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2021 Fall Member Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

**Board Members Present**: President-Ron Guggisberg; Communications Secretary-Leigh Stepan; Director-Kevin Rustad; Director-Mike Oja; Director-Andy Petruzzi (online); AIS Subcommittee Leader-Rick Nosan.

**Member/Non-Member attendance: 17** members in person, **6** non-members in person, 3 non-members online

**Board Members Not Present**: Vice President-Nathan Pedersen; Treasurer-Thomas Miller;

**The meeting was called to order** at 7:02 pm by President Ron Guggisberg**.**

**Approval of Minutes**

Mike Oja moved to approve the 2021 Annual Member Meeting minutes, second by Dave Nelson. Motion carried.

**Financials**

Ron Guggisberg reported on financials in Tom’s absence:

Savings $11,063.17

Checking $ 7,466.57

$18,529.74

Income: $1020 income to date ($20 from dues, $1,000 from donations – Lone Pine Township and Pengilly Booster Club)

Expenses: $1,150 ($150 MN Lakes and River Advocate membership and $1000 AIS inspector cost)

Motion to approve the Financials report was made by Rick Nosan, second by Dave Nelson. Motion carried without opposition.

**Report on Kiosk Progress**

We have been working with the DNR to place a map at the landing, didn’t happen before due to COVID, they are finally ready to put up the Kiosk and we talked about the map, and they said no we could not put a map up because if someone hit an object not marked, we could be sued.

On Johnson Lake the Sherriff puts out buoys every year. Cannot do them everywhere but Swan has been talked about, especially entrance to Stones Bay. Marking all low spots on all lakes is not feasible. He offered to come over and go around the lake with us and see what they can do.

**Sewer Project Update – Guest Speaker John Jamnick, JPJ Engineering**

**John provided a handout – See the Website for a copy of that**

Ron introduced John Jamnick of JPJ Engineering John indicated the firm is out of Hibbing and

They have been working with the East Itasca Joint Sewer Board created between Cities of Nashwauk, Keewatin and the Lone Pine Township. Responsible to evaluate a Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. Greenway Township was originally on the board but opted out a few years ago.

In the past year they began phase I of the project which is abandoning Keewatin’s wastewater treatment facility and expanding Nashwauk’s facility and running a pipe from Keewatin to Nashwauk and adding a new lift station and force main to Keewatin. Nashwauk’s facility was converted from a controlled discharge facility to a continuous discharge facility, so instead of discharging twice a year they will now discharge daily. The expansion included construction of 3 aerated ponds (9.9 acres total) to replace the stabilization pond. John explained the difference is that the stabilization pond uses natural sunlight and wind provides the treatment of the pond system aerated ponds detention time is less because we naturally ad air into the stabilization pond. There is also a tertiary treatment component which would be filtration and UV disinfection and post aeration would be cascade aeration and then discharge at the same location which is reservoir 2. Improvements were made to the Nashwauk lift station and mechanical bar screen and upgrades to the equalization basin.

The project started last summer in 2021 and will be completed fall of 2022.

Q: How often will they test the discharge if it is continuously?

A: It’s in their permit, I believe it is twice weekly.

Q: Do they take any measurements of the discharge in Reservoir 2 before it goes in the diversion ditch?

A: John did not know if there was any requirement to do so.

Q: Is the point of entry to Swan Lake Haye Creek then?

A: Yes, in the Southeast corner of the lake.

John highlighted some of the processes they had to go through to get a permit for the expanded facility by the MPCA (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency). They base all their discharges on what is called Water Quality Based Effluent Limits (WQBEL). You do some study of the receiving stream to determine what the effluent limits would be for Swan Lake, or the other option would be to freeze the mass limits on what Nashwauk and Keewatin have on their existing facilities. Nashwauk facility currently handles 353,000 gallons a day and Keewatin was about 250,000 gallons a day. They had to do an antidegradation review. Or accept the limit assigned to Nashwauk. So Nashwauk is currently at a limit of 1 mg/l on phosphorus, under the new system they would be limited to 0.51/mg/l of phosphorous. (See hand out) column D is if Swan Lake was added the phosphorous effluent limit would be down to 0.42kg/l. This is why we ended up with the tertiary treatment components. MPCA says if the Keewatin plant goes away, the Keewatin’s limits go away. Flow remains the same, but the pollutants are reduced.

