



**Lake Ripley Management District
Meeting of the Board of Directors
April 20, 2019
9:00 A.M. at Oakland Town Hall**

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Jimmy DeGidio called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M. Board members present: Michael Sabella, Georgia Gómez-Ibáñez, Craig Kempel, Walt Christensen. Excused: Mike Doman and Keith Kolb. Also present: Andrew Sabai, Lake Manager, Beth Gehred, Lake Manager. In audience Roger Rude, Gail Beaver, Jay Settersten, Deb and Rick Kutz, Dave DeGidio

II. Public Comment

Roger Rude asked if the DNR has the right to raise water levels in a marsh that is privately owned. Sabai responded that while the DNR likes to see marshes with varying water depths for ecological reasons, he does not know that DNR has right to manipulate the water level in a privately-owned marsh unless there is a written agreement with the landowner. Kempel added that he'd monitored the lake recently and lake levels were in keeping with levels for the past five years for this time of year.

III. Approve Minutes of March 16, 2019 meeting

Sabella moved to approve the minutes as corrected for three typographic errors. Second by Christensen. Motion carried.

IV. Approve Minutes of April 13, 2019 meeting

Christensen moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board on April 13, 2019, Second by Kempel. Motion carried.

V. Treasurer's Report

Sabella distributed to the Board copies of his treasurer's report for March, 2019. Total receipts of \$431.46; total disbursements of \$7200.13. Balances of \$200 in petty cash and \$161,543 in checking account. District is current with pension payment and payroll taxes. Of note: due to bank ownership change, Sabella voided out a trail of 8 – 10 checks for auditors. New checks were used from Mar 17. **Kempel moved to accept the treasurer's report and enter it into record. Motion seconded by Gómez-Ibáñez. Motion carried.**

VI. Lake Manager's Report and Correspondence

Sabai fleshed out each of the items in his written monthly report to the Board, prefacing his remarks with his gratitude for his time here as Lake Manager, as he's accepted another position. His last day as Lake Manager is April 26, 2019 and his focus is on wrapping up what he can and helping transition in the new Lake Manager.

DNR Lake Planning Grant approval notification arrived including \$5000 for sending out a survey to LRMD residents. Sabai will send in a request for early payment of 75% of the payout upfront. The District has until 12/21 to complete the grant. Modifications to scope and extensions of deadline usually approved if needed.

Summer Interns - Twelve applications have arrived, up from two last year. We had a wider pool as the job description went out to six different universities in the state. Sabai recommends continuing this practice. Gehred/DeGidio/Sabai will move forward in selection.

Forster Tern raft – This 8'x12' floating raft is to spur nesting of the Forster Tern in the Preserve. Plan is to add the marsh hay donated by Roger Rude on Monday a.m. Raft is anchored to pond where the water is 12" deep. Not ideal due to predation but plus side is that it is easily seen from observation deck and a trail cam is mounted on it. Christensen asked if we could put a fence charger on it to deter predation. Sabai thought a good idea if needed. Sabai reminded Board that of the 3 cameras deployed the District owns 2 and state owns 1.

Lakes Convention - Sabai opted not to attend determining his time more valuable on site.

Prairie Burn - Pheasants Forever conducted prairie burn in early April. Need to remove the willow suckers remaining on west side of Co A. Sabai estimated it would take two techs two days to cut and treat willow suckers on west side of Co. A, cut and remove the mature willow causing some of the problem, and take out worst offenders on east side. Rate of \$1400/day. Board agreed important to get done asap.

Water Quality Update – Sabai reported on data he'd collected comparing flow rates at Ripley Road that illustrated flow more important than concentration of P for result of P in Lake. Data useful for directing our efforts to periods of high flow for best result for reducing P in Lake. Sabai is girdling some trees along the inlet creek bank as they are causing erosion due to their size and shading. Estimated that ten people in an afternoon could get the work done, but best way to deal with the wood to be determined. Sabai agreed with Christensen that good to girdle now so the trees don't leaf out; wood chip/haul/burn can be dealt with over course of the summer. Sabai also outlined two places to mow paths deeper into the marsh to assist ditch water to penetrate the marsh more deeply and settle out more sediment during times of high flood. Suggested this happen twice/year, May, and first week of July. Christensen offered the use of brush cutter.

