisconsin. The meeting was called to order by Bob Wenzel, President at 9:00 AM. There were 32 people in attendance.

The minutes of the May 25, 2013 meeting were read by Rob Fillmore, for Gary French, Secretary, and approved by the membership.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Steve Knudson, Treasurer. The beginning General Fund cash balance (5/24/13) was \$3,701.29. Balance at the time of the meeting was \$3,711.62. There was no activity with the Water Quality Fund where the balance is \$717.90. A complete copy of the Treasurer's Report is attached to these Minutes.

Payouts were reviewed and discussed. Bob Wenzel reported that there is about \$2,751 grant balance left and indicated that about 75% will be used to pay for the 2013 boat monitoring program. \$2,500 had been budgeted for the program. Actual expenses may slightly exceed that amount when all accounting is complete. We also had picnic costs of \$220.

There was discussion around the issue of membership. So far this year, we have 57 members who have paid \$2,560.00 in dues. We are grateful to have received several donations over the current \$30 per year. Last year there were 71 members. Dues for this year are still being accepted and a list will be circulated to remind those who may have inadvertently forgotten to pay. Next year there will be three membership levels: Goose (\$30), Loon (\$50), and Eagle (\$100+).

A question was raised as to when, or if, we discontinue communication with individuals whose memberships have lapsed several years. Bob Wenzel indicated that at this point we continue to reach out to these individuals and keep them on the list for communication. There was general agreement that this practice is warranted in the interest of raising Association participation.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made seconded and approved.

Bob Wenzel reported that the Walleyes for Tomorrow hatchery released 600,000 to 800,000 fry into Silver Lake this year. The requirement to mark the fry has been eliminated which will increase the survival rate of the released fry. Overall this was felt to be a good result. WFT are on track to continue this activity in 2014. There are also plans to add to the Fish Sticks installations at the Zahrbock, Lepak and Wenzel properties this winter.

Bob also reported on the topic of walleye fishing regulations. The current regulation for Silver Lake walleye is a 15 inch minimum length limit and the daily bag limit is five. However, the walleye daily bag limit is typically reduced to two to three each year based on tribal declarations and spearing.

Beginning in April 2014 the Silver Lake walleye regulation will become a 28 inch minimum length limit and a one fish daily bag limit. This new regulation will be in effect for two years, until the 2016 fishing opener. At that time, it will sunset and switch back to the current base regulation described above. It is too late to stop the 2014 regulation change.

The purpose for the regulation change is to build back the breeding stock of Silver Lake walleyes which was severely depleted by a 2008-2009 winter harvest of large numbers of the 20 to 30" brood stock fish. A local group of concerned anglers introduced the regulation change described above and it was passed at the 2009 conservation congress hearings. In 2010, the proposed change was again supported as a statewide advisory question. In addition, the regulation change was voted on and approved during the 2013 spring hearings. Aaron Cole, DNR fish biologist held an informational meeting 7/22/13 regarding the new regulation.

Aaron Cole, DNR fish biologist for Barron and Polk counties gave a presentation to the Association on the study behind the change in regulations. Highlights include creel survey results that show the harvest rate in Silver Lake is 39%, meaning that nearly 40% of legal fish are harvested each year. Aaron reported that it takes 2.2 years for a female walleye to grow large enough to fall outside the slot. The combination of the harvest level and the growth rate leads to a situation where most females do not live to be protected by a proposed 15-20" slot. The recommended time for evaluation of a new fishing regulation is one fish "life cycle": 10 to 15 years. The next opportunity to impact future regulations will be in 2015. Aaron's full report can be accessed through our website.

Bob Wenzel indicated a willingness to represent the will of the Association to the DNR. A motion to have the board send out a survey of member views on the topic was made, seconded and approved. A thirty day window was allowed for response. The result of this survey will be used to indicate the will of the Association.

An update on the Lake Directory was given. This will be available to paid members only. Availability is expected within 30 to 45 days.

