

Lakes Committee - Town of Plum Lake
October 9, 2024, 9:00 am
Town of Plum Lake Town Hall, Sayner WI

Present: Wayne Ax, Cheryl Carper, Joe Heitz, Cathy Higley, Bob Jackson, Bob Munsen, Doug Pinney, John Richter, Mike Stroh, Lynn Wiggins

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Bob Jackson, Chair.

1. Open Meeting Verification – Notice of the meeting was appropriately posted at the Sayner United States Post Office and on the Town of Plum Lake website.

2. Secretary's Report

A. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 11, 2024 – Upon a **motion** by Wayne Ax and seconded by Joe Heitz, the minutes of the September 11, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

B. Motion Approved by Email Vote – On October 1 John Richter made and Bob Jackson seconded a **motion**: To approve the expense for a focused Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) survey on Plum Lake to be performed by Onterra LLC beginning October 2024.

Background information provided to the Committee included an itemized breakdown of the total \$2740.00 cost for the survey.

The Committee **approved** the motion with nine members voting in favor, one opposed and one not submitting a vote.

3. Treasurer's Report – Doug Pinney reported on the Year-to-Date Project Analysis for 2024.

Clean Boats Clean Waters - As of today \$11,490 in donations have been received in 2024. This is approximately the amount of donations that will be needed for the 2025 budget if approved by the Town Supervisors.

A total of \$43,000 income is pending from the Wisconsin DNR related to Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW), I-LIDS, and the Little Star EWM Remediation projects.

Upon a **motion** by John Richter and seconded by Bob Musen, the Treasurer's report was unanimously accepted.

4. Vilas County Update – Cathy Higley reported:

A. Phragmites – Cathy and Steve Garski have continued monthly removals of phragmites on Razorback Lake. Only two shoots were found during the last removal which is a marked improvement over previous removals. Additional lakes in the Town will be added to the program next year.

Cathy hopes to train Town road crews to identify and report Phragmites when observed during their daily activities.

B. 2025 Grants

- i. Decontamination Units – A grant is being applied for to continue the decontamination unit program on the current lakes. Bob Jackson and Joe Heitz will continue to do community outreach regarding the program; Bob will sign a letter of support.

The decontamination unit is owned by the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and leased by Vilas County to provide coverage at the landings.

- ii. Clean Boats Clean Water – Cathy is applying for a grant to provide ice packs and towels for CBCW personnel.

5. New Business –

A. Status of 2024 Programs –

i. BLIMS –

1. Maintenance – Removal of ILIDS cameras is planned for October 22 and 23.
2. Enforcement and Video Monitoring – There has been one additional suspected violation since the last meeting.

ii. Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) Remediation –

1. Little Star Lake – Remediation for Little Star Lake is incorporated into the Onterra, LLC (Surface Water Monitoring) grant for 2025.
2. Plum Lake – As noted in 2.B above, the motion to fund a focused survey for EWM on Plum Lake passed by email ballot on October 1. Jamie Van from the North Lakeland Discovery Center has revisited Plum and sent photos of samples of suspect plants to the DNR for identification. The specimens are believed to be either Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) or a hybrid watermilfoil (HWF). The Committee agreed that genetic testing of the plants is needed prior to submitting a grant for remediation.

Staff from Onterra, LLC visited Plum Lake yesterday and, in consultation with Jamie Van, obtained samples of several of the plants noted in the Discovery Center report. These samples will be sent for genetic testing.

iii. Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW)

1. Grant – The submission deadline for the 2025 CBCW grant is November 15, 2024. The grant is being prepared by Bob Jackson and Cathy Higley.
2. Monitoring Coverage
 - a. Interns – no report; completed their work in August.
 - b. Paid Volunteers – Paid volunteers have spent approximately 200 hours to date monitoring Town landings and will continue coverage for another week or more depending on lake conditions and activity at the landings.

- iv. Fish Sticks – Installations on Lake Laura, Star and Plum will begin in January 2025 if conditions permit. Cathy is preparing permitting for Star; permits for Plum and Lake Laura are in place.
- v. Rapid Response Lake Surveys – The final written report of the AIS surveys on Star, Plum, Razorback, Laura, Ballard, Irving, and White Birch Lakes is pending.
- vi. Enhanced Wake Ordinance – Signs notifying the public of the ordinance were posted at public landings and notice of the ordinance posted at several other locations throughout the Town. Lake associations are also notifying their members of the ordinance.
- vii. Lake Management Plan (Surface Water Monitoring Grant) – Bob Jackson and Doug Pinney participated in a conference call with the DNR discussing the grant.

The Town Supervisors approved the plan at their meeting on October 8.

- B. 2025 Budget - Doug distributed the preliminary 2025 budget discussed at the last meeting and which is pending approval by the Town Supervisors. The proposed net 2025 Lakes Committee budget for the Town is \$50,564. This includes \$11,835 for the Town's portion of the Surface Water Monitoring Grant, \$8000 for point intercept surveys by the North Lakeland Discovery Center, and an estimated \$8500 net expense to the Town for EWM remediation on Plum Lake.

6. Other New Business and Citizens' Comments –

- A. Rusty Crayfish – Mike Stroh asked about the current status of rusty crayfish. John Richter reported that there are very few rusty crayfish in Plum except in Starlight Bay where the population persists. Several native crayfish have been identified which may indicate that they are returning to the lake.
- B. Fish Stocking – Bob Munsen reported that due to budgetary constraints stocking of the regional lakes by the DNR has lagged recently. The Musky Club Alliance of Wisconsin has committed \$100,000 to stock lakes at 2023 levels. The stagnant price of fishing licenses over the years appears to be, at least in large part, one of the reasons for the budgetary shortfall. The Alliance is committed to encouraging an increase in fishing license fees.
- C. Sediment Masses – Bob Jackson reported that on September 29 several large masses of floating sediment were observed on Lake Laura, something that has occasionally been seen on other lakes. This may be due to gases formed on the bottom of the lake causing sediment to float to the surface. John Richter noted that the quagga mussels, an invasive recently found in lakes in southern Wisconsin, reside on lake bottoms and produce gases as part of their digestive process.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 am.

The next meeting of the Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake will be held in May 2025, specific date and time pending. Committee work in the interim will be accomplished through email and phone.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynn Wiggins, Secretary