

LAKE ORONO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

March 29, 2001

Elk River Country Club

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 P.M. by President Jim Raivala. New members were introduced. Mayor Stephanie Klinzing was introduced. She addressed the group about the proposed YMCA indicating two possible sites; one in the new commercial site East of 169 off Highway 10, the other by the water tower and Orono Park. She also reported that the city is interested in more liquor licenses due to interest in a hotel/restaurant east of town. The Mayor also reported that Allina is breaking ground west of town for their new clinic and addressed the growth of high-density housing.

Betty Zehringer read the minutes to the last annual meeting. They were approved as read.

Vance Zehringer read the treasurers report for Rickie Buttweiller. It was approved as read.

Committee Reports:

Cindy Edward Plant announced the Lake Orono web site has been moved to an AOL account. New website information will be available in the newsletter.

Vance Zehringer gave the pollution committee report including:

Secchi Disk Readings to determine water clarity—24-30 inches prior 2000, 18-24 inches 2000
Water Sampling Cty Rd 15---total Phosphorus high, dissolved Oxygen good, total suspended solids low
Bacteria Count, city beach---usually below 1000 = ok, but when geese are present above 3000 not good
Invertebrate Sampling by ER Watershed Assn---sampling area streams indicates water quality is good

Sara Hartman gave the Safety committee report. Personal watercraft seem to be a continuing problem. Buoys are being placed in the lake to call for no wake zones. She also announced that ART SOUP is once again coming to Elk River, the dates are June 22, 23, 24. There will be a historical play during the festival.

Steve Rolph reported that hydropower is being considered at the dam. The concerns expressed by the group was that the lake level not be compromised for the production of electrical power. There was also discussion about the possibilities of lowering the lake periodically for clean up. Steve thought that permits may pose a problem but the Water Quality Task Force will study it.

Dave Halgren reported for the Membership Committee. Maps were passed out requesting updated information about new ownership on the lake.

Patrick Plant reported on the Water Quality Task Force. He provided the group with the mission statement and a broad overview of the work being done. Members of the taskforce include Patrick Plant, Jim Snetsinger, Vance Zehringer, Ed Buttweiler, John Weicht, Jim Tachney, Cindy Edwards-Plant, Steve Rolph, and Mark Basseletti. The main thrust of the task force is to protect and improve water quality in Lake Orono by:

1. decreasing the goose population
2. encourage the use of buffer strips
3. collaborate on projects with the City of Elk River
4. decrease phosphorous in the lake
5. decrease leaves and other debris in the lake
6. inventory materials coming into the lake
7. decrease coliform bacteria in lake
8. work with MPCA
9. use Best Management practices
10. protect water depth
11. eliminate erosion sources

Patrick talked about interim costs and funding. He suggested using a college intern to do a formal study of what is coming into the lake.

Steve Rolph addressed the goose control project. 118 geese were trapped and removed from the lake last year. The DNR will not issue permit to destroy goose eggs. Much discussion about health issues, trapping versus hunting, the problem of goose waste adding to algae bloom.

The issue of fertilizer was discussed, the soil in this area has a high level of phosphorus and the city has issued an ordinance to outlaw application of phosphorous on lawns. Steve admits it is a difficult ordinance to enforce so we should concentrate on education.

Patrick Plant talked about the importance of buffer strips and the goal of restoring buffer strips to help filter the phosphorous, promote habitat for wildlife, reduce pollutants going into the lake, and improve water quality. The Donnelly shoreline will be used as a buffer zone demonstration project. Patrick will ask the Lions to provide some funding for water quality testing, signage, and education.

Vance Zehringer reported on work the Elk River Water Shed Assn. is doing. Their goal is to improve water quality and manage water quantity by encouraging livestock fencing, plantings, and erosion control through cost-shared funding. The group represents Benton and Sherburne Counties and Vance sits on that Board.

Vance Zehringer reported for John Weicht and on work the Sherburne County Water Planning Task Force is doing. Their work focuses on identifying and correcting problems that effect surface and groundwater quality and quantity and related land uses that effect those water resources. John is a member of that Task Force.

Jim Snetsinger reported on carp removal in the lake. He has contacted commercial fisherman to get an estimate on associated costs.

There was no old business.

New business: The issue of townhouse associations and whether they hold full or associate membership was referred to Membership Committee.

The 2001 calendar was established:
Lake Day is June 23 – handout
MLA Conference, May 3-5 at Craguns Resort
Smelt fry will be May 16
Progressive dinner will be July 26
Luau on the Lake, September 22
Annual meeting, March 21, 2002

MLA conference---it was voted and approved that one representative will be reimbursed to a limit of \$350 for their expenses to attend the event. Ed Buttweiler volunteered to attend.

Discussion on 501c3 status. 501c3 and 501c4 are tax exempt designations for non-profit organizations. The Water Quality Task Force has been looking into the possibility for the Lake Orono Imporvment Assn so it can receive donations from other tax-exempt organizations such as the ER Lions. Costs are \$70 to update and file undated Articles Of Incorporation, a one time filing fee of \$150, and a \$25 fee to register as a State nonprofit corporation. The group agreed we should pursue this status and voted to approve use of Association funds for costs as stated.

Tom Hartman reported on the Fox Haven development. The development will consist of 19 lots, with 5 on Lake Orono and 6 slips for access for those not on the lake.

Budget Items

Patrick Plant requested \$1500 for "Developing a Lake Management Plan" and \$700-1000 for buffer demonstration project. A motion was made to approve funding for same by Jim Raviala, seconded by Joe Berglove and approved majority vote of the Association members.

Lake home owner Larry Hickman volunteered to give \$500 to help defray expenses for the water quality projects.

Elections: Since term of president was the only non 2 year office, the group agree to extend it to two years. Vance Zehringer moves from Vice President to President of the Association, and Patrick Plant, was elected vice-president. Rickie Buttweiler agreed to serve another 2 years as Treasurer.

District 1 representative: Tom Harbrave, Linda Turner Alternate

5 representative: Elaine Hageman, Aldon Hageman Alternate, Stanley Denne, Alternate

Vance Zehringer discussed stocking Lake Orono. He indicated that the DNR will stock 1000 5 to 6 inch pre spawn Crappies by May 15 at no cost to the Association, and that a private fish operator will stock 1000 4 to 6 inch pre spawn Bluegills before June 1 for a fee of \$900. Bluegills were not available from the DNR because of a high winter kill. A motion was made and approved to appropriate Association funding for this project. Mayor Klinzing indicated the City should help fund this project and asked Steve Rolfe to look into it.

Vance Zehringer announced that there were brochures available concerning a phosphorous-free fertilizer for anyone interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30

Betty Zehringer, Recorder