A discussion took place about the efficacy of styles of cuts to best tamp resprouting of unwanted brush. Settersten had information from a 3-year study that a forestry head cutter that rotates and tears shatters the cambium layer of the tree is more effective than flatter cuts (i.e. lopping). If not rotating and tearing, applying herbicide to trunk immediately improves absorption. But do not apply herbicide immediately in rotate/tear, in order to not overuse the herbicide. May be only needed in 10% of stumps. Wait and see and apply as regrowth indicates.

A Fecon cutter on a tracked skid loader rents for \$1200/day and overkill for Co A but may be indicated for larger acreage with box elders that are big and need to be ground up and treated. . JDG says investigate this and move forward.

Critical Habitat Area – There have been years of delays and redirections at the DNR such that finalizing the designation of the Lake Critical Habitat Areas (formerly called Sensitive Areas) has been stalled. Sabai has been working with Sue Graham at the DNR to finalize the draft and Board agreed this needed to stay as a high priority.

Transition – Sabai outlined what he hoped to accomplish in his last week and what he was sharing with Gehred. Craig and Christensen expressed thanks to Sabai for his expertise. Sabai thanked the Board for its support and stated his willingness to stay on in a reduced capacity.

Settersten pointed out that the Lake Manager role required many discrete skills that may be met with more than one person.

Management Plan Update – Sabai said he intended to leave a road map for Lake Management Plan update and hoped he'd be considered a resource for it moving forward.

Plant Sale – Plants will be arriving the morning of May 2nd and Gehred will coordinate with Gomez-Ibañez that day and on the May 4th distribution day. Sabai will be available on the 4th.

Lake Manager Compensation Committee – Sabai met with the committee and gave his recommendations.

Gehred handed out a Report based on her four days on the job. Time has been spent primarily taking in info from Board members, Sabai, community members and written materials.

VII. Old Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on increasing Ripples newsletter distribution

After discussion it was determined that the April newsletter go out to the usual distribution and that an informational brochure be created for further distribution. A draft is to be brought to next month's Board meeting. **Christensen moved and Gomez-Ibañez seconded to approve up to \$500 from contingency funds for a brochure. Motion carried.**

- b. Discussion and possible action on Lake Manager compensation.

Working from a cleaned draft document, **Christensen moved to approve the Lake District Manager Full Time Employee Benefits Document with these changes as outlined - Delete the italicized note on page one. Last sentence bottom of second page add back in phrase in the "first calendar year." Striking sentence "Part-time employees shall be. . .whichever applies" from Bereavement Absence section. Change "employer only" to Chairperson in second-to-last paragraph of document for consistency. Change Chairman to Chairperson on pg. 2/3rd full pp. Gomez-Ibañez second. Motion passed.** Sabai recommended that in future compensation discussions the Lake Manager not play lead role. Chair noted that changes will be made to the Lake Manager job description to keep it aligned with the Benefits document.

VIII. New Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on participation and the purchase of materials for Memorial Day Parade float

Kempel moved and Christensen seconded to allow us to investigate use of harvester and purchase banners for Village of Cambridge Memorial Day Parade. Carried. DeGidio and Gehred to follow up.

- b. Discussion and possible action on weed harvesting program for 2019: permit, staffing and hauling of harvested weeds.

Harvester –**Motion was made by Sabella, second by Christensen, that we post the job description for weed harvester with a starting pay of \$14/hour with a \$2/hour premium pay for any staff-person with a CDL license. Carried.** The hours of work will be between 8 and 1:30 pm weekdays as needed under the discretion of the Lake Manager. Gehred to post and move forward with hiring.

- c. Discussion and possible action on the lake manager position

- i. Approval of Lake Manager resignation letter – **Kempel moved, Sabella second to accept resignation of Andrew Sabai as Lake Manager. Motion carried.**

Christensen moved to enter closed session for purposes of discussion of Lake Manager position. Second by Kempel. All ayes by roll call vote. Meeting closed session began at 11:07 AM

The meeting re-opened at 12:47 PM. **Gomez-Ibañez moved to offer Sabai a position as a Part-time Project Manager, reporting to the Chairperson. Christensen seconded. Motion carried.** Sabai accepted the position.

Approving Position Description for Lake Manager. **Christensen moved to accept position description for COLA with guidelines one word change from ‘before’ to ‘after’. Sabella seconded. Motion carried.**

IX. Adjournment

Christensen moved to adjourn. Second by DeGidio. Meeting adjourned at 1:20 PM

Next meeting: May 18, 2019, 9 AM at the Oakland Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Georgia Gómez-Ibañez, Secretary
Recorder: Beth Gehred

Date April 20, 2019

Minutes approved 5/18/2019 by the LRMD Board of Commissioners