



## White Bear Lake Conservation District

### Regular Board Meeting – Minutes

October 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.,  
White Bear Lake City Hall Council Chambers  
(6 pm., LUC meeting)

1. **Roll Call/Quorum** – Present: Chair Bryan DeSmet, Vice Chair Meredith Walburg, Secretary-Treasurer Mike Parenteau, Diane Longville, Scott Costello, Chris Churchill, Mark Wisniewski, Shari Salzman-Hankins, and Alan Kantrud. Absent: Mark Ganz and Susie Mahoney. A quorum was present.
2. **Call to Order** – Bryan DeSmet called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – The Wildwood Beach Manor permit application was removed from the agenda, and a motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Chris Churchill, seconded and passed.
4. **Approval of previous Board Meeting minutes** – A motion to approve the Sept. 17, 2024 minutes was made by Mike Parenteau, seconded and passed.
5. **Public Comments** – Rachel Bonin, White Bear Lake, came to learn more about how different government entities work on issues regarding the lake. Bonin stated that she is concerned about the dog beach on White Bear Lake and that it is affecting the water quality, and about the contingency of boats that gather by the Chateauguet Condominiums. Bonin would like the WBLCD to keep that in mind.
6. **New Business**
  - Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) survey and lake use study – Steve McComas, Blue Water Science presented information on the EWM survey, and the status of the lake use study:
    - EWM survey – The survey, conducted on June 27, found EWM at 16 sites, and 33 acres were identified for treatment. McComas noted they also surveyed for starry stonewort (SSW) at two public access points on the lake, and in the marina area, and it was not present. In 2023, the Rice Creek Watershed District conducted a point intercept aquatic plant survey which also looked for Zebra mussels. Zebra mussels were well distributed across the lake, with less appearing in the Commercial Bay area. The study will be conducted again in five years.

Answering questions about algae blooms, McComas said that it is related to zebra mussel and warm weather conditions, and while there is blue-green algae present, it is in low concentrations that are not toxic to people and pets. Bryan DeSmet asked at what point in the growth of blue-green algae does the public need to be notified. McComas said if lake water has a transparency of less than 3 ft in July or August, it is probably due to blue-green algae, and the MN Pollution Control agency would recommend that you avoid those areas. However the lake has not had a transparency issue in a very long time, and is in good shape. Asked what other lake communities around the state are doing to prevent starry stonewort, McComas said that of the 31 lakes with SSW, 29 of them had SSW present at public access points, so that's the place to search. The key to containing SSW is to find it early and treat it. Some lakes are surveyed and treated up to three times a year. The SSW can be contained, but not eliminated. McComas suggested that SSW could

be surveyed two times a year at Ramsey County and Matoska access points – once in June and July, and again in September.

- Lake use study – McComas stated that he is replicating the last use study conducted in 2005, and with the results of an earlier 1999 study, lake use comparisons can be made going back 25 years. The study focused on five areas - boat inventory, lake boating density, boater exit surveys, lake resident surveys and MN DNR boat data.

Some early trends show that there is a decrease in the number of fishing boats, ski boats, sailboats and canoes, and an increase in the number of kayaks, pontoons, personal watercraft, and paddleboards. The highest boat density calculated was on July 7 at 15 boats per acre. The peak time period for boats on peak days was 1:30-4 pm; on non-peak days it was from 3 to 6 pm, and on all survey days the north side of the lake had the most boats.

After the study is completed, McComas will present the final findings to the Board.

- WBLCD website update – Cheri Howe updated the Board on the process and timeline of updating the WBLCD website, which will be completed by next spring or summer.

## 7. Unfinished Business

- VFW-EAW Draft Findings of Fact and Record of Decision, and Resolution – Bryan DeSmet stated that the 30-day public comment period for the VFW EAW regarding their proposed dock expansion ended on Oct. 10 and resulted in five (5) comments which are entered into the draft findings of fact and record of decision document. The DNR commented that the VFW still needs to update its DNR permit, and that there are records of Blanding's turtle (a state listed threatened species), and least darter, lake sturgeon, few-flowered spikerush, and narrow-leaved water plantain (all species of special concern) in or near White Bear Lake. The DNR commented that the Blanding's turtle may be impacted by construction activities during their hibernation period, Sept. 15-April 15, and provided guidance on monitoring and accounting for state protected species during the construction process. DeSmet also noted that the Board may want to advise all Commercial Bay marinas of these DNR guidelines for state protected species when installing and removing docks, and will be discussed at a future meeting.

