

OKAUCHEE LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

June 8, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.

Town of Oconomowoc Town Hall

www.olmd.org

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

C. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. Meeting Notice Announcement

The meeting notice announcement was distributed to local newspapers, posted at the Town of Oconomowoc Town Hall, two posting boards, and on the OLMD website.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Roll Call of Commissioners

Present

Carol Wilson

Tom Godar

Dennis Johnson

Bruce Mueller

Dee Schriver

Absent

Also Present

Pat Furno, Accountant for the District

5. Correspondence

Information had been requested by OLMD resident K. Zwick regarding placement of “Slow-No-Wake” buoys in Bay 5. Also, information requested about the application of pesticides was referred to D. Johnson. A letter had also been received from the owner of the Golden Mast regarding agenda item 11b.

6. Comments from the Floor

None.

7. Comments from Committee Members

None.

8. Discuss & Act on Report of the Treasurer

P. Furno reported the following:

Total Revenues:	\$366,324.13
Total Expenditures:	<u>\$89,568.54</u>
Total:	\$276,755.59

No expenses incurred to date were outside of the yearly budget.

D. Johnson moved to accept the Report of the Treasurer as presented. B. Mueller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Approve Checks & Vouchers

B. Mueller moved to approve the bills to be paid for June, 2020. D. Schriver seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

D. Johnson moved to approve the bills to be paid from January, 2020 to March, 2020. D. Schriver seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

B. Mueller moved to approve the bills to be paid for April, 2020. D. Schriver seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

D. Johnson moved to approve the bills to be paid for May, 2020. D. Schriver seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

10. Approve Minutes of the Previous Meetings

D. Johnson moved to approve the October 14, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. B. Mueller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

T. Godar moved to approve the March 10, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. B. Mueller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**T. Godar moved to approve the April 15, 2020 meeting minutes as presented.
D. Johnson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion carried.**

11. Aquatic Plant Management Report

a. Update on 2019-2020 Muskrat Control Program

Arnold Groehler, DNR Animal Damage Control Trapper, noted residents seemed knowledgeable about the muskrat control process. When he began trapping three years ago, he anticipated one week in the spring and another in the fall to trap the lake. Last year he spent approximately nine months trapping and number of muskrats had declined to the point where he did not think they would get much lower. In April, 90 muskrats were trapped. Once people returned in the spring from traveling over the winter months, another 30 muskrats were trapped. There were only a few people left that had called regarding sightings of muskrats rather than actual burrows. This was a good thing because it meant the numbers of muskrats had significantly declined. He suggested the OLMD consider a long-term program for muskrat control. One solution could be to designate one resident in each bay, provide them with the traps and he could show them how to trap the muskrats as has been done in the past. If no one was interested, then a program could be developed that included individual services along with the current program where he trapped the lake at specific times in spring and fall. He currently trapped the lake in spring (\$1,000) and fall (\$1,000) for a total cost of \$2,000. Typical repair bills for damage to shoreline properties were approximately \$200-\$500 and his assistance in repair was currently being provided to residents as a low-cost benefit with residents paying individually if additional digging/repair work was required on their property. If a choice were made to continue the program in the future, he would increase the annual cost of the program to \$5,000 total for the spring and fall trapping. Another option would be to have an annual trapping period for a specified week in the spring and fall and then if property owners contacted him outside of that time period, they would be charged separately on a per case basis depending on what he was asked to do. People seemed to prefer the annual trapping with personalized service offered as an option if there was a wild animal or additional digging/repair work needed on their property. Discussion ensued. A. Groehler agreed to return in the future to provide an estimate of services and options for annual spring and fall trapping at the time of budget consideration.

