

HLA monthly meeting minutes for 6/24/24.

HLA monthly BOG meeting held on Monday, June 24, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 6:43 PM by President Jay Cassella.

Member attendance by zoom: Lloyd Pearson, Andrea, Marybeth Russo, Mr. Remski, James and Victoria Nicholson, Tim and Andrea Hayes

Attendance in person: Alan Howell, Jean Cassella, Alan Stokke.

Board members attending in person: Jay Cassella, Sheri Berger, Brian Polak, Frank Nunes, Bob Kiehm, Heather Edelson.

Absent board members: Laurel Hoynoski, Cynthia Porriello.

The floor was open to general discussion, Lloyd Pearson inquired regarding the contract for septic pump out, and whether or not Cahill had been awarded the contract? He indicated that he had he recently called inquiring about his pump-out dates and was told by Cahill that they had not received the contract at that time. Jay Cassella indicated he would follow up to make sure that the contract had been received and signed.

Tim Hayes inquired about the status of drainage improvements at West Shore Dr, he indicated that after recent heavy rains, there have been areas washed out, and some damage to the road. It may be necessary to apply some riprap. He was advised the area would be examined, and the matter looked into. He also wondered whether the Hidden Lake Association would benefit from the possibility of renting out some of its association property for the placement of a cellular phone tower. He is wondering if that could be an option for the association to explore. Victoria Nicholson indicated that Wi-Fi boosters are a good option for helping with bad cell phone reception, it was noted that was not the reason for Tim Hayes inquiry regarding renting association land, but rather as an additional source of income.

Alan Stokke indicated that a local nonprofit animal sanctuary, A Place Called Hope, is often looking for fish to feed it's rescue birds. Would it be beneficial to explore some system for the local catch being channeled to them for that purpose? Jay indicated that some members are donating Pickrell, which they catch, but that it appears most fishing on our association lake is catch and release.

Approval of last month's minutes for the monthly meeting held June 3. Sheri sent me an email with some minor corrections including spelling of last names and grammar. A motion was made by Sheri Berger and seconded by Brian Polak to accept the Minutes of the of the June 3 meeting with the proposed corrections, the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report was provided by Bob Kiehm, he reviewed the most up-to-date figures and indicated that the interest payment on our long-term certificates of deposit have been credited to our account. Yearly stipends were distributed to the HLA officers. There

were several reimbursement checks cut for various expenses by multiple committee chairs. It was also noted that three line items ended the year overdrawn by a total of approximately \$3,800. As of this report, the association has \$143,716.21 in total assets. A full written accounting was provided for the record and will be posted online. A motion was made by Frank Nunes and seconded by Heather Edelson to accept the treasurers report. The motion passed unanimously.

Tax collector's report was read by Sheri Berger. She indicated that there were no tax collections received during the month of June. Total tax revenue stands at \$65,274.87. She indicated that new tax bills will be going out this week with a payment due by August 1, 2024. She indicated that several liens were placed on some of the delinquent properties but no payments have been received on any of those. She also noted that none of those existing liens are yet eligible for collection through a tax sale.

Septic report: there was no septic report, Jay Cassella indicated that the list of properties to be pumped along with the respective dates has gone out to the affected property owners, and that the contract for pumping out the Association member's septic tanks was once again awarded to Cahill, he will make sure that the contract has been received signed and filed. The list of eligible properties is currently on the HLA website.

Road committee: There are currently no members on the road committee, volunteers are needed and welcome. This will be further discussed under New Business.

Lake and Dam committee: Marybeth Russo spoke to the matter and indicated their last meeting was held on June 20. Amber and Ron Trembley are two new members who have joined the committee. Marybeth reviewed their progress thus far and several items requiring follow up as well as plans for the next few weeks. It was noted that no erosion blankets were placed at the beaches this year, the results will be tracked to compare results from years past with and without said blankets. Buoys have been placed to mark out the various areas of the lake and beaches. It was noted that the sand at the beaches needs to be raked due to washout and erosion and there has been some movement of the riprap. Lake water testing will be conducted this week. Boat registration notices are going out again. There will be a redoubled effort to track unregistered vessels. The association is still in need of purchasing some previously discussed equipment that was recommended by AER for the purpose of tracking the water quality in our lake. President Cassella proposed that a Motion be made to add discussion and approval of this purchase to today's meeting agenda. A Motion was made by Frank Nunes and Sheri Berger seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Aquatic Wildlife committee: There is no report today.

Bylaw committee: The report was presented by Brian Polak. There was a meeting on June 23 where the results of the May annual meeting vote were again discussed. There will be some updates to the Bylaws coming up as a result of the Amendments that passed muster through the annual meeting vote. The changes will be posted on the

website. At the June 23 meeting the committee members also discussed section 51–51A, it was decided that matter will be tabled permanently. Some of the other failed amendments will be rewritten with new language. It was also noted that section 24 was not voted on due to some miscommunication, the committee will try to get it resubmitted. It was also decided that changes in the voting process will be looked at once again. Jay Cassella asked for a Motion to add these items. Bob Kiehm made a Motion and Heather Edelson seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Audit committee: The report was presented by Alan Howell, he indicated there is not much new to report. They will be meeting again in the month of July. The annual report is up on the website in an interim version, the final and audited report is expected to be completed by August 2024.

Web and Facebook committee: The report noted that there are some Minutes missing from the Aquatic Wildlife and the Lake committees. Marybeth Russo indicated that she would send me the annual minutes and I will forward them to Heather Edelson for posting online. Sheri Berger interjected that she has the Minutes and will send them directly to Heather.

