



**Annual Meeting
Lake Ripley Management District
Oakland Town Hall
N4450 County Road A
Cambridge, Wisconsin 53523
August 17, 2019**

I. Call to Order

The Lake Ripley Management District Annual Meeting was called to order by the Chair, Jimmy DeGidio, at 9:44 am at the Oakland Town Hall. The meeting was preceded by a 9:00 – 9:43 am Budget Hearing. Board members in attendance: Jimmy DeGidio, Michael Sabella, Georgia Gómez-Ibáñez, Craig Kempel, Keith Kolb, and Walt Christensen. Excused: Mike Doman Also in attendance: Beth Gehred, Lake Manager, Richard Moen, CBCW educator, Marilyn Sabella, Jameil Breit, Gail Beaver, Doug Maurer, Deb Kutz, John Molinaro, Ann Molinaro, Leah Maurer, Dave DeGidio, Mike Burrow, Jenny Burrow, Jon Tilp, Juliann Trout, Bill Trout, Richard Kutz, Mark Heynis, Delbert Whitney, Andrew Kornaus, Kelsey Kornaus, Roger Rude, Jason Hernandez, Maggie Kempel, Janet Papa, Justin T Schultz, Jane Jacobsen-Brown, Dave Wolfram, Jane Wolfram, Bob Gould, Mark McNally, and Steve Tesmer.

II. Approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes

John Molinaro/Jane Jacobsen-Brown moved to approve the 2018 Budget Hearing and Annual Meeting minutes. Motion passed.

III. Nomination of Board Candidate - two positions

Names on ballot were Deb Kutz and Doug Maurer running for two positions being vacated by Mike Doman and Michael Sabella, both of whom declined to run. The Chair asked three times for nominations from the floor. None volunteered. The Chair invited each to introduce themselves to assembled voters and give statement why running. Both gave brief statements. Nominations were then closed. The Chair gave those present approximately ten minutes to vote. After this time elapsed the Chair asked twice if everyone had had a chance to vote. When all present indicated that they had, the Chair announced that voting was closed.

IV. Chair's report

Jimmy DeGidio gave an update on District activities. He encouraged District residents to look for and fill in a public opinion survey that would be administered within the next month or two, to help guide management direction for the ten-year update to the Lake Ripley Management Plan. He gave the results of a shoreline survey and moored boats inventory that took place earlier in the month and compared findings to previous surveys reaching back to 2007. Also mentioned in the report was a District-led effort to eradicate the aggressive invasive grass *phragmites australis* that has taken hold in a critical habitat area on the shoreline of the Lake; the completion and placement in the Preserve wetlands of a raft habitat meant to attract the threatened species, Forster's Tern; dedication of a sign meant to thank donors for the 2017 acquisition of 40 acres of wetlands for protection; refurbishment of historic wayfaring wooden signs; the retirements of two Board members – Mike Doman, who completed one term with the District, and Michael Sabella, who had served as District treasurer for 20 of the 21 years he's served. Michael Sabella got a standing ovation from the crowd and Board.

A question from the floor regarding the rock's origin and about the timing of the retirement reception for Michael Sabella was asked. Board member Gómez-Ibáñez confirmed the rock was left behind by the receding glacier of 10,000 years ago. The Chair responded that all were invited to the reception being held at the Lake Ripley Country Club at 1 pm on Sunday, September 22, 2019.

V. Treasurer's report

Sabella explained that his role as Treasurer was to safeguard the financial assets of the District. He outlined his duties. He reported the financial condition of the District as very strong. Unrestricted funds on Dec. 31, 2018 are \$60,000, an increase from the prior year of \$2000. Treasurer read into the record that WI §33.29 (2) "All governing Lake Districts are required to have an annual audit of the organization's financial transactions prepared at the close of the year and presented at the Annual meeting. The Audit may be performed by an outside accounting firm or internal committee comprised of Lake District residents chosen by the Chair and approved by the Board." Sabella explained that the Lake District uses the latter method and thanked the Audit Committee, consisting of Jameil Breit, Dave DeGidio, and Deb Kutz, for its service. The Audit Committee chair, Deb Kutz, read its minutes and report (both attached) into the record. The Audit Committee found no exceptions to the financial records as presented. Chair DeGidio thanked the Audit Committee for its good work. **Mark Heynis moved and John Tilp seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. Passed unanimously.**

VI. Authorization to use unrestricted funds, capital reserves, or other financial strategies to purchase land available that is beneficial to the preservation of Lake Ripley

Chair DeGidio explained that the District occasionally gets contacted by property owners and realtors about properties in the area becoming available. The District Board and staff follow up on these by exploring the properties and discussing their impact on lake and preserve management at Board meetings. If and when properties are deemed appropriate for pursuit, the Board asks for authorization from voters to use a variety of financial strategies for obtaining them.