Phase II of the project is to put sewer around Swan Lake and send that to Nashwauk. The Nashwauk facility was built to anticipate this. They would construct a new lift station and force main from Swan Lake to Nashwauk lift station for pumping to Nashwauk Water Treatment Facility and add some aeration and blowers. There would be a low-pressure collection system built around the lake.

Both Nashwauk and Keewatin got substantial grants from MPCA to do the project. City of Keewatin got $2M and the City of Nashwauk got $7M. Out of the $11.5M cost they got about 9.5M in grants because they considered the freezing of the limits. It was called a point source implementation grant. None of that money was earmarked for Swan Lake Expansion. Goodland township would get a pipe through here as well.

There are planning meetings about 3 Thursdays a month. A requirement of the MPCA is to do an unsewered area needs determination. The project appears to be technically feasible but the unsewered area needs determination is required for additional funding to implement this. What the MPCA wants is reasonable documentation of each systems condition and a scaled map must be provided, it’s a 3-page survey for residents (started on the northside and are going clockwise around the lake). This is for the funding of the project. This allows them to map all the septic systems, treatment system and the project area. They are holding meetings for people to come in and they can add it right into the computer, septic systems, drain fields, holding tanks, pumps and well. .

There are 4 areas to be ranked

1) Is the current condition an immediate threat to public health and safety?

2) Is the system failing to protect the ground water? (That is where we may need to hire an

inspector to do some site evaluations.)

3) Does the system meet the setback requirements of the county?

4) Is it a conforming system?

They are really trying to help homeowners get mapped out. Hope to get most of it done this summer. They are there almost every Thursday from 5pm to 7pm. No meeting the first Thursday.

There was some brief discussion of cost. There have been some preliminary estimates of cost, but this study is required before we can get to the true cost. The study was done in 2015 and updated in 2018. The document that a resident had said that every homeowner was going to have to pay around $8,000 to run it to the right of way. John indicated that that is what they are doing , trying to make it feasible. The Keewatin Project helped fund the expansion, so those costs are already done and that helps reduce those figures. Also more users in the facility also helps reduce costs.

Q: Are you planning to go on the right of way or from property to property through owners’ properties?

A: The main line is planned to go on the county road and not from individual owners’ property to the next.

Q: Will there be grinder stations on private property?

A: That remains to be determined, but if that was the case there would then need to be easements.

Q: Who pays for the electricity for the grinder station? The individual property owner? Will there be information before a vote.

A: Probably yes. But that will be determined yet and we will try to get as much information out before a vote.

The resident does not believe there is a 40% failure rate around the lake. The resident wanted dye packs to flush and see if there is a problem.

Ron Guggisberg indicated there was a lot of talk about septic around lakes at the recent ICOLA meeting. Septic systems have a life expectancy 25-35 years. The county indicated that 40% of the septic systems built before 1996 will not pass inspections. In 1996 the rules were changed on how to install. A septic system replacement is $20,000 minimum.

Q: Will there be an opt in and opt out option?

A: Not sure that is to be determined.

The unsewered needs analysis will determine funding by the MPCA.

Q: If a property owner decides to not hook up, will they still be assessed for installing the pipe around the lake?

A: That has not been determined. There will be a debt of the project.

Q: Will owners be assessed by feet of even split between properties?

A: That is to be determined by what funding we get.

A resident talked about an experience he had in the city and getting assessed even if not hooking up.

Julie Jacobson said that once more is known it will be put to the people to decide by vote.

Ron indicated that this group is not here to vote or make any decision, only to educate. There is a lot of work to be done yet and if there is not a significant amount of funding, it probably won’t go. It will likely be a year before we know more.

