



MINONG FLOWAGE ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 167 / Minong, WI 54859

MinongFlowage@gmail.com

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES **of the Minong Flowage Association Members**

Approved by Board via email: 6/27/22

Date: June 11, 2022
Time: 9:00am to 11:15am
Location: Wascott Town Hall, Wascott, WI

Board Member Attendance: Dave Perrin (President), Kim Zeuli (Secretary), Peggy Bruzda (Interim Treasurer), Adrienne Banaszynski, Joe McGrath and David Marsh

Specific Project & Consulting Attendees: Dan Maxwell, Steve Johnson, Robert Budden and Dave Blumer (lake association consultant, LEAPS)

Opening Remarks and Minutes Approval: Dave Perrin

- Dave welcomed the attending members to the annual meeting.
- The 2021 Annual Members meeting minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Peggy Bruzda

- Peggy Bruzda is serving as interim Treasurer through the 2022 annual meeting since Karen Turnquist is on leave from the Board.
- The annual Treasurer's Report (June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022) was distributed as a handout to all members in attendance.
- As of May 31, 2022 the balance in the MFA bank account was (temporarily) negative \$38,742.04.
- The negative account primarily reflects expenses incurred with the lake level drawdown in the winter of 2021-2022, of which the Association has not yet been reimbursed.
- A final payment of \$28,588.70 was made to RWE Energy via the Washburn County Highway Department. This was to reimburse RWE for lost revenue from less power generated at the dam during the lake level drawdown.
- The total reimbursement to RWE was actually less than anticipated in the drawdown grant, and MFA could choose to reallocate the approximately \$12,000 to cover other relevant projects.
- Income received included: membership dues, a Benevity platform payment from an anonymous donor, a donation from the Swift Nature Camp, Washburn County Boat Fees, and the final CBCW grant payment from 2021.
- A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasury Report as presented. Motion carried without dissent.
- Dave thanked Peggy for stepping in as Treasurer while Karen was on leave.

MFA Membership Report: Peggy Bruzda

- Peggy provided a few verbal updates regarding MFA membership. There are 205 current MFA members, up from 171 members in 2021. This represents about 1/3rd of lakeshore property owners. *(NOTE: Clarification from Karen Turnquist post-meeting: 205 MFA members are actually 2/3rds of the total of 335 lakeshore owners. For our data, Karen uses only the first name listed for parcel ownership on the county records - which matches the number of land parcels. Intentionally, co-owners are not included in our total as it skews the figures.)* She expects the number to increase because some members paid their dues at the annual meeting. *(Per Karen: Only if new members signed-up, otherwise renewals do not increase total MFA membership.)*

Old Business

A. Review of AIS grant and winter lake level drawdown: Dave Blumer

- Joe McGrath asked the attendees to affirm a letter that expressed appreciation for Brian Danielson at the Washburn County Highway Department, who manages the dam. Joe shared that Brian is a great partner to the MFA. The suggestion was unanimously supported. Joe will draft the letter with Steve and share with the Board prior to sending.
- Dave provided a brief PowerPoint presentation summarizing the drawdown activities which are now complete, and the flowage levels as they were monitored during the entire drawdown. The flowage level was restored, as promised, by fishing opener.
- Dave said the impact of the drawdown on Eurasian Watermilfoil Management (EWM) will not be known until summer surveys and official fall EWM bed-mapping survey is completed. However, the drawdown process went smoothly and multiple channels of communication were used to effectively communicate about the drawdown.
- Dave reminded members that the first drawdown was done in 2020 because of the dam repair, but it also served as a pilot for EWM. He does not expect another drawdown will be needed for 5-7 years.
- Throughout the drawdown, lake levels were monitored by RWE, Washburn County and the MFA contracted company Ecological Integrity to monitor water level at four different areas. In addition, two MFA members also monitored lake levels on their own and regularly reported their findings to the Board.
- Ecological Integrity (the water level monitoring contractor) cannot find one of its monitoring devices (a shiny, metal tube 16" in length) which was located at Smith Bridge. Dave asked all members to watch for it when boating or paddling in that area. Notify a Board member if found and it will be returned to Ecological Integrity.
- Dave advised MFA members (and to convey to non-members alike) against marking any floating stumps with buoys or bottles because it creates boater confusion as well as liability concerns. He also reminded members that debris is always moving in our flowage-type lake, and people boat at their own risk.
- Dave noted that he is planning on retiring at the end of 2024.

