

Oconto County Lakes & Waterways Association
Minutes of 3 May 2008 Meeting

Vice-president Mike Winius called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. at the Best Western Inn in Lakewood. Lake organizations represented were: Maiden Lake, White Potato Lake, Townsend Flowage, Crooked Lake, Paya Lake, Inland P&R District #1 Townsend, Wheeler Lake, Bass Lake, Boulder Lake, Archibald Lake, Berry Lake, Boot Lake and the Machickanee Flowage.

Guest speakers present were Kim Biedermann, Northeast Organizer (Green Bay) for the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, and Tom Milheiser, Oconto County Conservationist. The League is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to electing conservation leaders to the state legislature through voter education, lobbying and issue advocacy.

Kim explained The League (which is based in 32 states) is composed of citizens who lobby for strong natural resource policies, primarily through Conservation Lobby Day held in Madison. In 2007 430 citizens met with state legislators to urge them to protect the Great Lakes, preserve vital lands, invest in renewable energy and, in general, to preserve and protect natural resources. League employees and members keep track of politician's voting records via a *Conservation Scorecard*, which can be accessed on the network at conservationvoters.org. On the Conservation Honor Roll were Senators Bob Cowles and Neal Kedzie, Representative Phil Montgomery, Representatives Black, Boyle, Hebl, Lehman, Molepske, Parisi, Schneider and Sherman. On the Conservation **Dishonor** Roll were Senators Zien, Lasee and Stepp, Representative John Gard (who failed to be re-elected), Representative Mary Williams and Senator Tom Reynolds (who cast the only vote against the Clean Energy Bill). The next Conservation Lobby Day will be held February 25, 2009 in Madison.

Tom Milheiser spoke first of the county's Shoreline Restoration Program to control erosion, explaining that grants up to 70% of cost or \$2,500 maximum are available through the county. Successful projects have already been carried out on Boot, Berry, John, Archibald, Kelly, and Rost Lakes, as well as Lake Noquebay, Wheeler Pond, Little Newton Lake and the Machickanee Flowage. Tom explained the design is planned by his department in cooperation with various nurseries, such as Dragonfly Gardens in Amery, WI and Marohl Landscaping in Pulaski. Tom explained that native plants are recommended because they have deeper root systems. Also strongly recommended are phosphorous-free fertilizers (phosphorous being the middle number on the bag of fertilizer) to prevent the prolific growth of weeds in our lakes.

Tom then spoke briefly about the Land & Water Resource Plan rewrite. The present plan expires December 2008, and a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) has been formed and is holding meetings to determine Oconto County's natural resource concerns and how to address them. The CAC will meet through May 2008 and will then produce a finished project by September for presentation to the Land Conservation Board meeting in October 2008.

Tom then updated members on the status of DNR NR 115 and the county's own CAC recommendations. The final version of NR 115 is completed and is being reviewed by the DNR's legal department. Once the code is finalized, the approval of the DNR Secretary must be secured to move forward with the revision. If his approval is granted, the DNR must then request permission for final approval from the Natural Resources Board. This will most likely

happen this summer. If final approval is received from the Board, the rule will be sent to the Legislature for their approval. This whole project has taken *five years and over 20 public hearings, unprecedented in state history*. It is extremely unlikely the Oconto County Board will act on the local CAC's recommendations before DNR approval of NR 115.

Tom's third update concerned the proposed position of County Lake Specialist. Tom, county board member Tom Grybowski and President Matt Marty drew up a job description for the position which was presented to the county board, but budget restrictions have held up any decision on the matter.

The February 2008 meeting having been cancelled, the secretary read the minutes of the November 2007 meeting. Motion by Don Preutor, seconded by Lillian Williamson, the minutes be accepted – motion unanimously passed.

Treasurer Dick Hiebing gave his report, stating a balance of \$1,071.74. Motion by Jim Martin, seconded by Mike Lavin, the Treasurer's report be accepted. Motion unanimously passed. Dick then presented a proposed 2008-2009 budget of \$1,639.78. Following discussion, motion by Mike Lavin, seconded by Dick Preutor, the proposed budget be accepted. Motion unanimously passed.

Lillian Williamson stated Paya Lake members wish to be trained in the Clean Boats/Clean Waters inspection program. Bruce Kilmer reported that Crooked Lake members will be trained May 24 and Townsend, Wheeler Lake and Paya Lake may join them.

Bruce Kilmer spoke briefly on the WAL convention held in April in Green Bay, stating the speakers were entertaining and informative and the exhibits were excellent. Bruce passed out brochures on the new rules for using minnows as bait and Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers for members to drop off at bait shops.

Informal discussions followed concerning chemical and water clarity testing of waters with instruments provided by the DNR, the Loon Watch program of "Get The Lead Out" of shot and anchors, etc. Dick Hiebing reported the treatment of invasive species on Horn Lake and the Townsend Flowage was successful.

Election of officers: terms of President, Vice-president and Secretary expire this month. Terms are for three years. Following discussion the following were nominated: Roger Johnson and Mike Lavin, Townsend Flowage, and current member Mike Winius of Bass Lake. Motion by Don Preutor, seconded by Mary Gilmeister, that nominations be accepted. Motion passed unanimously. From this 7-member board of directors, the three offices will be filled. Terms will expire in 2011.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Judie Gowaski, Secretary