



White Bear Lake Conservation District

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2024, 7:00 p.m., White Bear Lake City Hall Council Chambers
(6:00 pm LUC meeting)

1. **Roll Call/Quorum** – Present: Chair Bryan DeSmet, Vice Chair Meredith Walburg, Secretary-Treasurer Mike Parenteau, Mark Ganz, Chris Churchill, Diane Longville, Susie Mahoney, Darren DeYoung, Mark Wisniewski, and Alan Kantrud. Absent: Scott Costello. A quorum was present.
2. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Bryan DeSmet at 7:05 pm
3. **Approval of Agenda** – The following changes were made to the agenda: move 'Public Hearing' to 'Unfinished Business'; add 'City dog park fence' under 'New Business'; remove '2024 Ramsey County supplemental enforcement contract' from 'Unfinished Business'; and Meredith Walburg will give the Lake Education Committee (LEC) report. A motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Mark Ganz seconded and passed.
4. **Approval of Previous Board Meeting minutes** – A motion to approve the March 19, 2024 minutes was made by Mark Wisniewski, seconded and passed.
5. **Public Comments** - none
6. **New Business**
 - Survey-Commercial Bay docks – Bryan DeSmet made a motion to hire EG Rud and Sons for a one-time survey of marina dock lengths and position in Commercial Bay, and if the marina is out of compliance with its permit, the cost of a second survey would be passed on to them. After discussion and questions on other duties the surveyors could perform, DeSmet withdrew the motion and said a scope of work would be developed for the Board to review.
 - City dog park fence – A fence on the north side of the Matoska Dog Park was extended into the OHWL by the City, which is against DNR regulations. Cheri Howe will meet with the City for more information on this. Legal Counsel Allan Kantrud reported that a constituent also brought this to his attention.
7. **Unfinished Business**
 - VFW-EAW update – Bryan DeSmet reported that he contacted Dan Scollan and Melissa Collins, DNR, regarding the calculation for greenhouse gases on the EAW and has not heard back. DeSmet will continue to reach out for guidance, and update the Board.
 - Low water level study group – Chris Churchill reported that the Lake Utilization Committee (LUC) discussed how he and Mike Parenteau tried to correlate measurements of dock length and depth of water to come up with a logical way to implement changes in dock length and configurations due to low water levels. In Commercial Bay, the measurements correlated well to the variances in dock lengths that were submitted by Docks of White Bear Lake (WBL), and Tally's Dockside. The LUC will want to look at any requests for variances individually before the Board votes them on.

Churchill also stated that in August 2023 mooring problems started at the 922.5 ft water level. He suggested that the DNR designated 922 ft water level hampers the Board's

ability to address low water level problems when they start at a higher water level. He suggested that here should be a low and high water level mark created to make decisions.

For multi-user and residential docks, a good formula could not be devised due to the variation of docks and watercraft, but the study group would like to use the same idea to come up with a water depth in which lifts can be placed and watercraft safely moored. Dock modification requests would be looked at on a case-by-case basis. We also want to make sure that dock owners are talking with the neighbors about any changes so they are on the same page.

- Lake use study – Meredith Walburg reported that the study group is revising homeowner and lake user surveys from past studies to use in this summer's study. The Board will receive a draft for review and input before or at the May Board meeting.

8. **Public Hearings** - Bryan Desmet introduced one of two public hearings to gather input from the public. The first hearing was for Docks of WBL's variance request to lengthen three of their docks to 350 ft from the Ordinary High Water level (OHW), and three docks that would be 326-340 ft long. The variance was submitted due to a hardship caused by the low water depth preventing clients from mooring their boats.

- Docks of White Bear Lake – The public hearing was opened and Mike McGoldrick, owner, stated that he worked with Chris Churchill over the winter to reconfigure their docks in anticipation of low water levels. The docks will be angled to allow for better navigation, and may not be as long as 350 ft due to this. Churchill backed up the configuration changes with the data he gathered. With no other public comments, the hearing was closed.

Meredith Walburg expressed concern that they diagram looked like an expansion of slips, but was assured that all the slips on the diagram are numbered and do not go past their permit. Walburg also asked how they would discourage boaters from mooring in the area close to shore. McGoldrick said they are ordering numbers for all the slips, and they will remove cleats so boats cannot moor in that area. Bryan DeSmet stated that the water level is not yet 922 ft in April when marinas can go to a different configuration, and felt that variances should not be acted on preemptively in anticipation of reaching that elevation.

McGoldrick stated that their current DNR permit allows for Docks of WBL to have 350 ft docks even above the 922 ft mark, and that it is the WBLCD that has imposed the 300 ft restriction, so they are within their DNR rights. DeSmet said that their permit is up for renewal but have not received an update from the DNR. When asked if Docks of WBL could stop leasing the slips closer to shore instead of extending out, McGoldrick stated that would cause them a financial hardship. Mike Parenteau brought up that boats will be moored at the end of the docks so the actual length of the dock plus the width of the boat will make it more than 350 ft. McGoldrick stated that it would only happen with two of the docks and that was the only way to get all the boats in. McGoldrick also brought up that they are having a hard time finding the exact ADUA line that was approved with the City of White Bear Lake-Lion's Park, as they said a marker would go in the lake, and would appreciate any help. A motion to approve the variance for Docks of WBL for the boating season of 2024 was made by Chris Churchill, seconded and passed with DeSmet opposing.