Old business: There was a significant amount of information regarding our insurance coverage gathered from multiple sources, including two different insurance agents and our attorney. The consensus findings are that volunteer workers are only covered if they are named in a lawsuit and for the purpose of defense costs to protect the association. It was pointed out that because they (Association members) are parties to the Association, they cannot initiate a lawsuit as they would essentially be suing themselves, and for that reason this is not a liability risk for the Association. The second opinion also provided essentially the same assessment. Volunteers are excluded from medical payments as well as from assault and battery claims. Our attorney said that he is unsure of the answer and deferred to the terms of the particular insurance policy. It was noted that insurance policies are deliberately vague on many issues, but he can however draft a waiver of liability for volunteers to sign prior to engaging in volunteer work for the association. He did make a point to note that that it is never a guarantee against anyone attempting to sue. It was also noted that most similar associations use volunteers to their benefit without any such issues. Jay feels that these recent efforts and opinions by the above discussed parties should be sufficient to once and for all put this matter to rest. It should be the Association's / Board of Governors position that any member wishing to pursue deliberations on this matter any further should do so by having their attorney pursue it through legal action.

Bob Kiehm indicated that in discussions with multiple banks, Webster bank offered us a 4% interest rate on the renewal of our long-term certificate of deposit for a period of six months and that Citizens bank offered 5.1% for eight months but that at the time of him attempting to open such certificate of deposit at Citizens bank they attempted to pull a "bait and switch" by adding additional terms and requirements. It ended up being that there is a Business Money Market account available that offers 5% for a period of one year. The result was that the Association opened up a Money Market account instead

but the 5% rate guarantee was never provided in writing but rather verbally. They (Citizens Bank) assured Bob that they would hold that 5% rate for a full year regardless of any Fed rate fluctuations. The certificate of deposit account at Webster bank was closed. This new Money Market account is also better in the sense that it provides liquidity that the association can tap for any unforeseen needs.

New business: The West Shore drainage project was discussed, it was noted that there has been some road damage in that area. The Board of Governors previously approved some work and had monies left over from last year for it, however, it was not completed in time due to having to wait for clarification on the insurance coverage questions. That allocation must be spent by June 30, 2024 and at this late juncture it is highly unlikely that it can be accomplished in time. There is \$693 remaining in the allocated funds which will likely not be used before the deadline.

Jay Cassella indicated that he has received two separate quotes for repair of the drainage pipe and necessary roadwork on West Shore and that both came in at \$5,900. He noted that alternatively, the work can be done by volunteers and with rental equipment. Jay asked for an allocation of \$3,000 for materials and equipment rental to be taken from the Road and Maintenance line item as well as the Repairs line item. E. Shore Dr. also suffered some washout damage to driveways. There are already some materials on site to counter some of that damage, but it may be necessary to bring in additional materials. The level of work necessary there is not likely to be achievable by volunteer work and may require hiring a contractor. A quote was provided by River Valley for \$6,560, there is another quote that came in, but it is unclear as to the scope of work and it will need to be sent back for clarification. Bob Kiehm submitted a quote that he obtained from a different company for \$3,500 but that quote is also unclear as to the scope of the work. The area requiring work abuts the Burr property. Jay feels that the River Valley contractor quote is the best option on hand at this time. There is \$2,600 left in the Road and Maintenance repair line item which will revert back into the General Funds if not used, there is an additional \$2,000 in reserves. This proposed project would wipe out the full budget for the upcoming fiscal year and as such the Board of Governors would need an approval for additional funding. The Board of Governors will need a new approval for additional funding to be approved at a Special Meeting once the total costs are determined.

The Lakeview and Westshore intersection is also in need of assessment in order to ascertain the level of work needed and estimate the cost to remedy damage in that area. A Motion was made by Bob Kiehm to proceed with the West Shore project \$2,000 allocation from the Road Drainage line item and \$1,000 from Road Maintenance. The motion was seconded by Heather Edelson and passed unanimously.

Marybeth Russo presented further regarding the needs for funding approval for purchasing of necessary equipment for lake water quality monitoring. The equipment includes a Sechi disk that will cost approximately \$27.92, as well as a Parameter necessary to measure the pH levels and dissolved oxygen in the water as well as temperature and atmospheric pressure. These are parameters necessary to track our

lake's health. The full Parameter kit cost approximately \$1,300. It is unclear if when we submit this data to the tracking website, we will have access to the data submitted by other lake associations. It would be beneficial to do so as it could provide us with a basis of comparison. A Motion to approve funds for this equipment to be taken from the Lake Weed Removal line item was made for a total of \$1,327.92. The motion was made by Sheri Berger and seconded by Bob Kiehm and passed unanimously. The purchase must be finalized by the end of June.

Bylaw submission for amendment number 24, vice president Brian Polak proposes the change to the language requiring the Recording Secretary responsibilities to include all meetings, be changed to the Recording Secretary, only being required to record Monthly, Special Meetings and Annual Meetings instead. He read in detail the entirety of the current language, as well as his proposal to change only the first sentence to clarify, which meetings need to be covered by the Recording Secretary. A copy of the proposal was provided to Jay Cassella. This proposed By Law change will require the calling of a Special Meeting. A Motion was made by Frank Nunes to call for a Special Meeting to set these proposals for vote, the Motion was seconded by Heather Edelson and passed unanimously.

The floor was open to general discussion: Marybeth Russo announced that the Aquatic Wildlife committee will be holding a workshop on July 27 to teach members and all those interested on how to build bird houses for Bluebirds. She asked that we spread the word to make this a well attended event. Also, it was noted that there is a dip on Ledge Drive that has been discussed and needs to be fixed when work is done on E. Shore Dr. Jay indicated that it was already in the plan, the equipment is already accounted for and no additional materials are needed.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bob Kiehm and seconded by Brian Polak, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM