

Approved 8-27-18

Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association (VCLRA) Board of Director Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 23, 2018 (weather delayed from the originally scheduled date
of April 16, 2018) – St. Germain Community Center

BOD Present: Steve Budnik (President), Tom Ewing (VP/Secretary), Jeff Currie, Carol Warden, Paul Lewandoski, Debby Soberg, and advisor Cathy Higley. Absent: Anne Kretschmann, Bob Barofsky, Pat Barofsky, Norm Wetzal, Karen Dixon and Celeste Hockings.

Call to order: President Steve Budnik called the meeting to order at 9:09 AM and announced the absence of a quorum, hence no official business was conducted (no actions/votes). However, an information-only discussion of agenda topics was performed.

Agenda review: No changes.

Secretary's report: Secretary Tom Ewing provided an overview of the draft minutes from the last (October 9, 2017) meeting, noting that 2017 total membership was down from the previous year, a subcommittee was formed to develop a VCLRA scholarship program, a logo apparel/gear e-store had been established, and that further engagement with OCLRA for joint activity was being pursued. Cathy Higley provided a correction for the Water Clarity Project, identifying cash-match partners and noting the project would commence this summer. Since a quorum was not present, the October minutes will require review/approval at the next board meeting.

Treasurer's report: Anne Kretschmann was not available but emailed the treasurer reports in advance. The final spending report for 2017 showed expenditures totaling \$1392.88 versus total income of \$2500 and a checking carry-over balance of \$7663.16, leaving an end of year checking balance of \$8770.28. Memberships totaled 64 for 2017, versus 78 in 2016; and 68 lakes were represented in 2017, versus 76 in 2016. Because a quorum was not present, work on the 2018 budget was deferred; however, Steve Budnik requested inputs by email to facilitate finalizing the budget at the next meeting.

President's report: Steve Budnik indicated that the shoreland initiative grant closeout was finally completed. It proved to be a challenge due to difficulties in locating all the records (lesson learned). Steve noted that VCLRA could continue the program on its own, since the costs are not high. Tom Ewing suggested that given the change in the legal basis for shoreland protection, we should step back and look at how the initiative might be evolved to represent a positive for participating homeowners, especially if lake friendly properties could be associated with higher property values. Jeff Curie also felt the initiative was worthwhile if it provided positive recognition for property owners, much like the Blue Heron award.

Steve Budnik filed the E-postcard required for our 501c3 status; noting it was a simple process. Jeff Currie inquired if we had obtained the Wisconsin sales tax exemption. Steve indicated we have not. Tom Ewing noted that this was a simple web-based application, but it had limited benefit for VCLRA to date because we do not purchase significant supplies in the state. However, Tom noted that Lands' End is a Wisconsin

Approved 8-27-18

business, so if we planned to purchase an inventory of logo gear/apparel, then the savings would likely make a tax exemption worthwhile.

Steve announced that the Multi-county Workshop/Annual Meeting would be held July 13th this year at Nicolet College. This was a month later than usual, so we might get new faces, although Steve hopes we maintain the large turnout of 70-80 participants that we have seen in recent years. Steve noted that our upcoming booth events include Lake Fest (2nd Saturday in June) and Cran-a-Rama in Manitowish Waters on October 6. Steve added that we have also traditionally covered Forest Fest in early August, although last year the crowds were low. Jeff Currie noted that all these events are on the far west side of the county, and we may want to consider the Eagle River farmers market, since it is free to participate and provides many opportunities during the summer (held weekly).

Committee Reports/Old Business:

Blue Heron report and award (Carol): Carol Warden has no nominee yet, but understands that Quita Sheehan has a recommendation. Steve Budnik encouraged board members to submit nominations, since we have an extra month to process them this year. Tom Ewing suggested we should still engage OCLRA to join this initiative, given its high value to promote lake stewardship. Carole will see if she can establish a suitable contact with OCLRA.

