

WHITE BEAR LAKE CONSERVATION DISTRICT NOTES

• The conservation district has hired its next administrator. Cheri Howe is tentatively planning to retire at the end of July, and the new hire, Jody Savage, has been selected to fill the role. Vice Chair Meredith Walburg said that more than 50 candidates applied for the position.

"Thank you for all the work you have done on behalf of the board. It is not an easy job... You have done so much to help move the board forward and make our processes so much more efficient," said Chari Bryan DeSmet. "I think we are a much better board because of you."

Howe responded, "It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve with the White Bear Lake Conservation District. It has been really fun to get to know everyone. You are a great group and I know Jody is going to enjoy working with you as well."

• Director Mark Ganz has been re-appointed by the city of Mahtomedi to serve another three-year term on the board.

• The conservation conducted its first

drone-compliance check to ensure that the correct number of slips are being used in Commercial Bay. At the June meeting, Attorney Alan Kantrud said that the Lake Utilization Committee (LUC) had not done its official count yet, but they would report back to the July meeting if they found any discrepancies.

"From a drone's-eye view, Commercial Bay looks as good as it ever has. I'm impressed with what I saw," Kantrud said.

• The board plans to host a strategic planning session before its August board meeting, likely around 6 p.m. "The planning session is really critical for us because from that we will develop a scope of work and then based on that scope of work we will request proposals from professional organizations to come in and assist us with the preparation of that document," DeSmet explained. "So, the better job we do of defining that scope thru the planning session, the better document we will end up with in the end."

• The conservation district has reached out to E.G. Rud and Sons on the replacement of the Commercial Bay survey markers to make the markers more permanent and "visible." After a scope of work is formalized, it will be

brought back to the board for approval at a future meeting. DeSmet said he was hoping to hear back from the company and have more information for the July meeting. E.G. Rud and Sons is the same contractor who installed the initial markers in 2023.

• As of mid-June, the lake level was at 922.99 feet, which is about three inches lower than May, and the same depth as this time in 2025. The water temperature was 66 degrees, which is 8 degrees warmer than mid-May. "It's going up. It's on a natural progression," said Treasurer/Secretary Mike Parenteau.

• The board has budgeted up to \$32,000 to treat Eurasian watermilfoil. If necessary, the board also approved the spending of up to an additional \$10,000 on treatment. Parenteau noted the treatment would be done before the July board meeting.

• Every five years, the conservation district is required by the Office of the State Auditor to have an audit done. Parenteau said he received a couple of bids to perform the audit, but they seemed "extremely high." He noted he was working on options and hoped to bring back more information to the board in July.

• Director Brian Bonin, who sits on the buoy committee, pointed out that

the committee has received "weird complaints" in regard to the buoys near Ordway Bar. He noted Ramsey County Water Patrol Cmdr. Mike Servatka saw the issue firsthand and recommended the district add an additional eight buoys. Some temporary buoys have been placed in the area, but the board agreed to spend \$1,334 for six additional buoys.

Kantrud noted he was contacted by the water patrol about the issue after someone lost their lower unit from hitting one of the large rocks in the area and reported it to the sheriff's office.

• Kantrud reported that the water patrol responded to its first boating while intoxicated incident. "Cautionary tale, if you buy a new pontoon and you decide to drink and boat, you should register your pontoon," he said. "That's not a great start to the season from a law enforcement perspective, but it proves that they are out there and keeping us all safe."

The next White Bear Lake Conservation District meeting will be at 7 p.m., Tuesday, July 21 at White Bear Lake City Hall.

Shannon Granholm



CONTRIBUTED

Cheri Howe