

# White Bear Lake Conservation District

## Regular Board Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2025, 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, Mark Ganz, Scott Costello, Chris Churchill, Mark Wisniewski, Susie Mahoney, Shari Salzman-Hankins, and Alan Kantrud. Absent: Diane Longville. A quorum was present.
2. **Call to Order** – Bryan DeSmet called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – A motion to approve the agenda was made by Susie Mahoney, seconded, and passed.
4. **Approval of Previous Board Meeting minutes** – A motion to approve the February 18, 2025 meeting minutes was made by Mark Ganz, seconded and passed.
5. **Public Comments** – none
6. **Public Hearing – Docks of White Bear Lake Variance Request** *(to commence at or after 7:10 pm)*
  - Hearing – The hearing was opened to public comments regarding Docks of White Bear Lake’s request for variance to extend their docks 50 ft beyond the permitted 300 ft. The reason for the request was in anticipation of low water levels, which makes slips close to shore unusable. There were no public comments and the hearing was closed.
  - Board review and action – Bryan DeSmet stated that research done last year by Mike Parenteau and Chris Churchill determined that a water depth of at least three feet is needed in Commercial Bay for watercraft to operate, and that the DNR has set an elevation of 922 ft in April as a benchmark for when marinas may request a variance to change their dock configurations to extend beyond 300 ft. DeSmet added that, historically, the lake level decreases over the summer making some slips unusable by August. A motion to approve the variance request was made by Bryan DeSmet, seconded and passed. The District will monitor water levels this year and work toward designating a benchmark elevation by mid-March to assist marina owners in dock planning. Susie Mahoney asked that the previous year’s variance request information be included in the review of current requests.
7. **New Business**
  - Committee appointments – A motion to approve the following slate of committee members was made by Bryan DeSmet, seconded and passed: Education Committee-Scott Costello (Chair), Meredith Walburg, and Susie Mahoney; Lake Utilization Committee-Mark Ganz (Chair), Chris Churchill (Vice Chair), Mark Wisniewski, Scott Bohnen, and Alexander Schwartz; Lake Quality Committee-Mike Parenteau (Chair), Diane Longville, and Shari Salzman-Hankins.
  - Constituent complaints: form and process – Meredith Walburg presented a draft document that Board members could use when reporting complaints received from the public. It will also be available on the WBLCD website and from the office. Complainant names and contact information will need to go on the form, but names will not be made public due to data privacy laws. Chris Churchill asked what the best way would be to address a situation where the complainant has an issue with another party and the Board would like them to talk together first. Alan Kantrud stated that a complainant’s personal information is non-public private data and he will add language to the form letting them know that, along with a line asking if they’ve contacted the other party and do they want assistance from the Board to mediate. An updated draft of the form will be reviewed at the April meeting.

- AIS funding letter – A draft letter to legislative representatives from the WBLCD Board showing support for an added surcharge to the DNR's boating registration fees to help fund AIS management was considered. However, the draft was discontinued as none of our representatives were on the committee that would review the proposed surcharge.
- Resolution for proposed bylaw amendment to Section III-Meetings, #1 (1<sup>st</sup> reading) – The current bylaws state that the meeting begins at 7:30 pm, but the Board meets at 7 pm. A second reading and vote will be take place at the April Board meeting.
- Starry stonewort (SSW) monitoring plan - Bryan DeSmet reported that the Board is putting together a SSW monitoring and response plan and trying to establish what kind of effort should be put into monitoring for it, and if found, responding to it. A draft of the plan will be brought to the April meeting for input. Meredith Walburg added that it also includes public education. Treatments for SSW are available and Scott Costello asked if there would be funds pre-allocated for treatment so that it didn't have to wait for Board approval. DeSmet said that would be part of the plan, and if designated funds were less than needed, a request for more funding would come back to the Board for approval.

#### 8. Unfinished Business

- Lake use study – Meredith Walburg reported that most of the lake study was delivered, and Walburg, Mark Wisniewski, and Shari Salzman-Hankins are reviewing it. Once a full draft is ready in April or May, the Board will have time to review and comment on the draft and a final draft would be generated to present to the public at a Board meeting in late spring or summer. At some point in the future, a lake management plan will be developed based on the study.

