

**LAKE IMPROVEMENT BOARD – PRATT LAKE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Held at Sage Township Hall**  
**September 19, 2023**

Meeting called to order by Terry Walters at 6:29p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Terry Walters.

Present: Terry Walters, Chris Meissner, Ron Taylor, and Lucy Zeestraten

Also present: Ray from Aquatic Nuisance

Absent: Renee Zelt and Craig Mills

Additions to the Agenda: Amend the minutes to read August 15, 2023, and September 16, 2023.

Motion to approve minutes from August 15, 2023, and September 16, 2023, made by Ron Taylor. Seconded by Chris Meissner. All in favor, motion carried.

Correspondence: Micheal Clark, list of property owners that would like their assessment adjusted.

Account ledger received and filed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Ray from Aquatic Nuisance gives his report on the lake. There is some Stary Stone Wart up where the Loons were nesting. Ray also wants to address the Lilly Pads. He wants to make it easier for the property owners in the canals to get out. Terry asked if the landowners could remove the Lilly Pads themselves. Ray states they can cut them all they want. They can use a rack, but the State doesn't want them to grab a shovel and dig them out. Ray also that could be a dredging project. It's also illegal to spray public water without a permit. It's been a couple of years since the lake has need Lilly Pad control. He has noticed some places are getting cut off. When the water cools down the Stary Stone Wart gets more active again. Ray is going to look at the condition of that. Chris asked if the Milfoil dies off in the winter. Ray states is goes mostly dormant but can grow sideways on the bottom. They have been able to knock it down with the first treatment. We haven't put a ton of money into chasing Milfoil like we did a few years ago. We will keep an eye on it if we need to start treating aggressively then we will do that. The budget will allow us to do more treatments if needed. Chris let Ray know what areas on the lake were getting bad with Milfoil. Terry asked about the Lilly Pads and Ray referred to the map. Ray stated that the black squares on the map were the Lilly Pads. The map was passed around in case someone might have a question. Someone asked what about Wild Celery. Ray answered his question and the treatment for them. There was more discussion on the weeds. Someone asked how many times a year do you normally spray and how many times did you spray this summer? Ray answered we have done 1 at this point but we generally do 2 treatments a season. Because of some areas of the lake, we aren't allowed to go in until August 15<sup>th</sup> which is where the Loons are nesting. That's what holds off the second treatment. They keep in touch with the Loon Association in the spring. They have to be notified prior to doing their 1<sup>st</sup> treatment. They are supposed to get back with them about any nesting activity and places where they are at, and it never comes. The state puts conditions on the permits that we full fill as far as notifications and requiring. We never get the information, so we have to rely on the people on the lake or what we find when we get out there. John Mattson stated that you could spray in other places of the lake without affecting the nesting areas. He stated yes, we can. His point is the lake has reached its all-time low and there is so much weed growth. You couldn't get through many passageways. We couldn't even put our boat in until we moved muck. My question is could you have come out and sprayed another time in between at some point? Ray stated we done that in early to mid-August and then turned right around and went to work in other areas in the lake. This is not a Loon nesting area. Could you not have come back and sprayed in that area or lagoon areas that don't have Loon nest areas. We could have done that, but we have had a lot to rain in July which put us behind schedule the rest of the summer. John asked if they are coming back out this year. Ray stated yes. There was more discussion on this and treatment moving forward. Brenda Mattson asked if you can please explain how this extremely low level of water we have this year affects weed growth? Ray stated that as your water drops you have shallower water further out. So, you get weed growth that's coming more abundant further out in the

lake. So as soon as the water levels come back up the sunlight can't penetrate quite as deep, so the activity is closer to shore at that point. So, Brenda states the higher level would be better for the lake. Ray states yes so you can get your boat out. Tim Briggs states that usually this time of year starting in August he couldn't even troll because there is so much cut vegetation on the service. This year I didn't even notice it. I could troll all over the lake. Ray states all the shallow areas, the canals, the bays those are always the worst and all ways have been. More discussion on weed treatment. We have a Loon advocate on the lake. Do you need paperwork from the Loon Association to do your work. Could she call the board and let them know the information you need to know about the Loons. Ray stated that they can get ahold of him directly.

Motion to approve next year board meeting schedule by Ron Taylor. Seconded by Chris Meissner. All in favor. Motion carried.

Terry Walter addressed the board about dredging the canal. We talked briefly today to our attorney. She said you can go through the township to pull the permits. The thing is that permits will take a long time. Ron Taylor asked what you are saying is that Sage Twp. can apply for the permit for that. Terry said no. The group has to get together whoever the subdivision is and the township will take and sponsor to take and assess those people that do the canal. To dredge it. Terry goes on to explain that the spoils can't sit on the banks so a pontoon or a float to dig it out that way. The other problem is that if the dirt is contaminated it has to be sampled and go to a designated area. He is sure the Township has some place they can put dirty. We are looking into it. Terry asked who's the president of the association now? Robin Hanel. Terry states will get with somebody with what she comes up with so we can get it done. Terry thinks about 300 years needs to be done. There was more discussion on the possible project. Some asked what can we do about raising the level? Is it possible to divert water from Cedar River in the spring to Pratt Lake to bring the water level up? Terry said we would investigate that. The property owner states that it would only be in the spring. Brenda Mattson stated that the water will go over the water level structure and with evaporation it will be low again. The structure needs to be set high. There was more discussion on the level and that we are in violation of the court order. Brenda Mattson asked what we are going to do about it and Terry stated we are going to do anything. You will have to get an attorney and take us to circuit court. Mike Rajt comments if they do take it back to circuit court. The way the law works, and we fought this battle with the county 20 years ago on Wiggins. Not only do you will pay your legal fees but everyone on the lake will pay the county's legal fees. Mike Rajt stated to put in a well and Brenda Mattson stated that will cost a lot of money according to Spicer Group and Stacy our attorney. Ron Taylor stated that it's not going to be taken care of overnight. Ron agrees to get some estimates to get water from the Cedar River onto Pratt Lake in the spring. We need to look into that. If it's less, then what it would cost to get a well. Terry states the biggest thing is the permits. Someone has a question on dredging. If you dredge the canals, I live on the northwest lagoon. I took my boat out and had to have 3 guys push it off the mud. I have mud 16 feet out from my seawall. Can you dredge that? Terry said we can look at that and we don't have the weather and the snow we used to have. We must take that into consideration too. There was a discussion on water coming in from Foran Drain, water quality and EGLE.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **COMMENTS:**

A Motion to adjourn was made by Ron Taylor, 2nd by Chris Meissner.  
All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03p.m.



Respectfully submitted.

Lucy Zeestraten, Secretary