

Nov. 2, 2023 Healthy Lakes Meeting Agenda Palmer Town Hall

- Update from BLCA board - 5 min.
 - Ice day budget was approved, there will be a conservation table at the event with brochures and information highlighting the new statute making littering or leaving waste on the ice a petty misdemeanor offense
 - The board is still looking for a secretary and editor for the directory
 - Steve McComas, the Lake Detective, has agreed to come to another meeting in March or April (or instead perhaps film a series of “ask the lake detective” short videos for social media / website use)
- TLID Update -5 min.
 - Bob Sass attended the meeting as a TLID representative.
 - TLID board members agreed to split overseeing 7 projects they’re focusing on for next year.
- Alum grant update—5 min.,
 - Core sampling to occur soon
- Water testing update—Walt, 5 min.
 - Water testing is completed for the year
 - Should have results in December
 - Thank you to all of the volunteers for all of their hard work this year!
- Gentle Footprints update—Shelly, 5 min
 - Bre and Franny recently met with new lakeowners potentially interested in a GF grant to complete shoreline improvements
 - Franny has a plan in the works for a property owner interested in applying for a grant soon.
- HL Plant program update—Bre, 5 min.
 - Approximately \$1,000 remaining in Plant Bank budget, rolling over to spring. 6 landowners with seed / plant interest for spring fulfillment.
 - We will request additional funding for the 2024 plant bank.
- Lake Steward program—Bre, 10 min.
 - Ruth met with Lily from Minnesota Lakes and Rivers to discuss their Lake Steward Program. The program uses a quiz to score properties as Lake Steward, Lake Steward in Progress, and not yet a Lake Steward. This could tie into our existing efforts very well with those deemed “Not yet a Lake Steward” as good candidates for our Gentle Footprint and Plant Bank initiatives. Ruth, Naomi, and Bre agreed to volunteer to lead the program and conduct site visits to “score” interested candidates properties. Lake Stewards received a BLCA customized Lake Steward sign to display on their shoreline. Healthy Lakes will propose a \$500 sign budget at the next BLCA board meeting – signs are \$50 each with MLR splitting the cost 50/50 with the Lake Associations.
- Follow-up on action items: (15 min)
 - Ice fishing handouts—Shelly
 - Instagram—Bre/Ruth

- Dave Maiers contacted Nature's Caretaker Landscaping to make sure they are not blowing leaves toward the lake. He is willing to reach out to other local companies to be sure they are aware of keeping the leaves and grass clippings out of the lake. To consider: Could we promote companies that use best practices?
 - Dan Cibulka's response to the feasibility of using beavers to create wetlands along the Elk River vs. other more costly alternatives:
 - That is a fascinating idea and approach! When we design a wetland study we have to do our due diligence to make sure the wetland stores water in the locations we want it to, and not beyond our calculated area. Secondly, we also need to ensure that the wetland area does not hold water back within the soil and potentially impact septic fields, wells, or other structures. Having a beaver dam up a wetland would be a tremendous cost and time savings. However we cannot be certain how large or tall the beaver dam would be – if we know that we can safely impound water an additional 1.0 feet higher but the beaver builds their dam 2.0 feet higher than it could lead to areas being flooded that we do not want to flood. Similarly, if the beaver constructs a dam that is 0.5 feet in height then we are not maximizing our potential storage of 1.0 feet. Additionally, a beaver dam is a solid structure but under some conditions could eventually fail, resulting in an unplanned rush of water downstream. We need to ensure that any containment structure is built to handle all elements of nature. With how relatively flat our area is, planning these storage projects is very important because the water can spread outward quickly. I suspect this is less of a concern out west where the terrain is much different.
 - "Ask the Lake Detective" question a month series –Shelly, Ruth
 - Possibly consolidate this into one or two short interviews where we collect the questions up front and post the answers over the series of a month or two between ice melt and the usual fish kill / weed spraying so we can keep ahead of
 - For further discussion: placing educational signs in yards on the lake side.
 - The Lake Steward Program would be a good start to more signage promoting natural lake shores.
- Determine action items for the next month–5-10 min.
 - Dave to reach out to additional Lawncare companies
 - Bre to reach out to Gina Hugo for information on future plans for restoration work at the Elk Lake Park project
 - Ruth to get more information on Lake Steward Program from MLR
 - Shelly to reach out to DNR regarding informational signage posted at landings and potential for bag stations at landings for garbage and pet waste

2023 Healthy Lakes Committee Goals

Goals which do not have specific owners are owned by the committee as a whole.

1. Extend water quality monitoring data throughout 2023 as per Lake Management Plan, with cost sharing for testing from Palmer Township. *Walt Munstermann*
2. Collaborate with the Three Lake Improvement District throughout 2023 on water quality and water stabilization issues. *Stacy*
3. By August of 2023, identify existing storm drains and seek volunteer monitors for each. *Brad and Ruth Thom*
4. Participate in BLCA related Board of Adjustment hearings throughout 2023. *Steve Demueles*
5. Coordinate and fund AIS surveys for Big Elk Lake by August 15, 2023. *Gary Anderson*
6. Publish a Healthy Lakes committee summary of each meeting in the 2023 Lake Report issues and post on BLCA website. *Ruth Thom, Bre Bauerly*
7. Actively participate in Sherburne Coalition of Lake Associations [COLA] throughout 2023. *Scott Ruiter, Shelly Alger-Peyton*
8. Actively participate in the planning and development of the One Watershed One Plan throughout 2023. *Scott Ruiter*
9. Continue the Shoreland Restoration program and administer Gentle Footprint grant Program. *Shelly Alger-Peyton, Chuck Heinemann (mentor)*
10. Support Clear Lake Township with creating and enacting a No Wake Ordinance for Big Elk Lake. *Gary Anderson*
- 11. Seek ways to increase education and awareness among members, new lake residents, and visitors regarding best practices for maintaining and improving the quality of our lakes.**
12. Host an educational event for youth to introduce non-motorized watercraft and to provide instruction on water safety and ecology, and the Leave No Trace principle. *Ruth Thom, Naomi Kimball*