Annual Meeting Minutes – August 5, 2017

Commissioners present; Timothy Meekma, Cheryl Witkowski, Dale Macheel, and Edwin Benter. Absent; Kurt Heckl. Also present: Dr. Neal O’Reilly, many residents, and, Kathleen Rydquist, clerk-coordinator.

Acting Chairman, Timothy Meekma called the Annual Meeting of the Fox Lake Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District to order on August 5, 2017 at 1:00pm at the Fox Lake Town Hall, W10543 County Road F, Fox Lake, Wisconsin.

Motion by Dennis Pufahl, second Arlene Runkel to approve the minutes of last years’ Annual Meeting. All yes. Motion carried.

T. Meekma gave a short explanation of the audit report. Motion by Robert Bergmann, second Thomas Wissing to approve the treasurers and auditor reports. All yes. Motion carried.

**Election of one commissioner –** The balloting was closed, and Dennis VanderWerff and Robert Bergmann were selected to count the ballots. Those listed on the ballot were Colleen Crane and Ross Werner.

**Establish official newspaper –** Motion by Thomas Wissing, second Steve Eisenga to establish the Beaver Dam Daily Citizen as the official newspaper. All yes. Motion carried.

**Election result –** Colleen Crane is reelected. Motion and second to approve the election and destroy the ballots. All yes. Motion carried.

**Lake update – Dr. Neal O’Reilly –** Dennis Pufahl, chairman of the Aquatic Plant Management Advisory Committee, introduced Dr. O’Reilly and the members of the committee. The members are: Dennis Pufahl, Chuck Orsay, Louis Leizinger, Ann Tepp, Dale Winkelman, Cherie Witkowski, Bob Cerniglia, and permanent members are: Dr. O’Reilly, Susan Graham and Laura Stremick-Thompson from DNR, and Kathy Rydquist, clerk-coordinator.

Dr. O’Reilly laid out the topics for the annual update: nuisance aquatic plants; DNR permits for harvesting and herbicide treatments; moving forward. **Nuisance aquatic plants** – Prior to 2005, aquatic plant coverage in Fox Lake was at about 30% according to plant surveys. In 2005 we had a plant explosion and coverage reached 90%. After two to three years of abundant to moderate plants, the aquatic

Annual Meeting Minutes – August 5, 2017, page 2

plant community again went into a decline. Harvesting was discontinued, and herbicide treatments became fewer and fewer as the plants became less and less. By

2013 aquatic plants had declined to as low as 28%. In 2014 the plants began to rebound and while there were no surveys in 2015 or 2016, based on anecdotal information, 2016 may have had plants frequency of occurrences similar to 2005 at close to 90% occurrence. What conditions contribute to irregular abundance or scarcity of plants in Fox Lake? Thirty-five to forty thousand acres of watershed and its runoff contributes sediment and nutrients as well as water to Fox Lake. Runoff is comprised of snow melt and rainfall. Clear ice in winter allows plant growth under the ice – opaque ice allows for slower growth. Incoming nutrients combined with nutrients already in the lake sediments and spring sunshine are the perfect recipe for abundant plants.

**DNR permits for harvesting and herbicide treatments** – Because of the continued changing conditions experienced in Fox Lake our APM Plan (Aquatic Plant Management Plan) will be amended to include recommendations for a variety of conditions ranging from an over abundance of rooted aquatic plants to those with spare vegetation in the lake. The plan needs to address recreational lake uses in nearshore areas for lake residents that have nuisance plant populations. We also must plan for navigation to open water in selected shallow areas affected by nuisance aquatic plant growth. Additionally, we must to continue to educate the local community on the benefits of aquatic plants and promote ecologically sound management strategies and establish a long-term monitoring strategy.

The original five-year plant management plan was prepared in 2006 when rooted aquatic plants were abundant and the plan focused on control of nuisance plant growth i.e. Eurasian water milfoil which had replaced native plants. Years that produce an abundant plant supply provide large numbers of zooplankton. They eat algae which increases water clarity. They are also food for fish with the plants providing habitat for both zooplankton and fish.

The aquatic plant management plan for the lake needs to be adaptable to address the varying conditions in the lake to address the need for an adaptable plan the recommendations will be divided into three categories based on plant abundance. The three categories are: 1. **Abundant** density of aquatic plants; 2. **Moderate** density of aquatic plants; 3. **Sparse** aquatic plants. The District will continue to have plant surveys done as often as needed. There are 886 survey sites in a plant survey that provides information on location, species, and abundance of plants. These surveys give us a picture of the trends over time.

Annual Meeting Minutes – August 5, 2017, page 3

The District will continue to facilitate the herbicide treatment for individuals as well as the harvesting of navigational lanes. **Allowed control techniques for rooted abundant and moderate aquatic plants in nearshore areas –** 1. Hand pulling or raking of a 30-foot wide area perpendicular to shore in accordance with

plants around piers that are inhibiting boat access, swimming or fishing. 3. DNR permitted use of nonselective herbicides to create riparian sponsored navigation lanes. 4. Aquatic plant harvesting near piers and to create riparian sponsored navigation lanes. **Allowed control techniques for sparse rooted aquatic plants in nearshore areas -** 1. Hand pulling or raking of a 30-foot wide area perpendicular to shore in accordance with NR 109.06(2). 2. DNR permitted use of selective herbicides to control Eurasian water milfoil and coontail around piers that are inhibiting boat access, swimming or fishing. 3. DNR permitted use of selective herbicides to control Eurasian water milfoil and coontail to create riparian sponsored navigation lanes.

**Moving forward –** 1. For the time being, the District will continue annual plant surveys. 2. Cherie Witkowski will continue working with the Self-Help Monitoring Program and additional Drew Creek testing. 3. Develop a survey to get your opinion. 4. Continue seeking funding and opportunities in the Drew Creek Watershed.

Explanation of the Budget. Acting Chairman Meekma asked if there were any questions about the budget. The special charge for harvesting was handed separately. **Motion** by Dennis VanderWerff, second Paul Roscoe to approve the budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 as printed. All yes. Motion carried.

The District had received and paid invoices for two harvestings. August is the beginning of the “die-back” time for aquatic plants so there was a question as to whether there would be a third harvesting and if so what would the cost be. After some discussion, a **motion** was made by Dennis VanderWerff, second by Ann Tepp to replenish the APM Harvesting Savings Account back to $70,000 using the total spent for the 2017 harvesting project as the Special Charge amount. All yes. Motion carried.

The next Annual Meeting will be held on the first Saturday of August, 2018.

Motion to adjourn, Louis, second Arlene Runkel. All yes. Motion carried,

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Rydquist, Clerk-coordinator