Roger Rude asked about which specific properties were under review. Chair responded that discussions have been in closed session at the request of the property owners so the District is not yet in position to disclose that. Jason Hernandez asked why a property at the head of Ripley Road from County Road A, near where the inlet creek crosses under Ripley Road, was not purchased by the District. The Chair responded that the lot was not considered strategically important enough to the mission of the Lake District to justify its price. Rude asked if the Board considered the impact on staffing that additional properties would demand. The Chair said that the Board considered that in its deliberations around acquisitions, among many other factors. The Chair further explained that any property that abuts our existing holdings, or that abuts the lake itself, or the inlet or outlet creek, or have other significant attributes that would sequester nutrient away from inlet and the lake, has heightened strategic interest to the District Board. Roger Rude asked about a specific property. The Chair repeated reasons earlier given for not being more specific.

Mark Heynis/Jan Papa moved to authorize the use of unrestricted funds, capital reserves or other financial strategies to explore and potentially purchase land available that is beneficial to the preservation of Lake Ripley. Motion passed all ayes, one nay.

VII. Discussion and possible action on other Business that can be legally considered by the District

Water Safety Patrol chief, Bruce Gondert, gave an informational report about the history, funding, and operations of the Lake Ripley patrol. Funding comes from the Federal government through the Coast Guard, is administered at the state level by the DNR, and at the local level by the Town of Oakland. In his 30-year history there has not been a significant injury or fatality on Lake Ripley. The Chief took a question from the audience including whether there'd be a boating safety class for children as he'd earlier done. He said that DNR on-line classes had replaced these and referred attendees to <https://gowild.wi.gov/>. In response to a question about a written list of boating regulations/requirements, the Chief handed copies of a blank inspection sheet to all participants. A resident asked what happens when a boat is found to be short of life jackets. The Chief explained that the boat was escorted to shore and

was allowed back on the water when they returned with the proper number of PFDs. He confirmed that Slow No-Wake hours were from 7:30 pm – 11 am.

On other matters, Roger Rude asked if the Board had considered blocking the inlet creek water with a gate over the culvert where it crossed under Ripley Road. The Chair responded that a similar idea had been tried earlier with a more natural obstruction/dam within the wetlands that we own; the Chair said that getting the cooperation of the Town to let us block the culvert would be a major obstacle. Board member Kolb said that the principle of slowing the water down and getting it out of the ditches is one that we are pursuing in wetlands. A resident recounted his conversation with a visiting amateur spearfisher opining that Lake Ripley is one of the clearest in the state. Board member Kempel, who does the water quality testing for the Lake, agreed that our spring Secchi ratings this year were on the very high side, indicating good clarity. Mark McNally, Village of Cambridge president, spoke to three ways that the District's cooperation with the Village is welcome and invited more collaboration in the future. Richard Moen's remarks were that buoys and boat launch education around Aquatic Invasive Species has been well received this year. He also wanted the District to consider dredging of sediments at the inlet as a strategy for reducing internal nutrient loading of the lake. Jason Hernandez asked that the Board consider a fund for property acquisitions. Kolb responded that he is looking into that on behalf of the Board. Jan Papa gave commentary that modern dredging practices are less destructive than old dredging practices.

VIII. Approval of budget and tax levy

Jason Hernandez moved to approve the budget and levy as proposed. Dave DeGidio seconded. Passed unanimously.

IX. Tabulation of vote and election of Board Members

The Chair announced the outcome of the election. Deb Kutz obtained 26 of 27 votes cast; Doug Maurer obtained 25. One ballot left blank.

X. Adjournment

Jenny Burrow moved to adjourn/Steve Tesmer seconded. Motion passed. Meeting ended at 10:58 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Georgia Gómez-Ibáñez, Secretary
Recorder: BG

Date