



**Lake Ripley Management District  
Meeting of the Board of Directors  
July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 9:00 AM  
N4450 County Road A  
Cambridge, Wisconsin, 53523  
Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Jimmy DeGidio, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Board members present in addition to DeGidio: Debbie Kutz, Georgia Gómez-Ibáñez, Steve Bieschke, and Meg Turville-Heitz (Jefferson County Representative). Doug Maurer was excused. Also present: Lianna Spencer – Lake Manager, Arthur Watkinson – WDNR Lakes Biologist, Dave DeGidio, Keith Kolb and Roxane Schiller.

**II. Public Comment**

There was none.

**III. Approve Minutes of June 15th, 2024, Board meeting**

**Without discussion, Bieschke made a motion to approve the June minutes, seconded by Kutz. All ayes. Motion passed.**

**IV. Treasurer's Report**

Kutz reported on the budget and expenditures for June. Receipts for June amounted to \$15.00, which was a garnishment fee. Disbursements for the month amounted to \$17,030.41. Kutz noted that nothing was unusual for the month other than weed harvesting costs were less than expected because high water/no wake delayed weed harvesting for a week. There is \$50 in petty cash and \$172,005.62 in the checking account. The 15-month CD has \$104,804.76, and the 12-month CD has \$105,712.43. Kutz was thanked for her report. **Gómez-Ibáñez made a motion to approve the June Treasurer's report, seconded by Bieschke. All ayes. Motion passed.**

**V. Town of Oakland Representative Update**

DeGidio gave the update explaining that Ted Vratny, Town of Oakland Chairman, had resigned July 9<sup>th</sup>, and that recently Laura Payne had been appointed to fill that position. It has not yet been decided who the Town Board representative to the Lake Board will be.

**VI. Jefferson County Representative Update**

Turville-Heitz had several updates of interest to us. The State Department of Transportation is planning a safety study of Highway 18 at Hope Lake Road. Two 'Brew with a View' events are coming up July 25th and August 22nd. Turville-Heitz has been appointed to two statewide roles: the WI Land+Water Board, which lobbies on behalf of all county Land and Water Conservation Departments (LWCDs) and County Land Conservation Committees. Its current legislative goals include (among other concerns) funding LWCD staff, eligibility for who can get help for contaminated wells and funding farmland preservation/ag enterprise efforts. She was also appointed to the Wisconsin Counties Association's Agriculture, Environment and Land Use steering committee which helps set the environmental lobbying agenda for the Wisconsin Counties Association. The committee approved resolutions that, after they are approved by statewide county board votes, will be added to lobbying priorities. These include support for enhanced wake regulations and aquatic invasive species control, potentially having consequences in Lake Ripley and the District. She was thanked for her update.

**VII. Lake Manager's Report and Correspondence**

Spencer reported on another busy month, touching on some of the subjects covered in her written report. First and foremost, the Critical Habitat Designation is effectively active and official at this point, with the report online, the shape files uploaded to the Surface Water Data Viewer, and letters to lake riparians all sent out. The Cost-share Program continues to be busy. Shoreplace has nearly completed their project, a new project has received preliminary approval from the committee, and another (previously approved) is expected to be completing their project in August. The homeowner that allowed the District to install native vegetated mats in their ditch is very happy with it. Final reports have been submitted to the WDNR for grant LPL175-921, so reimbursement can now come to us, once processed. The phragmites grant is in its final year. Water quality monitoring continues. We have been asked by the WDNR to participate in a zebra mussel populations dynamics study. The Park Road rebuild continues; the culvert replacement, long delayed by high water, is expected to happen Monday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are bringing 17 bylaw changes to the annual meeting, mostly correcting statutory citations and minor word errors. We will be addressing District Electronic Policy changes necessitated by rules to make every governmental system more secure. The summer Ripples is ready for mailing.

**VIII. New Business**

**a. Per Diem Policy discussion and possible action**

This policy sets clear guidelines for staff requesting reimbursement for expenses incurred during travel on business for the District. It includes a statement of policy as well as an Employee Reimbursement Form and utilizes the U.S. General Services Administration/Per Diem rate for Wisconsin to determine reasonable reimbursement rates. **Turville-Heitz made a motion to approve this policy with corrections in wording about use of personal vs District vehicles. Bieschke seconded. All ayes. Motion passed.**

**b. Request for Qualifications discussion and possible action**

We received two responses to our RFQ solicitation, from Stantec and Merjent. Much discussion about this important decision. We chose Stantec as being local, ready to start, with appropriate staff and a correct understanding of our goals. **Gómez-Ibáñez made a motion to hire Stantec, seconded by Turville-Heitz. All ayes. Motion passed.**

**c. Bylaw updates discussion and possible action**

DeGidio presented the changes one by one. Most involved small corrections of statutory numbers and/or wording. Gómez-Ibáñez asked for clarification about #8: Article III. This is something already in state statutes regarding Lake Districts; we are just making it clear in our own bylaws. **Gómez-Ibáñez made a motion to accept the bylaw changes as is, seconded by Bieschke. All ayes. Motion passed.**

**IX. Old Business**

**a. Critical Habitat Designation update**

Arthur Watkinson was present to give this update himself. He reported that the designation is officially active, with the designation online, the shape files uploaded to the Surface Water Data Viewer, and the letters to riparians and other entities mailed. A 30-day period for contesting the designation begins Monday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Watkinson agreed that the process is cumbersome, but probably necessary in this time when the DNR is seen by some as government overreach. Watkinson received a happy round of applause for helping steer this through.

**b. 2025 Budget discussion and possible action**

Kutz noted that the accounts for legal fees and outside accountant are expected to be up. She noted that because three board members do not take stipends, they were able to budget less in that account. The Capital Reserve account was reduced but the Preserve budget was increased to fund our inlet creek and adjoining wetlands project. Spencer added that we currently have \$10,000 in this year's budget for that project, so it can start now. **Gómez-Ibáñez made a motion to approve the 2025 budget proposal as is, seconded by Bieschke. All ayes. Motion passed.**

**X. Announcements**

DeGidio had two announcements: Gómez-Ibáñez is on the ballot, and August 17<sup>th</sup> is the date for our annual meeting. Turville-Heitz added that at the July 25<sup>th</sup> Brew with a View the NRCS would have their rain simulator on display. Watkinson commented that these simulators are very cool and he hoped this one would include the lake version.

**XI. Adjournment**

**Turville-Heitz made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bieschke. All ayes. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 10:34 AM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Georgia Gómez-Ibáñez, Secretary  
Recorder: Lianna Spencer

Date: July 24, 2024