

# Sawyer County Lakes Forum

## Meeting Minutes

11/19/2024 9:00am

Sawyer County Courthouse Assembly Room & Online

1. Martin Hanson called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

*\*\*With a low turnout this morning, we would like to stress the importance of making these meetings a priority. We worked hard to get this back up and running and it will only work if members show up. If you can't make it, notice would be appreciated\*\**

### 2. Roll/Introductions

1. Natalie Erler- Sawyer County AIS Coordinator
2. Jean Accola- Little Sissabagama
3. Martin Hanson- Round Lake
4. Donna Carlson- Grindstone
5. Dan Tyrolt- LCO Conservation Dept.
6. Linda Zillmer-Big Chetac/Thomas
7. Jim Meyer- Spring Lake
8. Mike Gardner- Chippewa Flowage
9. Megan Sorenson- Northwest Regional Planning Commission

### 3. Public Comment

None

### 4. Approval of October 30, 2024 Minutes

### 5. Election of Board Officers

A. President: Martin Hanson elected 10/30/24

B. Vice-President: Jean Accola elected 10/30/24

*C/D. Secretary & Treasurer: Still no nominations. Low turnout. Martin will be Treasurer for now. Natalie will take notes for this meeting.*

## 6. Treasurer Report

-Agendas will be posted on the website

-Natalie will create a virtual link for online that will be the same for the future (so there isn't a new link every time, and you'll always have it)

-Report from Phil Nies was that the check was cashed, so the current balance is \$67.27. Phil will have his name and address taken off of the statements. Martin will add his address and membership dues can be sent there. This will all be on the website.

### B.) 2025 Budget:

\$30/year for website (expense)

\$50 to WI Dept. of Financial Institutions (expense)

Suggest a \$500 sponsor donation to the Northwest Lakes Conference (expense)

Suggest buying a Microsoft Cloud account \$100 (expense)

Suggests increasing membership fee to \$35 x 20 lake associations = \$700 (revenue)

Leaves \$50 in bank account

Discussion: Martin created a specific email, [scf.president@outlook.com](mailto:scf.president@outlook.com), for all things related to the forum. Please use this email instead. He proposed to buy a Microsoft Cloud account for \$100 because the free version limits the amount of emails he can send and number of recipients he can send to. Paying for the account would get you unlimited emails, and 5 terabytes of data. If anyone else wants a Lakes Forum specific email let him know. He can add 4 more people (each email account gets 1 terabyte of data). Do you need to have Microsoft downloaded on your computer? No, there is a website interface.

### C.) 2025 Dues:

Dues are currently \$20/year for members. Should we increase to \$35/year?

Discussion: Linda suggested a tiered membership based on the lake classification list (acreage). WI Lakes does it by membership numbers. For simplicity, Martin thinks it's easiest to keep it a flat fee for now. Dan talked about how in previous

years, the intent of the budget was to break even and there was never a need to have a lot of money sitting in the account. Usually had around 12-15 paying members in the past. If we could get 20 paying members, that would be amazing. He emphasized having whatever fee is most appealing to the lake associations is best, whether that is \$20 or \$35, but having a flat fee is easiest. Mike Gardner shared that the Forum used to have a tiered membership system. Martin suggested that dues would be following a calendar year, so sending invoices at the beginning of January and having them due by the end of January. Jean brought up that some of the small associations don't meet as often or only in the summer months and if that would be a barrier if we send it at the beginning of the year. Invoices would include Martin's address to send the checks to as well as a note about if associations can't pay it yet, because they don't meet often or need board authorization to send money, let the Forum know. Marty will work on the dues/invoices.

Motion by Jean Accola, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Meyer to increase the membership fee to \$35 from \$20. Motion passes, all in favor. None opposed.

Motion to approve the 2025 budget by Mike Gardner, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Meyer. Motion passes, all in favor. None opposed.

Do we want a certain monetary amount that needs board approval or approve each expenditure with board approval?

Jean motions a \$50 limit for no board approval. Over \$50 will need board approval. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike Gardner. Motion passes.

Jean motions that the Forum buys the Microsoft email/cloud storage, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike Gardner. Motion passes. Martin will pay with his personal funds right now and then reimburse himself.

## **7. Website Update**

A.) Should we have all Sawyer County lake associations on the website or just the Forum members? We will have all known lake associations in the County and either shade/highlight or put a star next to the associations that are paying members. There will be a "Library" section on the website that will have extra information like the lake classification list. Linda clarified if she was still in charge of creating the lake association list. Martin had sent out an email asking for lake

association contact info and only got 1 response. Some people did not receive this email so he will resend that to everyone.

B.) Should we take down the Facebook page or keep it? Jean is willing to keep the Facebook page going posting when upcoming meetings are, or sharing relevant articles or videos, and directing people to the website.

