



REGULAR MEETING OF THE WHITE BEAR LAKE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
7:00 P.M. WHITE BEAR CITY HALL
MINUTES of February 16, 2016

APPROVAL DATE: 3/15/16

1. CALL TO ORDER The February meeting of the White Bear Lake Conservation District was convened by Chair Jane Harper at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers.

2. ROLL CALL Present were: Chair Jane Harper, Vice Chair Bryan DeSmet, Directors Mike Parenteau, Pat McCann, George St. Germain, Gene Altstatt, Scott Costello. A quorum was present. Absent were Diane Longville, Susie Mahoney, Mark Ganz (all excused).

3. AGENDA

MOTION #1 (DeSmet/Altstatt) Move to approve agenda. All aye, passed

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION #2 (Parenteau/St Germain) Move to approve minutes of January. All aye passed.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

none

6. NEW BUSINESS

6a. Nominations and election of board officers

Current nominations: Harper for Chair, DeSmet for Vice Chair, Longville for Treasurer.

No other nominations.

MOTION #3 (St Germain/Parenteau) Move to close nominations. All aye passed

MOTION #4 (Altstatt/Parenteau) Move to approve slate for 2016 of Jane Harper Chair, Brian DeSmet Vice Chair, Diane Longville Treasurer. All aye passed.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

none

8. REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

8a. Lake Level Resolution Committee

No meeting this month. Art shanties are open on weekends in February

8b. Lake Quality Committee

8b1. Water level 921.87 - last month 921.83, virtually unchanged. Up 8" from last year at this time

8b2. EWM control grant was applied for, state has much less money available than in past - entire state has only \$200k available.

Next will request proposal from Steve McComas for survey

8c. Lake Utilization Committee

8c1. Paddle Tap boat permit

MOTION #5 (St Germain / Altstatt) Move to approve permit conditional to receiving proof of insurance for 2016. All aye passed.

8c2. Hickory Street. New neighbor is only change in area

MOTION #6 (St Germain / Altstatt) Move to approve Hickory Street Dock Assoc. permit for 2016. All aye passed

8c3. East Shore Dock Assoc

MOTION #7 (St Germain / Altstatt) Move to approve East Shore Dock Assoc permit for 2016. All aye passed.

8c4. City of WBL Veterans pier

Would like to see shore frontage noted for each site, not all total.

MOTION #8 (St Germain/Altstatt) Move to approve. All aye passed.

8c5. City of WBL Matoska Park.

MOTION #9 (St Germain / Altstatt) Move to approve. All aye, passed

8c6. City of WBL Municipal Marina

MOTION #10 (St Germain / Altstatt) Move to approve with condition of current insurance. All aye passed.

8d. Lake Education Committee

Website assuage up over the past year – graph

March 12 is Lake Clean-up day – boy scouts meet at 10:00 am at Bellaire beach

8e. Joint Powers Task Group

Harper – The DNR released cost estimate for augmentation of White Bear Lake with two different options of piping water. Estimate \$55 – 67 million to build, \$570k per year operation & maintenance. Potential additional cost for treating water quality. Last May WBLCD agreed to be the Fiscal agent. The board established a task group to examine what would have to undertake. Task group has provided the board with a report that provided additional information. No official position has been taken for or against augmentation by the board.

Discussion

St Germain – assuming the construction costs are covered, how are the operating, management and annual costs covered? How could WBLCD afford to own and operate?

Costello – uncertainty of ongoing funds. Our current budget is less than 100k. There is an issue of scale of what we're set up to do vs. the budget for project like this. There's no consent on operating or overhead costs.

St Germain – We can only increase what we charge the cities, not our income from permit fees, etc. This would more than double for cities costs.

Altstatt – There are various sources for funding - cities, lakeshore owners, etc This is a regional asset.

St Germain – 570k per year operating estimate from the DNR, we could triple city costs and still be short

Altstatt – This provides the ability to get project going. State won't fund if not seen as capable.

Kantrud – if WBLCD builds it, it's yours. Piece of infrastructure that needs to be insured, could lease to other entity. Will go over property that is not yours – would need legal right to have structure there. League of MN cities would insure. DeSmet – primary concern is are we the correct entity? Communities are saying “no”. Obligations to future costs are an educated guess. Is augmentation the right project? Don't want to do something detrimental, there are contaminants in Mississippi that will end up in WBL. Other projects have used this water but we don't know of data that tracks micro contaminants and their impact. If we are fiscal agent would want to be sure all costs are covered and guarantee we would not degrade water quality. If we degrade quality are we protected?