County Conservationist/Lake Specialist Report (Cathy Higley): Cathy reported that there will be 6 clean boat/clean waters sessions in 2018. Eurasian watermilfoil water pulling demonstrations are being established by Stephanie Boismenu, AIS Coordinator for Oneida County. Cathy suggested Vilas participants could participate; no dates available yet. Healthy Lakes grants that provide homeowners with funds for shoreland improvements are available on a competitive basis. The Decon Project, funded by a DNR grant, commences this year and targets 4 lakes. Partner UW Oshkosh is developing a training program for this project. Land & Water Conservation has been asked to develop metrics to measure the effectiveness/impacts of their programs. Quita has grant funding to commence the Water Clarity Project, which will examine linkages between water clarity and economic value of lakes. Steve Budnik noted that Quita will have a newsletter article on this project in our May issue.

Shoreland Initiative Grant Completion (Steve/Anne): covered in President's report.

Legislative/WSI Update (Steve): Steve Budnik had a conversation with John Richter to get an update on the shoreland zoning bill that had been drafted and circulated for review. Richter indicated the bill was never introduced due to delays in the budget process that limited opportunities for introducing new legislation. Steve Budnik also learned that the transition to a more sustainable funding model for Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative using foundations instead of LA's was moving forward. Jeff Currie suggested that we should still budget some level of support for WSI, as it was important for LA's to still demonstrate some connection to this initiative. Steve Budnik noted that WSI support was still budgeted in our 2018 draft budget.

VCLRA Clothing/Hats update (Tom): Tom Ewing indicated that a Lands End storefront for logo apparel/gear had been established last October and could be accessed from the VCLRA website. Steve and Tom both

Approved 8-27-18

have ordered logo apparel successfully. Steve Budnik indicated that he tried to order a cap but learned there was a minimum quantity requirement. Tom Ewing acknowledged that caps are more complicated to embroider and require special setup, and thus are not economically viable in single quantity purchases. Tom suggested we budget for a quantity that gets us close to a \$10/piece cost and provides a 2-3 year inventory. Tom noted that many years ago we sold VCLA caps for \$10 at our booth events to build name recognition. Paul Lewandoski suggested we might consider spending \$150 for caps if we get the ~\$10/piece cost, which represents about ½ of our merchandise budget. Jeff Currie concurred that logo clothing items were beneficial for identity and branding, and inquired if we use our logo consistently in our outreach. Tom Ewing indicated that the (revised) logo is used in our exhibit booth, Lake Living brochure and website. However, Steve Budnik noted it did not appear in our newsletter, so we should make a note to include it in the future.

New Business:

July Multi-county Lakes Workshop & Annual VCLRA Meeting: As noted in the President's report, the Multi-County Workshop/Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, July 13th at Nicolet College. Efforts continue to line up speakers; however, Pat Goggin will again be the master of ceremony. Steve Budnik will email more information about this event when available.

VCLRA Scholarship (Steve, Anne, Carol): The VCLRA scholarship subcommittee met with Northern Pines High School to learn more about their process. The subcommittee developed an application, which was distributed electronically, and we did get 1 solid application (Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua). Carol Warden will make the award for \$500 on May 30th. Tom Ewing and Jeff Currie both felt this award should be publicized in local papers and our newsletter, as done for Blue Heron awards, as it demonstrates positive support to the community by VCLRA.

OCLRA/VCLRA update/plans: Steve Budnik had a further meeting with OCLRA representatives. It was agreed that OCLRA and VCLRA will jointly develop a brochure, booklet, or other good-practices guide. Both county zoning administrators have provided assurance they will distribute it as part of their standard packet for responding to zoning inquiries. The zoning committees request a draft to review.

May Newsletter: Steve Budnik will confer with Celeste (absent) to verify next steps. Both Quita and Debby Soberg have ready-to-go contributions. Steve suggest we target May 7 as the deadline to ensure we keep to our usual May schedule.

Board & Officer Positions ending July 2018: Board terms are up for Anne Kretschmann, Karen Dixon, Celeste Hockings, Carol Warden, Jeff Currie and Steve Budnik. It is presumed that all plan to continue on the board. Please contact Steve if this is not the case, or regarding your interest in officer positions.

Next meeting:

Lacking a quorum, the board meeting that follows the Multi-County Workshop will be set when we meet as a board at the annual meeting on July 13th. Steve Budnik will email a couple candidate meeting dates for an

Approved 8-27-18

August timeframe so we can provide preferences and schedule a tentative date. Carol Warden has offered to host the meeting at UW Trout Lake Station.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:04 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Ewing", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Ewing, VP/Secretary VCLRA