DeSmet said the Board needed to decide whether the EAW was adequate or if an environmental impact statement (EIS) was needed. Alan Kantrud introduced and reviewed a proposed resolution that accepted the findings and made a negative declaration for an EIS, which means the environmental review process does not have to go any further. A motion to approve a negative declaration on the need for an EIS was made by Bryan DeSmet, seconded and passed. Cheri Howe will distribute the findings document and resolution to the MN Environmental Quality Board (EQB), the EQB distribution list, and the project list.

## 8. Reports/Action Items

- **Executive Committee** – none
- **Lake Quality Committee**
  - Lake level – The lake level today is 922.56 ft.; it was 922.4 ft last year.
  - Lake temperature – The lake temperature today is 55 °F; last year, it was 54 °F.

- Mike Parenteau also said that invasive phragmites were treated on Oct. 7. The applicator does not have a map showing the treatment areas, but one will be created next year.

- **Lake Utilization Committee**

- Docks of WBL-DNR Permit Amendment recommendation – Chris Churchill explained that Docks of WBL’s DNR permit is expiring and they are applying for a revised permit, including: a reduction in the number of overnight slips, from 260 to 250; a revised dock layout to conform with the 300 ft (ADUA) requirement of the WBLCD; the addition of a boathouse as a public service structure operated by Your Boat Club; and a change in the authorization language that defers to the WBLCD for configuration of the docks during low water conditions. Churchill stated that the ADUA line agreement between the City of WBL-Lions Park and Docks of WBL needs to get better documented in applicant’s diagram and memorialized.

Bryan DeSmet stated that the DNR sent it out for public comment which ends Oct. 25 and asked the Board for their input. DeSmet said that the Executive Committee would also like to see the dock configurations removed from the DNR permit so that the District has more flexibility to work with marina owners on minor modifications to their dock layouts. A motion to comment to the DNR to memorialize the ADUA line in their permit by inserting the City’s coordinates of 18 degrees, 33 minutes, 14 seconds from the ADUA line to center of lake line, and to change the authorization language to defer to the WBLCD for approval of all dock configurations (not just in low water conditions) was made by Bryan DeSmet, seconded and passed. Cheri Howe will submit the comments to the DNR.

Permit applications

- Snyder Bay Beach Club – 2025 noncommercial permit (no change from last year): A motion to approve the application was made by Churchill, seconded and passed with Scott Costello abstaining.
- Brenda Farrell – 2025 noncommercial permit (no change from last year): A motion to approve the application was made by Churchill, seconded and passed.
- Redpath Wolgamot Water Ski Courses – 2025 water structure permit: A motion to approve the application was made by Churchill, seconded and passed.

- **Lake Education Committee**

- Educational outreach update – Scott Costello reported that they will write some content by the end of November for the last *Laker* issue. Costello reminded the Board that the annual lake ice cleanup with the Boy Scout troop will be held in early March next year.
- Social media update – Meredith Walburg said she will post content on social media about the lake temperature, phragmites treatment, winter salt use, and aeration devices.

## 9. Treasurer Reports

- 2024 October Treasurer’s Report – A motion to approve debit purchase 2024-19, and checks 4983 to 4990 was made by Mike Parenteau, seconded and passed.

10. **Board Council Report** – Alan Kantrud

- Alan Kantrud was in contact with the DNR and Ramsey County enforcement officers and the season continues to be quiet. This year staffing was tough for the water patrol, and the District may get credit for less contract hours used, either as a reduction of fees for this year's contract, or credited to next year's contract. Kantrud asked the Board to let him know if they have any questions or comments for the enforcement officers.

11. **Announcements** - The next Board meeting, and the last one for 2024, will be held on Tues., Nov. 19.

12. **Adjournment** – A motion to adjourn at 8:21 pm was made by Chris Churchill, seconded and passed.

ATTEST

Bryan DeSmet, Chairperson *Bryan DeSmet*

Date: 11-19-2024

Cheri Howe, Administrator *Cheri Howe*

Date: 11/19/2024