B. Other Topics Discussed:

- There was additional discussion about the use of excess grant funds, which Dave said has to be used by end of 2023. However it does not need to be spent, keeping in mind that grant funds are administered by a reimbursement process and they do require matching funds.
- Steve Johnson reported from the ad hoc MFA Lake Management Committee. Committee members include: Steve, Joe McGrath and Dan Maxwell.
 - They found that everything looked good on the flowage this spring.
 - There was no documented evidence of fish kill related to the drawdown. There was a post on Face Book about a "significant fish kill" on the flowage this spring. The Lake Management Committee investigated immediately but did not find any evidence, anywhere, to support the claim. The anonymous posting was taken down very soon after it was originally posted.

- Dan reminded everyone that grant applications require 2,000 MFA volunteer hours. In 2022 - so far only 500 hours have been reported. He encouraged everyone in attendance to do more volunteer activities when possible, spread the word to others, and report activities/hours online via the link on the MFA website. Members should feel free to ask Dan about what constitutes relevant volunteer activities. Some quick examples are: 1) meeting attendance 2) pulling invasive weeds from shorelines 3) observing, documenting and reporting lake and lakeshore quality concerns, 4) participating in fish-sticks construction.
- In October of 2022, there will be a DNR final drawdown stakeholder meeting. Interested lake property owners are encouraged to attend. A notice of the meeting will be posted on the MFA website.
- Dan also discussed pressuring the DNR to do a comprehensive fish survey of the Minong Flowage again (to collect data after this latest lake level drawdown). The DNR conducts a fish survey approximately every 10 years. Dave Blumer said that as of this meeting's date, the DNR has committed to doing a Walleye survey in the fall of 2022.

B. Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW): Dave Perrin

- The local Boy Scout Troup will no longer be staffing the CBCW station at the DNR landings because they simply did not have the capacity to do so. After discussion with several Board members and exploring other volunteer options (which were not viable), Dave decided to pay a contractor to staff the boat DNR boat landing to perform this important reminder & awareness service.
- Volunteers are still needed to perform this task at the Smith Bridge and Pogo's boat landings. Training for all new inspectors is required but is brief. Contact the MFA Board if interested.

C. Fish Sticks: Dan Maxwell

- Dan provided a brief verbal update. Much more interest (to construct fish habitat structures) this year with about 12-15 people contacting him. This is possibly due to the increased visibility and marketing by the MFA. The grant for this project will be ending soon. The existing grant helps to pay contractors to position the fish sticks structures on the ice in the winter. Anyone interested in helping with this effort should contact Dan.

D. Zebra Mussel Decontamination Stations: Dave Perrin

- Dave reported that MFA is negotiating with the County Park and DNR (Lisa Burns) about setting up a decontamination station at the DNR board landing. They are working through logistical issues.
- If the decontamination stations are indeed set up, Washburn County enforces their use. Complaints regarding boaters ignoring the required boat cleaning can be filed with the County Sheriff Department.
- MFA would need to purchase and maintain the cleaning tools & equipment needed, including refilling the cleaning solution weekly or more frequently as needed during peak usage periods.
- Invasive zebra mussels have been detected in nearby lakes, the closest being Big McKenzie.

E. MFA FaceBook: Adrienne Banaszynski

- Adrienne announced that the MFA Facebook page has been created and encouraged all members to join. The goal is to use it as another communication tool and provide a greater sense of community. Adrienne will serve as the administrator.

F. MFA Website Inbound Email: Dave Perrin

- Dave Perrin mentioned that he monitors all email messages into the MFA mailbox and he also receives some phone calls. The MFA President has to occasionally do 'damage control' to dispel rumors and convey important, accurate information.