Bob Wellhoefer gave a presentation on water quality measurements. Secchi disk measurement was 10 feet in May, reduced perhaps due to high runoff with the spring rains. The August measurement was the highest ever recorded: 20 feet. Maximum lake depth is 85 feet. This used to be 91 feet and in 2003 was 100 feet. The bottom of the lake has no dissolved oxygen this time of year due to decay of algae and plant matter. 10 ppm dissolved oxygen is recorded at the top of the lake, which is healthy. Water temperature is presently 77F, and might typically be 79 to 80F. Bob is looking for a replacement for the existing dissolved oxygen instrument whose sensor needs annual replacement at a cost of \$150. Bob has been funding this over the years himself as a contribution to the Silver Lake Association and plans to fund a new instrument the same way.

A question about the snails in the lake was made. According to many, they've been here for years. They are "Mystery Snails, and while not a threat, they are a non-native species escaped from tropical aquariums.

Bob Wenzel reported on water level. Rainfall is the dominant factor. Over the past 10 years we are short 40+ inches which would account for about seven feet of water depth. Roz Rockman reports it has been this low based on a picture of a post near her property. In 1937 it was reported to be this low and lower. We will hope for rain.

An acknowledgement was made that the Silver Lake Association is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Thanks to Bob Wellhoefer and Ozzie Ostrem who did much of the grassroots work to start the Association. Thanks also to the current members for our sustained success.

The Aquatic Invasive Species Grant has about \$2,700 left to tap into, but most will be used by this year's boat inspection according to Bob Wenzel. Bob has enquired about renewing and extending the grant for future years. We will try and write our own grant with the board using the existing grant as a template.

It is reported that we have curly leaf pondweed, a non-native invasive species. A report on the website shows the locations. Bob Wenzel called for a plan to go in and pull the weed in early spring, which is required since the plant dies in mid-July. It spreads by seeds, so we need to pull it early before it seeds to achieve effective control. Alex Smith of the DNR will show us what weeds need to be pulled. This will probably require an annual effort. Jim O'Brian, Roz Rockman and Rob Fillmore will join Julie Fetch who will chair the project.

Sam Jacobson, Boat Monitor, reported on the program. He manned the landing when it was busy making most effective use of our budget. Milfoil was found in two instances and was prevented from entering the lake. Sam he had to manually remove the plant, due to uncooperative boaters. There was discussion as to how we might better equip our monitors to deal with difficult people. Bob Wenzel will look into this. Sam recommended we have a boat cleaning station, but this is difficult to implement due to regulations and also expensive. Other rules were also enforced pertaining to dog waste on the beach, etc. David Moin, Barron County Sheriff provides good coverage for backup, but was not needed. The membership extended thanks to Sam for his good work.

Bob Wenzel reported that the boat monitoring program went over budget by \$200 to \$300. A motion was made seconded and approved to authorize Bob to work with Beaver Creek once again and expend up to \$500.

Bob reported that there have been two shoreline law enforcement actions on the lake this summer. One pertained to excessive clearing of the beach area, and one from the use of a riding lawnmower and

spraying herbicide on the shoreline. Tyler Gruetzmacher provided a summary of shoreline rules which is posted on the website.

Rob Fillmore reported on shoreline restoration work with the DNR. Jergy's Earthworks visited the site in spring and submitted a plan to the DNR, which was rejected. In August, a meeting with Alex Smith and Patrick Goggin of the DNR occurred on site to try and understand the requirements. A DNR trained engineering firm must survey the site and design the plan. The trouble is that there are none in our area. The next step is for Mr. Goggin to refer a qualified firm, so a survey can be conducted and design devised. Roz Rockman indicated she has had success with Dennis Hamman Landscape. Bob Wenzel noted that there is \$1,500 to \$2,000 of labor value available from the Fish Sticks projects that can be used to provide some of the needed funds.

Two vacancies on the board occurred with Gary French and Bruce Tremble stepping down. Thanks to Gary and Bruce for their service. A motion was made, seconded and approved to appoint Kari Chase to the board. A motion was made seconded and approved to appoint Brian Chase to the board.

There was discussion about a dock at the landing. Presently, there is no dock at the landing as there was in the past. There was a problem with people leaving their boats at the dock and blocking the access. Discussion was made to ask to see if the apron can be extended and the drop off fixed. Bob Wenzel will enquire with Barron County.

An update on road paving was provided. The best information is that the fill will be installed by fall, allowed to settle over the winter, with paving next spring. We do not have an update on paving of 11th ¼ at this time.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded and approved at 10:57 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fillmore
Secretary, Silver Lake Association