

Horsehead Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District #1

Annual Meeting

August 3, 2024

Sloan Center Meeting Room, Lake Tomahawk, WI

Commissioners Present:

Dusten Tornow, Chairperson

Dave Averbeck, Treasurer

Kevin Collins, Secretary

Stephanie Sowatzka, Lake Tomahawk Board Commissioner

Lenore Lopez, Oneida County Board Commissioner

Meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Dusten Tornow. Dusten reminded everyone that, by law, we are following the “People of the Lakes” Guide for Lake Districts and during the meeting we adhere to “Roberts Rules” meeting guidelines. Anyone can make a motion. Making motions, seconding motions and voting are only to be done by eligible voters. He asked that people state their name when making or seconding a motion so the secretary can record their names.

The meeting proceeded with an introduction of all members that were present.

Dusten asked the members to approve the agenda with a change the scheduling of the agenda to allow Lenore Lopez to speak earlier and allow her to leave early. Alan Hougum made a motion to accept the change in the order of presentations, Dave Averbeck seconded the motion. Everyone approved.

Lenore Lopez indicated that the county has approved the Wake Boat Ordinance for the Town of Lake Tomahawk. The Wake Boating Ordinance is now under review by the state. A handout of the Wake Boating ordinance was included in each member’s handout. Lenore also stated that the county in updating their Comprehensive Plan 2024. There is new language in the plan, the most concerning is the change to allow metallic mining and remove the ability to have voter referendums. She suggested that we send letters to the Oneida County Planning and Development committee (OCPDC) expressing our opposition to the section on metallic mining as it would produce sulfuric acid and pollute the land, water and air. Lenore suggested that we contact Mitch Ives or herself with comments. The Oneida County Planning and Development committee member email addresses are listed below:

sholewinski@oneidacountywi.gov

mtimmons@oneidacountywi.gov

ralmekinder@oneidacountywi.gov

dhess@oneidacountywi.gov

mives@oneidacountywi.gov

Dave Averbeck motioned to approve last year's meeting notes. It was seconded by James Watters. Approved unanimously. 8:30

Guest Speaker: Susan Knight, Emeritus Scientist, UW Trout Lake Station Center for Limnology.

Susan opened her talk on what the UW program for Limnology does. The program has been operating for 100 years and is the study of inland lakes. Surface water (lakes and rivers) comprises a very small fraction of the earth. Vilas and Oneida counties are lucky to have over 2400 lakes, which comprises 1/3 of the land area. The studies of lakes started in the UW Madison campus and Lake Mendota. Subsequently the scientists



traveled up to the north woods to study the more pristine lakes. Now, there are projects run by graduate students with undergrads as staff. She presented a topic which has been studied at Trout Lake, which is the balance of predator fish, prey fish, zooplankton and algae known as trophic cascade. If you don't balance the cascade, it can cause an overabundance of one type which can ultimately lead to algae blooms. HLPRD has been stocking prey fish (blue gill, crappie) to improve pan fish population and indirectly improve the trophic cascade balance of the lake. Little did we know!! She also talked about an acid rain and its effect on lakes. The study was done on a small lake where the scientists split the lake in two, acidified one half and observed the outcomes. The results found significant problems for the fish, plants and algae and provided the basis for the Clean Air and Water Acts. Dave Averbeck commented that our Horsehead Lake pH is around 10. Susan stated that Horsehead would not be influenced by acid rain and probably has a lot of minerals like calcium carbonate which would neutralize the acids. Susan's current project is investigating the causes of a decline of wild rice found in northern lakes. Susan summed up her presentation with outreach programs such as "Science on Tap" where a scientist have a question and answer discussion with the attendees at the Rocky Reef Brewery in Woodruff. To access the University of Wisconsin Trout Lake Station website: <https://limnology.wisc.edu/>

Reports:

Dusten Tornow, Chairperson

- Dusten asked for people who have not submitted their email addresses to do so as it saves money not having to mail out as many newsletters and notices.
- Dusten reported that according to the survey of weeds that he, Tom Niebler and Deb Bursik conducted on the lake in early July, no weed harvesting was needed.

- Dusten reported that we did receive the Onterra Early Season Aquatic Invasive Species which was completed in June. The report concluded that Curly Leaf Pondweed population in our lake has not increased since 2021 and is mostly present in the northern bay. Eurasian Water Milfoil was not detected in our lake.

Kevin Collins, Secretary:

- Kevin displayed the DO sensor tree for the members. He explained the process which is to measure the dissolved oxygen (DO) in the lake over winter. This is done to determine if our aerators are successful in adding DO in the lake water. There was a question on where the sensor tree would be deployed. Discussion ensued about method of deploying the sensors and having a buoy attached to locate the sensor. Dave interjected that HLP RD has built maintenance cost into future budget planning. Measuring DO in the winter is a requirement for the DNR aerator permit. This year's plan is to measure at the Deep Hole location.

Audit Report:

- Dave Averbeck explained that Chuck Konsitzke is now doing the audit review for HLP RD. Dave's researched the audit process and found that the correct method for auditing is for the fiscal year rather than from Annual meeting to Annual meeting. The fiscal year audit found no discrepancies.