b. Update On Okauchee Lake Chemical Weed Spraying Program

Chemical weed spraying took place over the last two weeks. Substantial weed growth was noted in Tierney Bay. This was the result of not being able to spray in the fall as had been done in the past. As part of the chemical weed application process, Starry Stonewort locations, depth and plant height were verified. Other weed growth that would normally require treatment was noted in the areas where Starry Stonewort was located. The treatment area near the Golden Mast was approximately 4,000 sf and spanned from the party barge location past the boat launch to the rental slip area. The other area was straight out from the gas tank location near Foolery's and was approximately 1,200 sf. Efforts were underway to work with the DNR in a test program to combat Starry Stonewort. In these infested areas, barriers would be installed from the water surface to the depth of water and would encompass the entire area. The Army Corps of Engineers had set up a test facility with several tanks (10-11) with Starry Stonewort growing in each of them. Each tank was treated with a different "cocktail" of herbicides to see which was most effective. Other treatments had been attempted in other parts of the state that also had lakes with Starry Stonewort. Different factors effected the efficacy of the herbicide cocktail in other locations. Lake experts differed in opinion with the DNR. All agreed it needed to be treated aggressively. Starry Stonewort would likely be with the lake forever and the goal was to manage it. This would be difficult. Starry Stonewort grew from the water depth to eight feet. People could not swim or boat through it. The Clean Boats, Clean Waters program would be critical in other area lakes to prevent the spread. It was believed that most cases of Starry Stonewort originally began near boat launches.

Randy and Lynn Bree, W357N5102 Lakeshore Drive, were present. L. Bree questioned the impact of holding large fishing tournaments at the Golden Mast. Large fishing tournaments were of concern; however, one advantage was that the infestation occurred in its current location with a natural current taking it away from the main lake. No additional infestations in other areas of the lake were noted earlier this year. The weed cutting crew had been trained to spot Starry Stonewort and an incentive was offered to the crew if it were to be spotted elsewhere in the lake.

The current height of existing Starry Stonewort plants was questioned. The plants were approximately one foot tall and located about three to four feet from the surface currently. This was an issue of concern because the DNR would only allow treatment of the Starry Stonewort when the plants were within two feet of the surface and in a growth phase. If this were necessary, boat motors coming in/out of the launch would encounter the plants and they would be distributed

throughout the lake resulting in additional Starry Stonewort plants in other areas of the lake. Potential distribution by the weed cutters were also a potential problem if the plants were not treated soon. Original information provided to the Golden Mast Restaurant owners indicated a treatment period would take place outside of the July 4, 2020 holiday weekend to avoid impacts to increased holiday boat traffic. That was no longer the case. Chemical weed applicators and non-DNR lake experts remained concerned that if the plants were allowed to grow within two feet of the surface as desired by the DNR, the chemical weed application would not penetrate the plant as it should because of the density of Starry Stonewort plant growth that would occur. The DNR also expressed concern about loss of other native lake weeds in the area as collateral damage from the treatment of Starry Stonewort. Discussion took place regarding how best to proceed in a timely manner. An update on Starry Stonewort treatments would be placed on the OLMD website and residents were encouraged to monitor the website for updated information.

Lisa Marks, Golden Mast Restaurant representative, explained that the Weissgerber's Golden Mast Inn (Golden Mast) restaurant owner supported the chemical treatment of Starry Stonewort in front of the boat launch and restaurant; however, it would encompass the entire lakeside of the restaurant and there were boat tenants currently docking their boats in that area that had an equal right to use the lake. The Golden Mast was notified at the end of May 2020 that the chemical treatment originally scheduled for June would take place in July. This would be challenging for the boat tenants and for the restaurant. Due to the COVID-19 virus, the restaurant was not operating at peak volumes. While the lake residents were supportive in dockside, curbside and carry-out service, the boat tenants also helped to support the lake economy. A solution was needed to provide information to the boat tenants and boaters that generally allowed them to make use of the launch and restaurant area. This information would also be better received if provided at the end of a season to prepare people for the next boating season. Cooperation with the OLMD was needed to manage the situation. A letter from the OLMD about the chemical treatment would be helpful. While potential losses could be assumed, a partnership in communication was essential moving forward. No information had been received by the OLMD regarding boat tenants at the Golden Mast. L. Marks suggested perhaps the DNR could provide boat tenants with a free pass to use the boat launches during the time of treatment to assist in mitigating this situation. The history of Starry Stonewort and actions being pursued by the OLMD had been publicized on the OLMD website in 2019 and were included in the 2020 OLMD newsletter. Enforcement at the boat launch was critical to preventing additional spread of Starry Stonewort and other aquatic invasive species. The OLMD would continue to work with the Golden Mast to the extent possible and would attempt to accelerate the process for the inception

of treatment. Chemical treatment contractors would need to be scheduled and coordinated. At this point, chemical treatment of the areas of the lake with Starry Stonewort would take place sometime between July and October 2020 and was at the discretion of the DNR.

