

**Bear Lake Association Annual Meeting**  
**May 25, 2014 7:30 PM**  
**Minutes**

Sam Rahaim, president, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and introduced the current board members: Jeff Shull, vice president, Phil Resko, treasurer, and Bob Tuttle, member-at-large. Marge Knable, secretary, was absent. Jo Rahaim recorded the minutes in her absence.

New lake property owners were introduced: Mike and Lori Bell and Tom and Sheryl Cunningham.

Quality of Bear Lake

Sam prepared a PowerPoint presentation to update the members on the status of the lake. (A copy of the slides from this presentation can be viewed on the website.)

PLM Lake and Management Corporation treated Eurasian watermilfoil and Phragmites on 3 acres of the lake during 2013. This was a dramatically smaller area than 2012 (8 acres). PLM will continue to monitor invasive plant growth throughout 2014 and systematically provide herbicide treatments as needed. Since the lake level is significantly higher this year, there is water flow into Bear Lake from Eleanor Bay and two streams on the north side of the lake. A lake member asked if these areas will be treated if they have invasive plants. Sam replied that the charge of the Association is primarily Bear Lake. However since these inlets could possibly compromise the health of Bear Lake, the Association board will discuss whether these areas should be treated if PLM discovers invasive plant growth in their lake survey.

PLM communicated that a hybrid milfoil species has been discovered in Michigan lakes. The hybrid is a combination of the Eurasian watermilfoil and Northern milfoil, a native species. This hybrid will have to be correctly identified to ensure an appropriate and effective treatment.

Zebra mussels continue to thrive in the lake. There is still no approved treatment to remove them. It is highly recommended that lake members remove any hard objects in the water, i.e. cinder blocks, large boulders, etc. where zebra mussels are likely to attach themselves. Routinely picking up clams or other objects covered in zebra mussels and removing those from the water will help reduce the overall zebra mussel population.

The water level is very high this year due to the plentiful snowfall and cold temperatures this past winter. Sam shared a graph provided by the USGS tracking lake levels since 1994. These readings were taken from a water gauge situated on the southeast side of the lake. The gauge was recently removed but Sam is looking into installing another gauge.

Mike and Sue Boss continue to routinely take lake quality readings measuring the clarity (transparency), and presence of chlorophyll and phosphorus. Bear Lake is maintaining high levels of clarity and very low levels of chlorophyll and phosphorus. A member observed that according to the graph, the phosphorus level seemed to be the same although there is more fireworks activity on the lake. The good news is our lake is not deteriorating but maintaining a high level of health. Sam has added an additional slide in the presentation to explain the different classes of lakes and how they are rated.

Last year the board purchased a sample of muck pellets from PLM to test its effectiveness in reducing the "squishy-ness" of the lake bottom. Three board members distributed the pellets near their lakefront

and reported negligible results. If anyone would like to try pellets to reduce muck they can contact Sam to obtain a supply. The cost is \$100 per bucket and it lasts for 2 years.

Last summer the Bear Lake Township Improvement Association (BLTIA) paid for pellets to test the septic systems on Bear Lake. Volunteers flushed the pellets in their neighbors' toilets and then watched for dye leakage into the lake 2-4 hours later. So far 49% of the properties have been tested with no negative results. The testing will continue throughout this summer. One property owner has refused to be tested. The board will discuss what, if anything can or should be done regarding this resident.

On April 28 (the day all the ice on the lake disappeared) the DNR stocked Bear Lake with 4,940 rainbow trout. 16,800 brown trout were stocked on May 21.

#### Treasurer's Report

Phil Resko reviewed the balance sheet for the Association and the SAD account. As of 5/31/14, the Association's account is \$2,679.87. Prior to the annual meeting the Association again received a \$1,000 check from Brooks Kushman, Bob Tuttle's law firm. Phil thanked Bob for his generosity on behalf of the Association. The SAD account has a balance of \$13,619.60. These funds may be needed to treat the inlets now flowing into Bear Lake as discussed earlier in the meeting. Sam added that if PLM is successful in finding an acceptable treatment for zebra mussels, having these funds readily accessible will give the Association the means to act promptly.

