

Sawyer County Lakes Forum

Meeting Minutes

9/19/2024 9:00am-10:30am

Sawyer County Courthouse Assembly Room

Meeting began at 9:01am.

1. Participants/Introductions

In-Person:

1. Natalie Erler, Sawyer County AIS Coordinator
natalie.erler@sawyercountygov.org
2. Jean Accola- Little Sissabagama jaccola9@gmail.com
3. Marty Hanson-Round Lake treasurer@roundlakes.org
4. Warren Johnson-Sand wdjohnson2009@gmail.com
5. Cary McDonald- Moose carym0513@gmail.com
6. Don Stover- Tiger Cat Flowage donstover0607@gmail.com
7. Donna Carlson- Grindstone president@grindstonelake.org
8. Megan Sorensen- Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC)
msorensen@nwrpc.com
9. Dan Tyrolt- LCO Conservation Dept. Dan.Tyrolt@lco-nsn.gov
10. Linda Zillmer-Big Chetac linda.zillmer@outlook.com
11. Mike Hallum-Nelson osseosubway@trivest.net
12. Phil Nies-Current VP & Treasurer of the Forum philnies2920@gmail.com
13. Mike Tietz-Blueberry blueberrycabin@gmail.com
14. Steve Umland-COLA/LCO AIS Coordinator umlandstudios@outlook.com
15. Paul Martin-Windigo pmwood80@yahoo.com

Zoom:

1. Cynthia Aigner-Connors Lake caigner3329@gmail.com
2. John Zoller- Big Sissabagama bianchi.zoller@gmail.com

2. Phil Nies

Phil Nies, current VP and treasurer of the Forum talked about the history and current status of the Forum.

About 20 years ago, individuals from LCO, Round, and Moose Lakes got together to create the Forum. The idea was to create a bigger group that represented the smaller lake associations that didn't have as many assets or resources as the bigger lake associations. Additionally, the Forum would have more power/standing when testifying on issues etc.. than an individual lake association. There were no websites and email weren't used much back then, so initially, this group made it easier for individual lake associations to connect.

The Forum is classified as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation and started the wake boat bill, for example. Phil testified to the State of Vermont during their wake boat hearings. The Forum is currently a part of the Wisconsin Coalition of Lakes. COVID was the main driver for the dormancy of the Forum, and there were unsuccessful attempts to get the Forum up and running again.

Currently, there is \$60 in the back account and funds are used to keep the website running (\$30/year), \$100 donation toward the Northwest Lakes Conference every year, and registering the Forum's status with the state. Other possible expenses include ads in both County papers. Current board members are Bill Czeskleba-President, Phil Nies-VP/Treasurer, Martin Hanson-IT/Website, and Dan Tyrolt-LCO Conservation Dept.

A small binder of records is all that's left after the passing of MaryAnn, former secretary, a couple of years ago.

The current bylaws were rewritten last fall/winter to simplify them so that new people/members could join more easily.

If the board felt strongly on particular issues or wanted to support County Board Candidates, Phil would go to Zoning/County Board meetings, and submit comments/testify on behalf of the Forum or put adds in both County Newspapers.

Typically, the Forum would meet quarterly and would have an annual meeting with a presentation where lake association reps would come, but the annual meeting was less attended overtime.

The Forum needs new blood... and we are looking to find new board members.

3. Discussion

Dan Tyrolt- Sees himself as a technical resource to answer questions on things like water quality, oxythermal habitat etc.... His department does intensive water quality monitoring on 33 lakes.

Jean Accola- Brought up a confusion with the current bylaws. She suggested changing it to anyone can be a member but not everyone can vote as something to consider for the future. It makes the Forum a little more open to everyone, for example, open to people that care about the lakes but don't live on one.

Mike Tietz asked if there were any associations that have legal authority to propose rules for the entire lake. For example, property owners being taxed or paying fees to a lake association or lake district. There are none in the County, but Callahan/Mud Lakes are actively pursuing this.

Linda Zillmer responded that there are such things as qualified lake associations with the DNR.

Mike Tietz- Sees the Forum as a conduit for smaller organizations and local issues. The Forum can help sway or provide input on local issues, conduit for information/resources, connect people, and creates contacts between lakes.

The DNR has ultimate say/power on what we can and can't do on the lakes.

Marty Hanson- Is the webmaster for the Forum website. The new group should decide what information is forward facing or private. He'll put whatever the Forum wants to put on it. Meeting minutes agenda used to be posted. The website could use a facelift and content update. Up to the new board to decide.

Linda Zillmer- Washburn County Lakes & River Association has a good website and they are active. They send quarterly newsletters and provide outreach and education.

Goal is to get new people on the board

Steve Umland- What is the Forum trying to do? Phil: The Forum is a funnel for information, not to duplicate what other lake associations are doing. The Forum

has some power/standing in the County, at meetings, and writing recommendation letters for grants.

Marty added on to Phil's comment that there is a mission statement. Having a County round table to see what other associations are up to, legislation at town, county, and state level-Forum (can vet to legislation).

Paul Martin asked about decontamination stations-if any other lakes have stations? Chicago landing on LCO wants to put one in. Sand Lake wanted to do bleach solution, but because the landing is DNR owned, the DNR doesn't want to be liable if the bleach runs into the water or groundwater. Lost Land Lake also wanted to do bleach, but got blocked like Sand Lake did, so they are just using hand tools instead.

Dan commented not to worry/stress about diluted bleach concentrations going into the lake and being harmful. Road salt is more harmful than the bleach decontamination stations.

Steve potentially see the Forum as a large group that goes to the DNR and says this is what we really need in this watershed or this lake etc.

4. Future Meeting Time & Date

Will be Dependent on individuals joining the board or becoming members. Dan Tyrolt and Martin Hanson will stay on the board, but we are looking for a President, VP, Treasurer, and Secretary at the very least.

If you're interested in being involved in any shape or form please call or email Natalie Erler ASAP: natalie.erler@sawycountygov.org

715-638-3266

Thank you all for coming today!

Meeting adjourned at 10:13am