Bob Sokolowicz, N64W34899 Road J, questioned the biology of Starry Stonewort. Starry Stonewort resembled native Chara which was brittle and deeper green. Starry Stonewort, however, was almost a translucent looking seaweed that if squeezed would pop and was brighter green in color than Chara. B. Sokolowicz requested a sample to be brought to the August 31, 2020 Annual Meeting for educational purposes.

L. Bree questioned the chemicals being used to treat Starry Stonewort, data efficacy associated with the herbicides, data used to recommend the use of the DASH method of removal for weeds, best practices used in other Wisconsin lakes, boat inspection status at Okauchee Lake boat launch locations, and use of barrier curtains. D. Johnson explained there was a mix of chemicals being used to treat Starry Stonewort instead of one single chemical. No single chemical worked all the time to treat the plant. No data had been provided by the DNR/US Army Corp of Engineers regarding chemicals at this time. No singular best practice had been found in other lakes. The plant growth could grow to eight feet. If the plants were allowed to grow to within two feet of the surface, boat props moving through the infested areas would be of great concern for distribution to other areas of the lake. Barrier curtains were required to contain the chemicals being used to treat the Starry Stonewort plants. While there was not a Clean Boats, Clean Waters crew and/or inspection person at the boat launch there were numerous signs required by the DNR at the launch sites.

Rachel Specht, W351N5458 Lake Drive, noted personnel at the Golden Mast launch had indicated a boat should be inspected and washed before going into or coming out of Okauchee Lake. People often “power launched” to get off trailers and this would likely stir sediment and further distribute the Starry Stonewort. She questioned other options and why the DNR did not close the launch. The Golden Mast had more than 3,000 launches from that location. This had been discussed numerous times with DNR staff; however, the DNR would not do so in the past. In recent years, the OLMD had tried to start a Clean Boats, Clean Waters program at the boat launches; however, no one came forward to volunteer for the program. The impact of transmission was totally dependent on how many boaters took responsibility for cleaning their boats.

- c. Discuss & Act On Compensation For The Closure of the Golden Mast Boat Launch During The Summer, 2020 Starry Stonewort Treatment Program

L. Marks noted a letter had been distributed from the Golden Mast to all Commissioners in advance of the meeting about the potential loss of revenue due to the chemical treatment of Starry Stonewort this summer. She requested a letter from the OLMD indicating the need for closure of the area outside the Golden Mast that could cause a loss of revenue to be shared with boat tenants. Discussion ensued. The OLMD would continue to communicate with the Golden Mast about the chemical treatment this summer. No action was taken at this time.

D. Johnson explained a Goose Round-Up would take place in 2020 only if enough birds were present according to DNR/USDA guidelines. Thus, far only two families had been spotted. There was no penalty to the OLMD if the Goose Round-Up did not take place this year.

12. Discuss Website Items

Updated lake level information, monthly updates to the Waukesha County Aquatic Invasive Species newsletter, information about the 2020 chemical weed spraying permit application, the 2020 newsletter, information about employment for the 2020 weed harvesting crew and weekly weed cutting updates had been added to the website since the regular meeting held last fall.

15. Future Agenda Items

The following item was requested for the next Regular Meeting agenda:

- Update on Aquatic Plant Management Report

16. Set Future Meetings

The next meeting was scheduled for July 13, 2020.

17. Adjournment

T. Godar moved to adjourn the June 8, 2020 Okauchee Lake Management District meeting. D. Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:18 P.M.