

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2019

Attendance: Melanie Bomier, Carlton Co SWCD; Anna Bosch, MPCA; Jim Carlson, Big Sandy Lake; Barb Dahl, Carlton Co SWCD Supervisor; Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Ramona Hooper, McGregor Twp Supervisor; Steve Hughes, Aitkin County SWCD; Dianne Knoblen, SWHIM; Bill Pratt, Aitkin County Commissioner; Bill Reed, Big Sandy Lake; Pat Rath, Lake Minnewawa; Al Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers; Carmen Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers; Janet Smude, Aitkin County SWCD; Franklin Turnock, Aitkin County SWCD Supervisor; Bill Zelazny, North Island Lake; Sharon Zelazny, Island Lake Cromwell.

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm. Introductions were made. The agenda was approved as presented. M/S/C Carmen Rinta / Ray Gurske.

1. 2018-2019 Financial & Activity Summary: Janet Smude shared an annual report for July 2018 – June 2019. Two grant programs were summarized.

The EPA Section 319 Grant was completed in August 2018. We were able to spend \$ 71,765.50 or 83% of this grant. The grant supported shoreline restoration projects, stormwater management projects, educational efforts, and water quality monitoring.

Aitkin County Aquatic Invasive Species grants were also utilized during this reporting period. Funds were used for a variety of education projects including placemats, newsletters, tackle boxes, school programs, coasters, and boat plug docks.

Total expenditures during this reporting period were \$ 18,030.20. Thanks was given to the many volunteers who donated their time to make these efforts successful.

2. Election of Officers: The position of Vice Chairperson was open for election. Pat Rath nominated Ray Gurske for the position. This was seconded by Bill Reed. There were no other nominations. Ray Gurske was unanimously elected to the position of Vice Chairperson, which he accepted.

3. Brief Monthly Business Update: Financial Summary: A financial report for the months of May and June was shared. \$ 2,549.53 was spent from the AIS Prevention Grant. There is just over \$ 500 remaining in this grant account. AIS Grant Handout Materials / Distribution: Pat Rath shared that Boat Plug Docks were popular. They were distributed at Holiday in McGregor and Willey's. Other areas where they might be distributed were discussed. The coasters have been pretty much distributed. Recipients were pleased to take them as a free item. Pat was thanked for all of his work on this project. Aitkin County Rivers & Lakes Fair: The Aitkin County Rivers and Lakes Fair was held on June 15th. Ray Gurske and Janet Smude staffed the booth. Dianne Knoblen helped manage the kitchen. Attendance was good this year – just under 500 people. AIS education items were distributed. Ray and the booth were featured in the Aitkin Independent Age. Ray and Dianne were thanked for donating their time to work at this event.

4. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

4.1. SWHIM: Pat Rath reported that more people are installing docks and storing boats on areas of public deeded water frontage on Lake Minnewawa. This is causing some concerns and Pat has been fielding some phone calls and questions about this.

4.2. Sandy Lake: Jim Carlson shared that the time around July 4th was busy with boats on Big Sandy Lake. There is an increase in wake boats. These are causing bigger waves and more shoreline erosion.

4.3. Sandy River: Beaver are still causing a problem on this river. Ramona Hooper reported that water levels have begun to decrease some.

4.4. Tamarack River: The group continues to meet. An information letter was distributed to property owners on North Island Lake.

4.5. Prairie Lake / River: Joe Beaupre was unable to join the meeting, but submitted a written update. The Prairie Lake Improvement Assn. discussed beaver problems at their recent meeting. A beaver dam at the lake outlet last fall raised the lake level about 12". The State of Mn. came and trapped the beaver and removed the dam. A public meeting was held in late May to discuss proposed changes to Northern Pike regulations. Another meeting will be held in the fall to finalize regulation changes.

5. Agenda Additions: Rinta's shared that swimmers itch has been terrible on Round Lake recently. Solutions for this were sought. No perfect solutions were offered, other than toweling off right after leaving the water.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 14th. It will be held at 2:00 pm at the Cromwell Park Pavilion, if the meeting room is available. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

An Open House to discuss the water quality of the area followed the meeting. This was hosted as a part of the Mississippi River, Grand Rapids Unit, Watershed Restoration and Protection Project.