A member commented that these funds should be used to treat Eleanor Bay this year adding he believed Eleanor Bay was originally part of Bear Lake. Sam replied that the Association hired two biologists to study Eleanor Bay when the channel was closed. They recommended not opening the channel between Eleanor Bay and Bear Lake because it has invasive plants. Now that the channel is open naturally due to the high water level, the Association board will discuss the situation and devise a plan.

#### Michigan Inland Lakes Convention

Sam attended the inaugural convention held in Boyne City on May 2, 2014. He summarized the major findings of presentations covering the hybrid milfoil infestation (discussed earlier in the meeting), a decrease in the zebra mussel population in the state during 2010-2012, and Manistee Lake's treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil with weevils. For details and its relevance to Bear Lake, review the pertinent slides in the PowerPoint presentation.

Of particular interest to the Association membership was a picture of a portable boat wash machine on display at the convention. The cost ranges from \$15,000 to \$20,000. A member declared that the Association should consider buying the machine and establishing a plan to require boat washing to all boats being launched at the public access. The point was made that with the threat of the hybrid milfoil and other potential contaminants, we would be best-served to avert any future contamination by using a boat washing system.

Sam replied that the BLTIA had members of Glen Lake make a presentation at their meeting last year about their boat wash. There are many factors to be considered, especially staffing and enforcement. The Board will continue to research and discuss this idea in light of the possibility the machine could be provided with private funds.

#### Loon Report

Mary Vervisch reported that 3 loons have been sighted on our lake this year. She reminded us that loons are a threatened species and are federally protected. Keep a distance of 300-500 feet from the loons when you encounter them. If you see an injured loon or find a dead loon on the shore do not touch them. Instead call the DNR.

Fishermen are advised not to use lead sinkers or other lead lures since loons may mistake them for pebbles and ingest them. Please buy fishing equipment that is lead-free.

#### Fitness Class

Jo Rahaim announced the return of an hour-long fitness class held at the Bear Lake Township Hall every Tuesday through October from 9:30 – 10:30 AM. The instructor is Shawn Barrera-Leaf who leads 30 minutes of Zumba dance and 30 minutes of Pilates. Cost is \$5.00 and is open to all on a drop-in basis. Class will only be cancelled if there are less than 5 people who have confirmed their attendance. For more information about the class, contact Shawn at [sbleaf@aol.com](mailto:sbleaf@aol.com) or Jo at [gigijo50@gmail.com](mailto:gigijo50@gmail.com)

#### Website

Sam encouraged members to submit stories, pictures, resource referrals, rental availability, or any other information that would be useful to Association members. This information will be shared on our website: [www.bearlakeassoc.com](http://www.bearlakeassoc.com).

#### Open Q&A/ Discussions

The Bear Lake Township Improvement Association will hold their annual meeting on Saturday, August 1, 2014. They are sponsoring trash pick-up days throughout the summer. The first one is on June 7 starting at 9:00 AM. All are encouraged to volunteer to keep our township litter-free.

Township clean-up is scheduled on June 14, from 8:00-12:00 PM.

During the Q&A period the following comments were made:

The Bear Lake Township board recently focused on the disposition of the road ends which surround Bear Lake. The point was made that no action will be taken and these access points will continue to be open to the public. It was suggested that the Association contact township citizens and encourage them to make donations to the Association for the cleanliness and health of the lake so everyone can continue to enjoy it. The Board will consider this suggestion and determine next steps.

Anyone interested in learning more about the road ends are referred to the Bear Lake Township website: [www.bearlaketownship.org](http://www.bearlaketownship.org).

A member suggested the Association hold more than one meeting per year. A hand count was taken and the majority voted to have more meetings, perhaps more social than a business meeting. The Board will consider this suggestion and determine next steps.

The raffle for one large pizza with everything from Bear's Lair was won by Wes Anderson.

With no other questions, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Rahaim (on behalf of Marge Knable, secretary)