**Nutrient Committee**

Kevin Rustad indicated they are looking for volunteers for river testing this year.

**AIS Report**

Rick Nosan indicated that a grant was submitted for additional inspectors and the grant was approved right away. We got money from the Lone Pine Township and the Pengilly Booster Club to get extra inspector time.

Rick had a meeting in January with the DNR and Soil and Water about the Curly Leaf at the public access. We expect a light growth this year. The discussion ended up with a plan to pull the Curly Leaf up with a rake.

We continue to prevent other invasive species from coming into the lake. The inspections are critical to this. Even though there are zebra mussels in all the lakes around us, we still do not have them in Swan. We are doing something right.

Swan was the 2nd busiest public access in all of Itasca county.

Cleaning units are popping up all over the area. We will talk more about this.

**Recruit AIS Inspectors**

There are flyers on the table, we are looking for inspectors. This would be a great job for a college student. Inspectors need to be 18 years old.

There is a free online class to learn about AIS. Those flyers are also on the table.

**Walleye Spawning Bed Project**

This construction will take place this fall, we had hoped last fall, but staffing was an issue.

Q: The riffle is wonderful, but there is a beaver dam up the stream. Would the Swan Lake Association be willing to help trap beaver?

A: Ron indicated that we could discuss it. We should first discuss with the county and DNR.

**Zebra Mussel Detection Plate Project**

Last year Nathan Pederson learned about these zebra mussel detection plates, and we put them around the lake and we had them inspected and we did not have them on any of the plates.

The best is prevention, once they are there, they are almost impossible to eradicate. We are building more plates.

**CD3 Boat Cleaning Station**

We had originally looked at a hot water cleaning station, but you need water there, you need electricity, and they can only be run by a trained inspector, not anyone can do it. It reduces the number of hours available.

There is a new system called the CD3 station. If we are interested, we can get the owner here in July to talk about it. They are made in Minnesota. They are solar powered, and you don’t need electricity or water. It is a vacuum system and comes with tools and you can remove debris and vacuum out the live well the bait well etc.

Video played: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IV3Y4AV4zzA>

Lake Koronis in Paynesville got Starry Stonewort in 2016 and they have spent over a million dollars already to try to control it and over 70% of the lake is covered with it today. They have harvested tons of this out every year.

Funding was made available to all lakes that have Starry Stonewort to prevent it from going elsewhere.

The cost of the CD3 Station is $34,000. Soil and Water Conservation district will give us $10,000 so we would still need to come up with $24,000. We need to think about this. Recurring costs are $1,200 a year and Soil and Water will cover half of this.

A site analysis was shown on two possible spots. The noise level is 70db, they said it sounds like an outboard motor. Closer to the road is the preferred spot.

We will do a field trip this spring to see one in action.

Q: Are you going to put a gate up to prevent people from coming in at night

A: That is beyond our jurisdiction.

There has been little to no vandalism to the ones that are out.

The guy on Fish Lake has reported that people really like it.

Q: Who is supposed to clean up the landing?

A: That is a DNR property.

Winnibigoshish is getting one this year.

Can we get someone who has one already to come speak.

Hot water is needed to kill zebra mussels if they are attached, it takes 3 days to attach, a CD3 station will take care of the ones that are not yet attached.

People were reminded about buying used equipment it has to stay out of the water of call soil and water to decontaminate for you.

**Web, Facebook and Email Update**

2021 we had 157 members up by 30 over last year 2020. We have over 530 followers on Facebook. We will start our member drive shortly. You have to be a member to vote.

**Date/Time of Next SLA Meeting**

Annual Member Meeting will be on a Friday as we have committed to doing for that meeting. The best dates would be July, 15 July 22, the 29th or August 5th. We need to check with Lone Pine to see availability.

**East Side Neighbors Garage Sale**

Saturday June 11th, stop at Lone Pine for lunch. To have you address on the map it is $5.

**Adjournment**

Adjourn at 8:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Stepan

Communications Secretary