## **8. Sawyer County Coordination**

A.) Land, Water, and Forest Resources Committee: Marty was there and introduced himself as the President of the forum. This was the first time that the County received a proposal for the formation of a lake district. Callahan/Mud Lakes are at risk of losing the lakes due to the dam. There is no ownership of the dam, and the DNR is requiring that someone fixes the dam or they remove it. Removal of the dam would turn that area into a marsh/swamp. By forming the lake district, Callahan/Mud can tax shoreland and surrounding owners to help pay for the dam and apply for state grants. There are mixed opinions and the boundaries didn't quite make sense as well as possible errors on collecting petition signatures. The LWFRC is holding a special meeting on November 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss this further as this is a very complex issue.

B.) Zoning Committee: Possible adhoc committee formation between all the towns with the upcoming zoning amendments. There're issues with definitions on density of lakeshore development, dwellings versus dwelling units, and multi-dwelling developments.

## **9. Lake Reports**

Spring Lake: Lake is getting clearer now. Secchi depth is 6 ½ ft. Boat landing dock will be pulled out soon. Working very closely with the highway dept. on the repaving project.

Chippewa Flowage: Submitted some DNR grants last week to update their 2008 aquatic plant management plan and to collect more data. They have quarterly meetings with partners. Have a joint agency management plan between LCO, DNR, and USFS. They are trying to increase their volunteer & membership base. They monitor for Purple Loosestrife, Loons, Clean Boats Clean Waters, and Eurasian water milfoil. Dan Tyrolt added in that the flowage doesn't use any

herbicide treatments for control because they have another treatment option-water fluctuation with the dam.

Chetac: They are interested in joining the SCLF! They've had surveys and sediment testing done for native plants and invasive species. No one wants to participate in the management plan that they have, but they are going to start trying to do some of things in the plan for the next 5 years. Birch Lake dam is a 50/50 split responsibility between Washburn and Sawyer Counties. It needs some concrete repair work done which will probably be next year.

LCO Conservation Dept: Survey/field work is done, now doing data entry and grant writing. Email Dan if you want lake data. The dashboards project will be happening over the winter months.

Grindstone: Continuing to carry out their grants. They have 12 neighborhoods that are based on geography with 1-2 leaders per neighborhood. The purpose is for outreach and to create a better sense of community. Some of them have social events and they get to know who their neighbors are. Their membership is now over 50% which is the highest it's been in a long time. Donna noticed that the Sawyer County Record doesn't have some of the addresses listed in the real estate section. Sometimes they are there but sometimes they aren't. This was very useful information to learn who was new to the lake and to welcome them. Jean also mentioned that Little Siss would use that section to see if developers bought land. Donna will reach out to the Record and see why this happening.

Little Sissabagama: No updates. Mentioned the WI Lakes and River Convention will be March 26<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 in Stevens Point and virtually. Suggested having a representative from the Forum attend. Jean motioned to have Donna be our representative (since she will already be there as a presenter), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Martin. Motion passes.

Round: Submitted multiple DNR grants to update their aquatic plant management plan and AIS control. They are looking at forming a lake district but it's very early on with mixed opinions. The main appeal for the district would be the shared cost between everyone for all the lake programs. They have 61% membership.

## **10. Northwest Lakes Conference**

Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the Hayward High School! We will put this on the website and Facebook. We will designate a forum member at the next meeting to have a table to represent the SCLF and hopefully recruit more membership.

## **11. Sawyer County Lakes Forum Annual Meeting**

Thinking to host in July sometime. In the past it was a 2-3 hour event in the morning with coffee/donuts. There would be a regular board meeting and then a presentation. Usually 20-25 people came. Attendance dropped because lake associations started having their own meetings with speakers, picnics, and annual events etc....Discussion included making sure that the presentation was a “hot topic” to entice more people to show up, making attendance to this meeting as part of the dues, asking a local business to sponsor food etc. Maybe having awards for stewardship, leadership.

## **12. Bylaw Changes Discussion**

Martin will update the bylaws to the 2024 version on the website. Martin would like to delegate a subcommittee to work on a draft for new bylaws. Topics to look at/change include: membership levels (tiered vs. flat fee), voting process, designation of voter, increasing the number of board members (currently 7), past president position... Mike, Jean, and Donna will be on the committee. Will be looking for more at the next meeting. Marty will get them a free Zoom account to use and send out both versions (2012 & 2024) for comparison.

## **13. Future Agenda Items**

Who keeps track of the membership? The secretary when we have one :)

## **14. Next Meeting Date**

Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 9am. Online and Sawyer County Courthouse Assembly Room

Meeting adjourned at 10:58am