#### 9. Reports/Action Items

- **Executive Committee** – At the meeting, members discussed banking items, SSW, the complaint form, the bylaw change, digitizing application forms, the lake use study, and the fund balance policy. Buoy definitions were discussed, but it was found that buoys are well defined by other entities and therefore the Board does not need to create its own.
- **Lake Quality Committee**
  - Lake level – Mike Parenteau reported that lake elevation was 922.52 ft today; last March it was 922.02 ft.
  - AIS monitoring and treatment – Parenteau is putting together a bid for services to review at the April board meeting.
- **Lake Utilization Committee (LUC)** – The following permit applications were reviewed at the LUC meeting and submitted for Board approval by Mark Ganz:
  - McCartney Estates noncommercial permit renewal-previously tabled (same as last year) – An updated diagram was submitted, and the permit to moor six watercraft was approved.
  - Manitou Island Assn water structure permit-previously tabled (same as last year) – A diagram of the swim area marked by swim buoys, with no ropes between the buoys, was submitted and the water structure permit was approved.
  - Russ Becker water structure permit-previously denied (same as last year) – An updated diagram, showing that buoys were removed and the water structures were within the ADUA, was submitted and the permit was approved.
  - Beverley Driscoll commercial permit renewal (change from last year) – A permit for nine (9) watercraft was approved.
  - Black Bear Yacht Racing Assn (BBYRA) summer event permit – An event permit for sailboat racing (May-Sept) was approved.
  - White Bear Yacht Club Sailing summer event permit - An event permit for sailboat racing (May-Sept) was approved.

- **Lake Education Committee**

- Educational outreach update -

- Annual lake cleanup March 15 (change in date) – Scott Costello reported that the event became land based after the ice deteriorated, and groups had until March 15 to clean their areas. On March 14, the Board met at Memorial Beach (with temperatures in the 70s), for cleanup with little trash to be found.
    - The Laker – Costello stated that the committee would meet on March 25 to discuss ideas for the first edition of *The Laker*, Marketfest, and a summer lake cleanup. Meredith Walburg added that if anyone has ideas for any of the four editions of *The Laker*, to contact Meredith, Scott, or Cheri.

- Social media update - Meredith Walburg will post on ice out, the water appropriation ordinance, and if using deicer, to please contact our office.

**10. Treasurer Reports**

- 2025 February Treasurer's Report – A motion to approve debit card purchases 2025-4 through 2025-6 and check numbers 5011 through 5014 was made by Mike Parenteau, seconded and passed. Parenteau reported that the District is in the process of moving its banking account to North Star Bank for convenience and online access.
- Resolution authorizing membership in the 4M fund – Parenteau reported that he has been researching the best way to manage the money market fund and will be moving it from Royal Credit Union to the 4M fund, which is specifically designed for municipalities and managed by League of MN Cities. The fund is run through the PMA Bank, located in St. Paul, and Andover. A motion to adopt the resolution for membership in the 4M Fund was made by Mike Parenteau, seconded and passed. Board approval would be needed to invest more money into the fund which is federally insured.
- Budget – A draft budget will be brought to the April Board meeting for input with a final budget voted on in June.

**11. Board Council Report** – Alan Kantrud reported that the car embedded in lake ice was removed without incident and some citations were issued to fishing house owners for litter and not removing their structure in a timely manner.

**12. Announcements**

- The administrator reported that a recent MAISRC newsletter had an interesting article about the relationship between zebra mussels and higher mercury levels in walleyes.
- The next Board meeting will be held April 15, 2025.

**13. Adjournment** – A motion to approve adjournment at 8:03 pm was made by Mark Ganz, seconded and passed.

**ATTEST**

Bryan DeSmet, Chairperson Bryan DeSmet Date 4-15-2025

Cheri Howe, Administrator Cheri Howe Date 4/15/2025