

Sawyer County Lakes Forum

Meeting Minutes

12/17/2024 9:00am

Sawyer County Courthouse Assembly Room & Online

1. Jean Accola called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

2. Roll/Introductions

1. Natalie Erler- Sawyer County AIS Coordinator
2. Jean Accola- Little Sissabagama
3. Don Stover- Tiger Cat Flowage
4. Dan Tyrolt- LCO Conservation Dept.
5. Linda Zillmer-Big Chetac/Thomas
6. Jim Meyer- Spring Lake
7. Mike Gardner- Chippewa Flowage
8. PJ Schaeffer- Osprey Lake
9. Dave Sievers- Osprey Lake
10. Dick Steininger- Windigo Lake
11. Kurt Schroeder- COLA

3. Public Comment

None

4. Approval of November 19, 2024 Minutes

No one received the minutes, so Jean read them out loud. Linda motioned to approve the minutes, 2nd by Mike. All in favor, none opposed.

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 takers. Tabled to January meeting.

Natalie will take notes for this meeting.

6. Treasurer Report

Revenue: \$35 (1 dues payment)

Expenses: \$84 (new website)

Balance: \$18

Need \$100 in dues revenue to purchase the Microsoft account. Dues notice with payment address is on the website.

To help pay for this new website, we would probably need to reduce the donation amount for the Northwest Lakes Conference unless we get sufficient membership dues.

7. Website Update

A.) New Website

i/ii/iii.) We exceeded the capacity for the current website, so Martin purchased a new website and he was able to get the old domain/URL back.

New website is www.sawycountylakesforum.org

iv.) Jean walked us through the new website.

v.) Old website will remain, but will have a notice to direct people to the new website. Jean made a Facebook post with the new website link. If you're on Facebook, please share the post.

vi.) Linda suggested we look at other area lake associations websites for examples and ideas. Examples: COLA, Grindstone, Whitefish etc....

vii.) Create new logo? No volunteers, discuss at a later time.

B.) Communications

Website only, Facebook, printed mailings? Need to discuss this at next meeting.

8. Sawyer County Coordination

A.) Land, Water, and Forest Resources Committee: Continuation of the Callahan/Mud lake district formation. The LWFRFC is taking it slowly and carefully. This has never been done in the County and they know it will set a huge precedent, so they want to make sure they do it the right way. It was not a public meeting, but there were some public comments. There were 2 attorneys present advising on the small details. Mostly concerned with the boundaries and landlocked properties. Eric Olson from UW Extension Lakes helped guide them through making the properties. Linda suggested that Dave Bloomer may have also helped with this process. The committee will supply a report of findings to the County Board and they will probably recommend changes to the borders.

Side Note: Jim Meyer talked with Phil Nies about the chairman of the LWFRFC and County Board Member, John Suralski, resigning from both positions. They are trying to find a replacement.

B.) Zoning Committee: Sawyer County has changed the website for getting access to meetings and agendas. It will no longer be accessible on the home page calendar. There is a link on the home page that will take you to where the meeting agendas and minutes are now housed.

New blanket special use permits and planned use development topics. Towns asked for improved communication with the County.

9. Lake Reports

Spring Lake: About 6 inches of ice right now. They are trying to figure out who the owner of the boat landing is. There will be a meeting soon with the County Highway Commissioner about the planned repaving/construction that will take place on CTH E (this highway runs along the lake).

Chippewa Flowage: Received a Clean Boats Clean Waters grant for 2025. Waiting to hear back on their other DNR grants.

COLA: Waiting for more ice to form for the fisherman and snowmobilers.

Chetac: There is some ice for the brave fisherman, but birch lake is mostly open.

LCO Conservation Dept: No updates.

Little Sissabagama: No updates. Jean is in Costa Rica for the winter.

Tiger Cat Flowage: Submitted 2 DNR planning grants- one for Burns Lake & one for Placid Lake. They also submitted an education grant that would help pay for signage/kiosks at the boat landings and a website to help educate and get everyone up to speed. They are also rewriting their bylaws and received a 2025 Clean Boats Clean Waters grant.

Osprey: They've battled Eurasian water milfoil for about 20 years. They did a milfoil treatment using "Renovate" (Triclopyr 3) that worked pretty well. They used to request \$200 per property owner to help pay for AIS treatments, but they are asking \$300 for this year. AIS treatments are very expensive. They have about 35-40 members. They are hoping to be a part of the Forum to help make some policy changes down in Madison.

10. Northwest Lakes Conference

Save the Date! Friday, June 20th, 2025 at the Hayward High School

Last meeting, we talked about having a booth at the conference. Jean thought we could maybe get a booth for free depending on how much money we donated. She will check on this. Otherwise, the booth is only \$20. Jean will be at the booth and Don offered to help her at the booth.

11. Sawyer County Lakes Forum Annual Meeting

A.) Formalize organizing committee

Linda & Mike volunteered to be on the committee. Will ask other board members next time, but if there are any speaker or topic ideas, send it to Mike or Linda for now.

Dan commented that we need a good membership base to drive the annual meeting. It needs to be generic enough to appeal to all lakes but also a hot topic that will actually get people to come. Having an annual meeting might be premature since we are still trying to get back up and running.

Linda agrees with Dan. We can't expect to be too ambitious at this point.

The committee will discuss this and go from there. There is no rush.

12. Bylaw Changes Discussion

Haven't met yet. Table this until the committee meets. Dan would like to be on the committee and shares it should be done sooner rather than later. Jean will contact committee members and try to set up a date. (Members are Jean, Dan, Mike, & Donna)

13. Future Agenda Items

A.) Town of Round Lake AIS Education Event

Don shared that the goal is to have a 1-2-hour seminar/meeting at the Round Lake Town Hall to raise awareness about AIS and the importance of keeping your boats and equipment clean. Many people will go to multiple lakes in a day. Thinking about having Megan Sorensen (Northwest Regional Planning Commission) and/or Natalie (Sawyer County) to come speak and educate. No date set yet.

Jean suggests that the Forum could maybe be a sponsor or supporter? Or at the very least, make a Facebook post about it to help spread the word.

B.) Other

Could put AIS educational videos on the website to help with education.

Natalie (on behalf of Donna Carlson) regarding the Sawyer County Record (newspaper) not publishing the new property owners/address in the paper. Donna contacted the paper and they said they had a glitch for a few weeks which is why the addresses weren't being published. But they fixed it and will continue to publish the addresses.

14. Next Meeting Date

Tuesday, January 21st at 9am. Online and Sawyer County Courthouse Assembly Room

Meeting adjourned at 10:09am