

## **Spring All Lake Meeting Minutes**

**June 22, 2020 – 6:30 pm**

**Stone Bank Community Park  
East Pavilion (outside)**

1. The meeting was opened by Greg O'Hearn
2. Opening remarks – Charlie Harkins

Reviewed the history of high water on Moose Lake. MLAA Board was asked by the membership to look into solutions to high water in September 2018 by a vote of 52-3. The Board worked diligently on this and found that no government entity was interested in doing any work on a possible solution. They essentially forced the Board to come up with a solution that those entities could respond to. That led to the overflow pipe solution that was presented to the DNR, the County and the Town of Merton. The DNR is regulatory only and not capable of execution of any plan. The County declared it to not be their problem. The Town is the only one capable of dealing with the issue. There are objections to this particular plan, as there will be with any plan. The plan did provide two valuable pieces of information. One is that Moose Lake at one time flowed naturally through a stream into Okauchee Lake. This has been verified and agreed to by all parties. Secondly, we were able to get an approximate cost of what a reasonable plan, even if not this particular plan, should cost.

Once those remarks were concluded, he went on to discuss the purpose of the meeting. It was to discuss the upcoming survey. The survey is judging people's interest in a solution to the high water and flooding on Moose Lake, not a particular solution. Also people's willingness to pay for a solution. If there is sufficient interest in both, then that can be presented to the Town and the Town would be able to go ahead and hire an engineering firm (with the money from the residents on Moose Lake) who would come up with their plan. All questions relating to that plan would be answered by the engineering firm.

Part of the opening remarks explained the survey and the process. To make sure it is a legitimate survey and no tampering occurs, MLAA has retained an accounting firm (Andaloro, Smith, & Krueger) to manage the survey process for us. They will mail out the surveys, receive the survey-responses, then send the results directly to the town, while carbon copying the board. If a property owner does not respond to the first survey, a second survey may be sent out to those not responding. The board and other property owners have gone to great lengths to make sure everybody's property address and contact information is correct.

3. The floor was open for questions from Lake property owners

- a. Hwy C was lower at one time (maybe the 60's) and many people remember a culvert. Since the county created the problem, can they fix it? This is being explored, but at the moment the county is washing their hands of the problem
- b. What would be the average cost per property? The average cost per property owner would be approximately \$1,000 based on the one example we have.
- c. A survey is going to be sent out. What will the questions on the survey say? The survey will be simple with 3 questions. 1) Are you in favor of pursuing a solution to the high water and flooding problems on Moose Lake 2) Are you willing to help pay for a solution 3) How much are you willing to pay towards a solution, then a brief section for comments.
- d. Are the questions in the survey enough to satisfy the Town to help move this forward? We aren't 100% sure, however they wanted us to have strong support from lake property owners and show we also have financial support to pay for a solution.
- e. Do we need Okauchee Lake approval? That would depend on the project the engineering firm that gets hired proposes. Not all projects would use Okauchee Lake. That is one of the purposes of hiring an engineering firm. They are responsible for developing a project.
- f. Should a tax district be created? The MLAA looked into this, and it was determined this is not the route to go. Tax districts are very expensive to set up. They also create another level of government bureaucracy when we have only one problem we want dealt with.
- g. Is the MLAA a 501c3 and if we need to pay for the solution can our contributions be tax deductible? MLAA at one time was a 501c3. MLAA has filed all the paperwork to reinstate this status. We should find out within the next 60 days.
- h. How is Carl Schurz Park doing with the high water? A board member of Carl Schurz Park was present and said, the park has incurred approximately \$60,000 of damage over the last few years due to the high water. The high water is making their swimming area almost useless, which is one of the highlights of the park. If the highwater continues it will put their bathhouse in jeopardy of severe damage. Carl Schurz Park will be supporting the efforts to solve the high water.
- i. We should ask SEWRPC to do the engineering. It is an option, but the Town will drive this decision
- j. How long will it take the town to move? We are not sure. The survey and showing support from lake property owners is the next step.
- k. How often do we have the water tested for bacteria? We have never had the water tested for bacteria. Something to possibly look into, as several homes on the lake may have their septic systems compromised due to the flooding.
- l. How low should we take the lake down to? This is a decision the town, county and DNR will decide.

- m. Lake Michigan is at a 150 year high. Will the water table go down over time?  
Nobody knows this answer
  - n. A list of questions were submitted by an individual unable to attend. Charlie went through the list of questions--The first seven questions all dealt with the overflow pipe proposal specifically. Since that was not the topic for the night, nor were they to be any part of the survey, those questions were not addressed. The eighth question was why the survey wasn't expanded to include questions on no wake hours. The Board had discussed this at length and decided that if there wasn't support to move ahead with a project, there would be no reason to discuss changing the no wake hours, since there has only been 2 weeks of allowable wake boating in the last 5 years collectively.
4. Some general comments and feedback from lake property owners
- a. Several people spoke up and noted their septic systems are close to being compromised. If the high water continues the quality of the lake water may be contaminated. This could prevent any recreational use on the lake.
  - b. Many people expressed concern over property value.
  - c. Many people expressed concern they have spent thousands of dollars over the years repairing their piers and shoreline only to have the water continue to rise and further repairs are needed
  - d. Several residents cited concern the water is extremely close to their house and only inches away in height from coming inside and ruining their lower levels / mechanical rooms
  - e. There was a couple who spoke, that recently moved from Middle Genessee Lake, where they had similar problems about 8 years ago. Residents were spending as much as \$700 - \$800 a month in electric bills pumping water out of their basements 24/7. That lake went to the city for help and the city stepped in with a plan creating a pipe to the nearest watershed / river. The pipe was approximately 1000 + feet. Several other residents then spoke up and said they are also close to pumping water out of their basements, if the water gets any higher.

8. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm

82 people were present at the meeting.