Dave Averbeck, Treasurer

- Dave reported that the aerators were working properly. It's too early to tell if the new aerators helped the lake this last winter as we had a short ice-on period. This spring, we had a report that one line for the south aerator was floating on the surface. We planned to sink the line but could not find it. Dave will have our aerator maintenance company check the lines when they perform annual maintenance in the fall.
- Construction of the new system was completed in November. We received most of the money from the grant. The state will hold 10% of the grant (~\$3000) until 5 year and we meet the reporting stipulations of the grant thru 2027. The \$45,000 loan for the new aerator was paid down by \$20,000 when we received the grant payment, with interest, we have 26488.70 balance. This will be paid in March of the next three year. A question was raised regarding paying off the loan early, Dave stated that we would have to call a meeting of the membership to vote on a revised budget to do that. Remaining tasks: complete the easement, installing DO monitors and annual reports. Pictures of the aerator in operation are available on the HLP RD web site. James Watters raised a question, "...would we do the same for the south aerator?". Dave replied that he would like to do it but the cost would probably be too high. This is mainly due to the cost of the self-sinking hose that

the district would have to buy. We purchased over \$20000 in self sinking hose for the north aerator.

- Treasurer's report show that we balanced out. Treasurer's report was included in the annual meeting mailing to all members.

Old Business:

- None.

New Business:

- Dusten reported that fish stocking was not done. When we applied for the stocking permit, Nate Lederman, DNR recommended that we see how the stocking is working before adding more small fish. In addition, this year's supply was undersized from Gollon's which contributed to the decision. A discussion ensued about fish observations. Dave reported he had bluegill nests on his shoreline. Others mentioned that they have seen a lot more bullheads in the lake. Kevin brought up that his neighbor, Chuck Konsitzke, caught 45 bullheads in a fish trap in one day. Dave pointed out that he talked to the people at UW Trout Lake and they said that bullheads are voracious eaters and out compete the pan fish for food. They also are bottom feeders and they damage or kill the roots of the plants in the lake. Kevin has information regarding catching bullheads. Kevin will also check with Wild Instinct Rehab as to whether they will take bullheads.
- Dusten raised the topic as to whether we should maintain a catch and release policy on blue gill and crappie. Kevin and Dave have reported crappie can be found all over the lake this year. Deb Bursik stated that we had a 3 year plan to stock fish and catch and release the stocked fish. Dave suggested that we consider removing the catch and release but keep it on the agenda for next year to revisit. James Watters moved that we extend the catch and release for bluegills for another 2 years through the end of 2026. Nancy Collins seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Proposed budget. Differences from last year budget to this year is primarily maintenance costs increases where we had 8 aerators in the past to now 8 plus 15 new aerators, we also increased our costs for electrical power to run those aerators. Dave reduced the amount in non-lapsable funds due to paying off the aerator. Sum total, this year's budget is virtually the same as last year's. However, the total tax levy goes from \$18,000 to \$32,000. We have \$3500 in the budget, for an aquatic study which may not be required. We have been doing the studies early, to be proactive. We now are questioning whether it is money well spent and have asked this question to Scott Van Egeren, DNR but have not received a response. Deb pointed out that she had talked to Oneida County Land and Water, Onterra etc., do we need to conduct yearly surveys. The consensus was that the plants do not propagate so fast that we need to do a survey every year. Dusten interjected that we formally adopt a plan to do an early season aquatic invasive species survey (ESAIS) every 2 years. Dave stated that according

to our comprehensive plan, approved by the DNR, the ESAIS is required every 3 years, point-intercept study every 5 years and every 10 years, a floating leaf and emergent plant study. Deb Bursik made a motion that we do an aquatic survey every 2 years, so the next one is 2026. Seconded by Linda Delius. Approved unanimously. Motion was made to approve the budget as amended. Seconded by James Watters. Approved unanimously.

Election of (1) Commissioner for a regular 3 year term.

Dave Averbeck is running for re-election as commissioner. By rule, we asked if anyone else would like to run. There were no nominees. The ballot were distributed and members voted.

Ballots were completed, collected and counted by Kevin Collins.

Fifteen ballots were counted. The tally was 15 votes for Dave Averbeck, who was re-elected to the Board of Commissioners for Horsehead Lake Rehabilitation and Protection District No. 1 for a three-year term.

Town of Lake Tomahawk Commissioner: Stephanie Sowatzka

Stephanie reiterated that a new wake boat ordinance is in place.

August 2, 2025 was suggested to be the next annual meeting.

Final Comments: Meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kevin Collins, Secretary

AUG 3RD 2024

HORSEHEAD LAKE P&R

SIGN IN SHEET

NAME

EMAIL

Stephanie Sowatzka

Sowatzka@yahoo.com

Lynn Gourley

Nancy COLLINS

Hans + Linda Pelius

JAMES WATTERS

BERNIE FARBLAK

Tracy Hougan

Alan Hougan

Kris Niebler

Paul Bursik

Deb Bursik

Pat Gasser

pat.gasser@regalresnord.com

regalresnord.com