- Tally' Dockside – The second public hearing was introduced and opened for Tally's variance request to add a 30 ft plank to extend their dock configuration to 330 ft. Chris

Churchill stated that the dock diagram would stay the same with just the addition of a 30 ft plank to make space for the mooring of boats in low water. There were no public comments, and the hearing was closed.

DeSmet stated that he had the same concerns as what he stated for the Docks of WBL variance request. Meredith Walburg stated that the current approved permit for Tally's is for 58 slips, and six (6) on skids, but the diagram shows three more than approved.

Churchill explained that they used an old diagram with additional slips, instead of the one that was amended and approved. A motion to approve Tally's variance of adding 30 ft to the dock, contingent on following their original permit of 58 slips and six (6) skids, for the 2024 boating season was made by Chris Churchill, seconded and passed with DeSmet opposing. Mark Ganz noted that Tally's should clearly number their slips from 1 to 64 to make it clear, and Churchill said he would get back to them about it.

9. Reports/Action Items

- **Executive Committee** – Bryan DeSmet reported that the committee met April 4 and discussed workers compensation coverage, the Manitou Days summer cleanup event, low water level potential for 2024, Commercial Bay permits and communicating with the DNR on dock configuration and slip counts, physical permit status for marinas, confirmation of dock lengths, the low water level press release, the lake use study, and ordinance review work. The committee also discussed the possibility of testing for the quantity and types of algae in the lake so that there is a baseline for the future that can be monitored, and the St. Germaine sign. Dellwood has agreed to a location for the sign, and the cost was approved at a previous Board meeting.

The last item was in regard to businesses operating on White Bear Lake. The City of White Bear Lake and Ramsey County do not license commercial businesses to operate out of their public park space, therefore the WBLCD will not approve permits for commercial watercraft rental businesses. Any complaints about these types of operations will be investigated.

- **Lake Quality Committee**
 - Lake level – The lake level tonight is 922.20 ft.
 - Lake temperature – The water temperature today is 48 °F and last year it was 42 °F with ice still ice on the lake.
 - EWM delineation and assessment quote – A motion to approve survey services from Blue Water Science to delineate and assess Eurasian watermilfoil at a cost of \$3,850, with \$3,750 coming from account 6036, and \$100 coming from general fund, was made by Mike Parenteau, seconded and passed.
- **Lake Utilization Committee** – Mark Ganz reported that the LUC reviewed the following 2024 permit applications, and made recommendations to the Board:
 - Chateauguet Condominium Association – A motion to approve the renewal of the multi-user dock permit with no changes from last year was made by Mark Ganz, seconded and passed. The association's permit is for the mooring of 11 watercraft.
 - East Shore Dock Assn – Mark Ganz, a member of ESDA, stated the variance request was amended from a 20 ft extension to a 12 ft extension of the dock due to the hardship of low water, non-navigable water at the shore. Emails were received from two adjacent property owners to ESDA expressing concern over the increase in dock lengths. Ganz explained that the ESDA president was able

to reach them before the Board meeting to explain the situation, and they were okay with the request.

Mark Wisniewski asked why ESDA was requesting a variance when the dock extension length is still within their ADUA. Ganz explained that as a multi-user dock permit holder, ESDA needed to formally request a change to its permit and the variance form was the most appropriate tool to use in this context, which was

confirmed by Alan Kantrud. Wisniewski expressed concern that there is no data to back up the hardship, which is lacking in the application. A motion to approve the 12 ft dock extension was made by Chris Churchill, seconded and passed, with Mark Ganz abstaining.

- **Lake Education Committee**

- Educational outreach update

- Summer lake cleanup event-Manitou Days (June 15, 2024) – Meredith Walburg reported that the WBLCD summer lake cleanup has been approved to be a Manitou Days event on Sat. June 15, 8-12 pm, so mark your calendars.

- Laker articles – Walburg reported that the LEC is working on the first issue of *The Laker*. As part of the May issue, the Press asked us to do profiles of Board Directors who will be contacted soon by the office to answer a few questions.

- Social media update – Some postings this month will include Earth Day, how citizens can help with lake quality, the Adopt-a-Drain program, and the buoy map. Mike Parenteau added that the buoys are in place on the lake.

10. Treasurer Reports

- 2024 April Treasurer's Report – A motion to approve debit card payments 2024-7 through 2024-9, cancelled check 3171, checks 4939-4943 was made by Mike Parenteau, seconded and passed.
- 2025 Budget process – Parenteau reported that he is working on the 2025 budget. If Board members have any projects in mind let him know, and he will also get input from Committee chairs. A draft budget will be reviewed at the May Board meeting for review and approval at the June Board meeting. Mike Wisniewski suggested having funds in reserve for enforcement actions if needed. Meredith Walburg stated that the Board is overdue to update the Lake Management Plan and should be in the budget soon.


11. **Board Council Report** - Alan Kantrud reported that it is early in the boating season and the DNR conservation officer has nothing to report. The Ramsey County supplemental law enforcement contract will be ready for review in May.


12. Announcements

- Board directors will receive digital copies of the contact list and annual Board activity calendar.
- The next Board meeting will be held on May 21.

13. **Adjournment** – A motion to adjourn at 8:37 pm was made by Mark Ganz, seconded and passed.

Attest

Bryan DeSmet, Chair  Date 5-21-2024

Cheri Howe, Administrator  Date 5/21/2024