Kantrud – too soon to suggest, currently have best guess cost estimate. More extensive study will be done. Grant could include study funds. Comes down to what legislation says funds can be used for.

Altstatt – water quality is different issue

St Germain – assuming involvement, upfront money will be required. We have a low reserve and are 1 yr out from budget increase.

Parenteau – we're being asked to take leap of faith. Need more info, always money

McCann – if we don't take lead, who will? Have to consider...

Costello – need some sort of stop or limit on what it costs to start up as fiscal agent

Comments from audience

Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Commissioner – From the county's perspective regarding the right-of-way question, we would work together. As for being the fiscal agent, Ramsey Co has clear criteria for being a fiscal agent; water infrastructure projects are not one of them. Other options are to contract out for expertise.

Mike Downing, WB Township resident - In support of WBLCD being fiscal agent. Ramsey Co beach has been closed for 9 years due to low water.

Sen. Chuck Wiger – The Board is asking the right questions. No other entity is in position to take leadership role in this. The resolution needs to be sustainable, have community support, and be affordable. There is a meeting March 1 at the DNR for further review on costs. Many people are examining sustainability. The session starts March 8. I will be chief author in senate. More information will be coming, we're committed to finding answers.

Harper – several city councils have expressed concern over the WBLCD's lack of experience and resources to lead this sort of project. How could we go about building in costs?

Wiger – possible that start-up funds may be able to be included.

DeSmet –what does affordable mean?

Wiger – hoping less than the current estimates.

McCann – can you explain timing issue?

Wiger – we have momentum now, it will be another 2 years for next bonding bill
Harry Melander Chair, Friends of WBL - Confident the state is not going to give money without support to help you manage it and be successful. Asking to keep conversation going, not to say no.

Beau Montgomery, Resident of WBL, and representing Friends of WBL - We have a good opportunity now to protect and save lake

Luke Michaud WBLCD Director for 18 yrs; still on LUC - The Board has changed over the years, acted as fiscal agent for USGS study and for milfoil treatment. This is a bigger project but you have the opportunity to back away in future. Need support to get to possible phase. This is directly related to WBLCD's work, encourage you to move forward with yes.

Harper – Back in May during the original vote the Board did not have much information on what it meant to be a fiscal agent. We felt we needed to do our due diligence for our communities to learn more. We have a vote of record that we will be fiscal agent... if we're going to change we need to do sooner rather than later. Would like help to be successful if project is funded.

Altstatt – Mark Ganz is not here tonight from Mahtomedi, he indicated he is in support. This is a regional asset here, the WBLCD was set up because of that.

The task group feels we are the appropriate fiscal agent.

MOTION # 11 (Altstatt / McCann) The White Bear Lake Conservation District does hereby affirm its commitment to accept the role of Fiscal Agent for any funds appropriated for the purposes of projects associated with White Bear Lake provided the District has the opportunity to advise and consent in the legislation prior to passage by the legislature.

Discussion

DeSmet – can I propose a friendly amendment “sustainable, affordable and has support of 5 communities”

Harper – written to be general and not specific to an augmentation project, in case there are other projects .. adding your text makes it more specific.

Costello – “support” is vague. Also we don't speak for our governments

MOTION Vote: All aye, passed.

Motion affirms commitment to accept role of fiscal agent with condition that we can advise and consent to legislation

8f. Treasurer's Report

MOTION # 12 (Parenteau/Altstatt) Move to approve treasurer's report and pay checks 4338 – 4342. All aye passed.

8g. Board Counsel Report

Will work on the enabling legislation

Reminder we may need to have special meetings of the work group if things progress - 3 day advance notice is required for meetings

8h. Administrative Staff Report

Items included in packet this month:

- Agenda
- January draft minutes
- Dock Permit applications :5
- Event permit applications : 1

9. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION # 13 (Parenteau/ St Germain) Move to approve. All aye passed.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parenteau – feel we're doing our due diligence and that we're conscientious, not negative.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION #14 (St Germain / Parenteau) Move to adjourn. All aye passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm

ATTEST:

Administrative Secretary

Date

APPROVED:

Board Chairperson

Date