New Business

A. Open Discussion

- Boaters on the Minong Flowage are advised to exercise caution at this time due to floating logs and other under water obstructions – some dislodged by the refilling of the flowage after the drawdown.
- Joe McGrath noted that there are numerous, adverse factors affecting the future of the flowage, including:
 - Shoreline erosion impact from wake boats and boats traveling too fast through “no wake” zones
 - Increased usage of the lake by more visitors staying at VRBO/AirBNBs as well as many more camping spots at various nearby campgrounds. The increase of lake usage by boaters who are unfamiliar with the lake, (which cannot be controlled) is impacting shoreline stability, water quality, and the overall quality of life on the flowage.
- The enforcement of boating regulations was discussed. Both Washburn and Douglas County DNR stations do not have adequate staff to regularly patrol the Minong Flowage. But, are responsive to boating violations reported by lake property owners. When violators are noticed, a photo (using your phone) of the offending boat including the boat license needs to accompany the submitted violation to the appropriate county’s Sheriff’s Department. Both county’s have been responsive to submitted lakeshore owner reported violations and have issued tickets to the offending boat owners using this method.
- Dave Perrin reported that he had approached the Sheriff Departments about a ‘rent-a-cop’ model to pay for a DNR officer to patrol the Minong Flowage. He hasn’t received any response as of this meeting date.
- There was a request to encourage Cranberry Lake property owners to join the MFA since a lot of boat traffic comes from that lake. (Connected via the north channel to the Minong Flowage.) This invitation will be a task taken up by the new MFA Board.
- There was also a request for the Board to be more proactive about the issues affecting the flowage and to explore a legislative affairs position. Possibly attend the surrounding town meetings and review county and state zoning information that could affect the flowage. To go beyond this effort of awareness however, the MFA would need to reposition itself to become an official “Lake District”. If there is a future directive to take this step, it requires a much more rigorous level of Board participation and adhering to many rules and guidelines. This would mean that the MFA would hold legal authority to enact and enforce specific ordinances. This is not on the MFA’s agenda at this time.
- A request was made to consider placing a buoy on a dangerous sandbar near the very east shore of the larger lake, (near properties along Flowage Road). This undetected obstruction is an existing danger to many boaters and it’s only a matter of time before there will be injuries at this site. The Board will consider the request, alternatives, and the feasibility of passing an ordinance to place a new buoy.

B. Nomination and election of Board members: Dave Perrin

- Dave summarized the state of the Board: three members have fulfilled their two 2-year terms (Joe McGrath, Rockne Johnson and Dave Perrin) and two Board members resigned (Craig Krupke and Tim Overom). Total of five outgoing members creating open positions. Karen Turnquist remains on leave at the present time.
- The Board needs a minimum of seven members and has a maximum of nine positions.
- The motion was made and seconded to approve current Board members seeking a second term (Adrienne Banaszynski, Kim Zeuli and Dave Marsh). It was unanimously passed without discussion.
- Dave introduced names of five nominated MFA members to fill the open Board positions. Nominated were: Harlan Johnson, Brian White, Becky White, Dave Vogt and Paul Gunderson (who has previously been a Board member). A motion to approve these five nominees was made, seconded and the slate of nominees was unanimously approved.
- Dave welcomed the new Board members and thanked the outgoing Board members for their service. As outgoing President, he will ensure a smooth transition to the new President and will remain available for advice and support.

- The new Board members elected to the following positions:
 - President—Harlan Johnson
 - Secretary—Kim Zeuli
 - Treasurer—Adrienne Banaszynski
 - Communication and Membership—Becky White (she will be supported by Robert Budden who manages Constant Contact and the website). Karen Turnquist may assist Becky in this role when she is able to join in with Board activities again.
- There are also several tasks and/or committees of which non-board members can volunteer, knowing it may be a short-term, yet important, participation. The MFA is frequently seeking volunteers for various projects. Contact the Board President or the Membership Board Member for more information.

C. Closing remarks: Dave Perrin

- Dave thanked everyone who attended this annual meeting and for the thoughtful contributions.

D. Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and unanimously passed at 11:15AM.

Draft meeting minutes recorded by Secretary Kim Zeuli. Additional information added by Board members for clarification.

REMINDERS:

Volunteer Hours

- A final reminder to MFA members to submit hours of volunteer efforts (including 2 hours for attending this annual meeting)
- A reminder to Board members to submit volunteer hours corresponding to various tasks respective to their Board position
- Again – a large number tally of these volunteer hours is very important for securing grants. A button to open the volunteer hours online form is front & center on the MFA website homepage. Or – use this link for submitting hours <http://minongflowage.org/volunteer/log-volunteer-hours/> (copy & paste into your browser line if needed) It is very easy!

MFA Board Meetings:

- Fall—October
 - Winter—January
 - Spring—April
 - Summer—Annual meeting: June, per bylaws
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