



Van Etten Lake Association (VELA)
ANNUAL MEETING
July 8, 2023 – 10:00 AM, Robert Parks Library

MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order at 10:04am.** Seven Board members present, Frank Rainey was excused. Thirty-three stakeholders present.
 - Pledge
 - Introductions
- II. **Approval of Minutes** (June 3, 2023 General Meeting) - Celeste Creger- approved
- III. **Board President's Comments** – Rick Copland
Rick thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
Volunteers are needed to become a Board member and to join one of the committees.
The Weed Committee
 - **Lake SAD History**
 - First Special Assessment District (SAD) was formed in 2006 to eradicate Eurasian milfoil.
 - In later years the focus was/is managing and treating nuisance weeds. About three years ago Lake Pro started treating the algae.
 - **How does SAD work**
 - Oscoda Township bids out a five-year contract to Lake Management companies. The VELA weed committee reviews/approves a company to the township.
 - Oscoda Township bids out a one-year contract to Applicator Companies. The VELA weed committee review/ approves a company to the township. This contract is yearly due to the fluctuating cost of chemicals. The Applicator Company applies for all the required permits.
 - The Oscoda Township requires that there must be a lake manager company and a separate applicator company.
 - Oscoda Township pays the bills upfront and then assess the SAD taxpayers.
 - The current maximum yearly SAD spendable amount is \$70,000.
 - The lake management company surveys the lake then recommends a treatment plan to the weed committee. The Weed Committee reviews and approves the plan then submits to Oscoda Township. The chemical treatment is applied shortly after approval.
 - **Issues with SAD and Lake Pro**

2020 December: Rick discovered that the five-year SAD was expired and a new SAD had not be written. Also, that the LakePro lake management contract was to expire at the end of December 2020. This work should have been done by the Township the summer or autumn before.

 - Rick and Weed Committee Chair, Leonard Brockhahn, with the help of Oscoda Township Supervisor Ann Richards, started a new Five-year SAD. Lake Pro agreed to extend their contract for one more year. Therefore, VELA did have weed treatments in 2021. Rick and Leonard met with the Township Supervisor and Superintendent and put a procedure in place so this issue should not happen in the future.

2022 There were Applicator company issues.

2023 The first lake weed treatment to the North cove was supposed to happen the first week of June. What was promised did not happen.

 - The weed committee held a special meeting on June 12 to discuss the Lake Management company, Lake Pro and the weed issues in the North cove. A plan was put in place to address this year and how to ensure future concerns were address in a

timely fashion.

- A treatment was done in the cove on June 26.
- Stakeholder stated the weeds are slightly better, but still a concern. He presented Leonard pictures of the area.

- **Plan in Place now**

- There will always be a weed committee person on the lake management survey boat.
- The next survey will be July 12 or 13. Weather permitting.
- Create an email address to report the weed concerns. Someone on the weed committee will review the emails and inform Lake Pro of any concerns.
- Lake Pro, the Weed Committee and Rick to have a meeting in the fall to discuss this year's issues and plans moving forward to try to ensure quality lake management.

- **Questions/ comments**

- Can we dredge the cove? Dan Banks stated when he was young, he would dive off a boat into the river. Now he can almost walk across the river.
- Can VELA get grant money? Helen Shastal stated she has written grants in the past.
- It was suggested that a sub-committee be formed from the Weed Committee to research and investigate: 1. If dredging can actually be approved to be done and what the process would be and how much it would cost, 3. To see if weed harvesting is a viable option and what the process would be and the cost. Volunteers from the committee would be needed. LakePro should be the first contact for this subcommittee as they have the expertise in these areas.
- Do we have a copy of the Lake Pro contract? Leonard Brockhahn does.
- Is there anyone who helps with the Pine River? Carol Plunkey a member from the Pine River Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition (PRVEL) stated that PRVEL monitors the habitat of the Pine River. Carol stated that when she was on the VELA board dredging would cost thirty thousand dollars. Plus, you have to pay more money to have the material tested for contamination and to dump the material somewhere. Carol stated that PRVEL can possibly clear the middle of the Pine River for recreational use, but disposing of the debris is problematic and many private landowners will not allow anyone on the riverbank of their property. This is not being currently attempted.
- Is there anything that could be done about mucky bottom now forming in the North cove? Dan Banks contacted Lake Pro for a muck pallet quote. Leonard stated it might not be in the LakePro contract to treat muck.
- Stakeholder commented the Pine River is filling in with weeds (pond weeds) and muck.
- Victoria Targosz stated the Pine River might be considered a federal issue. Maybe get EGLE involved. Possible federal grant money. Victoria offered her legal services free to VELA. Review contracts, grants, etc.
- Charlie Bauer stated that he was told by the applicator company if the treatment was applied before June 15 a larger area could possibly be treated.
- Stakeholder commented treatments need to begin sooner. Leonard stated that the surveys happen in May/June, July and August
- Stakeholder stated that we could use prior survey to do the upcoming treatment. Leonard stated you can only treat what is present in the water.
- Rick stated that because due to the presence of the invasive zebra mussel in the lake, sun light can penetrate further down causing the weeds to grow more.
- Stakeholder stated that the year the cove weeds were harvested was the best weed treatment that year. She also stated that a chemical treatment should have been done after the harvesting.
- Rick stated that Lake Pro will be attending the September VELA meeting. After that meeting, LakePro will be meeting with the Weed Committee to review the 2023 season, plan for the 2024 season and discuss future management of the lake.

IV. Reports:

- **Treasurer** - Leonard Brockhahn
 - Current Financials
 - Saving \$18,671.00
 - Checking \$11,477.00
 - Total \$30,148.00
 - Leonard presented the 2023-24 budget for approval by the membership. Unanimously approved.
- **Weed Committee** – Leonard Brockhahn (see above under President's Comments)
- **Membership** – Diane Banks
 - 80% of the members have paid their dues
 - 270 current members
 - On-line payment for membership dues is now set up
- **Picnic** – Diane Banks
 - Picnic August 5th 6pm.
 - Diane is going to send an email asking what members plan on bringing to the picnic.
- **Lake Monitor** – Dan Stock
 - Weekly clarity sampling started in Mid-May; average May results were 5.5 ft. compares an average of 5.4 for May over the past 10 years. June average was 6.1 compare to an average of 7.0 ft. for June over the past 10 years. July 1 reading was 6.5. July 2 temperature was 77 degrees. Mid-lake June water temperature was 68.7 degrees.

V. VELA Board Member Elections

- The Board shall have a total membership of nine (9)
- Only regular members may hold office
- Only regular members may vote
- The term of office for elected board members shall be two (2) years
- After the Annual Meeting in July, the Board of Directors shall elect from its members a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary

Rick stated that Frank Rainey is not returning, John Mullaly moved, Victoria Targosz will become ad-hoc to the board as the BOD attorney.

Three stakeholders volunteered to become Board members and were unanimously elected. John Kraly, Ed Lanivich, Tim Oharran. Thank you for volunteering your services.

VI. Comment/Question Period - none

Meeting adjourned at 11:44am.

Respectfully submitted by Celeste Creger, Secretary

Upcoming Meetings:

General Meeting: Saturday, September 9, 2023 – 10:00am, Robert Parks Library

Annual Picnic (Mark your Calendars):

Saturday, August 5, 2023 – 6:00pm

Ken Ratliff Memorial Park – Warrior Pavilion