

Meeting Minutes
Pickerel/Crane Lake P & R District Spring Meeting
March 10, 2012 – 10:05 a.m.
Nashville Town Hall

Roll call – all Commissioners present except Rod & Jim. Also present were Phil Holman and Brad Kupfer

Pickerel / Crane Lake Management Plan was started 4/2009 and was expected to run through 6/30/2011. We received an extension. Contacted Tim Hoyman and asked for an update on where we are and where we are to go from here.

Aerator – Phil Holeman said that it was down for a week over the weekend – He will shut it down after ice breaks down. Who knows with this weather – 1 – 3 weeks? As long as open water is there – save a few dollars – one blower = \$15 this year \$10/day with the new device for converting to three phase power. Energy savings.

Chuck: If the melting starts soon, more oxygen will be in the water which will help. It would be nice to have access to a boat and motor to remove posts. Sometimes you can pull them in. Perhaps get a small boat can hook onto one rope and pull out to open water for the people on shoreline to pull them in. They never sink – wood in stakes, but often end up in a ratted mess – putting it up is easy, taking it down is a mess, wave action, wind, is the problem.

Water quality report – from DNR water testing – on both lakes – Clarity of water 1992-93 - 14 ft. In the 2000s it was 10-12 ft. – chemical levels has remained on a straight line; chlorophyll & phosphorous – staying the same but not better. Phil just got the Pickerel report – Crane's report went to Ron Fields. Chuck will contact Ron for spring meeting to get these reports. Oxygen levels used to be checked, but meter doesn't work – now the DNR may provide one for the season without a cost – Dave Seibel in Antigo – should we try this spring? Even now to check the oxygen – minnows dying on west end of lake in front of the island. Phil willing to check on this and get trained on it. Is the aerator not reaching to that section of the lake even though the current runs that way? It would be ok to check in winter and check oxygen levels through ice fishing holes. Our old one was not very dependable - \$800 on repairs and it wasn't reliable still. Check levels at 3 – 6 – 9 ft. - tried to take it to Rhinelander for further repairs but never proved to be cost effective.

Bass budget – Conservation Meeting – second weekend in April – Monday night – no need to push up timeline of newsletter. Walleye and Bass will be discussed in the spring meeting.

2012 Budget – Amendment – Peg – treasurer does budget for fall meeting and things happen before the end of the year – walleye restoration project – 1st bill for Onterra for 20K, the asterisks on budget denote changes – for new budget. In minutes ok'd \$2,000 – per meeting in November needs to be further amended to \$7,000. In spring meeting we will have to discuss whether it should be upped to \$7,500 for Greg to purchase 6-10" fry – 3,500 X 2. At our previous Labor Day meeting, Brad suggested this. Will have to amended by Commissioner's. Motion is made and approved to amend 2012 budget as presented to commissioners - seconded and approved – needs voting for 2013 budget. (Jim Stormer arrived) This has to be bid out since it is over

\$5,000 - needs agenda item to move from capital purchases. \$5,500 will be needed for walleye restoration project. This can be on the 2013 budget. It was mentioned that there is a \$5K donation in this account that was earmarked for walleye restoration.

Weevil research project – Phil, Chuck, and Keith Verhagen would like minutes – went to December 6, 2011 meeting on the weevils. At that time we were included in the project which included raising and breeding a weevil to plant in lakes with EWM to bore into stems. The cost is projected to be \$1.20 / piece. Les Stram on Motonga raised them on their lake. How long ago? Phil – less than 3 years per Jim Stormer – He comes to lake district meeting and never mentioned it, and he wasn't at the December meeting either. Peg never heard him mention it. Peg has a meeting next Friday, will ask about them. They are native to our lakes. This grant would have covered everything except volunteer stuff. \$7,000 out of pocket cost. We did not make the short list, however. Kevin said we didn't qualify because we have too many weeds and our small spots were either too small or too big. We did not match the criteria. If the projects works, there will be a new grant with the DNR. We also have hybrid EWM – they want the pure weeds. Right now everything is on hold.

Walleye Stocking vs. raising – Brad – research with Greg Matzke fish biologist, Chuck, Kathy, Peg, & Phil were there. With all the monitoring that is required there is still less than 50% survival rate even with those doing it who know what they are doing. It requires labor, fish food, fingerlings, monitored for temperature, - too many variables and labor intensive – no guarantee that it will work or even produce survivable fish. Option Two – stocking – Trump Lake had a fundraiser for stocking – 300 per year for past several year – keep walleye and bass in check with each other. Very successful. He would support us for a public stocking license for nominal fee. Would start in Crane Lake which will be our rearing pond because of depth. The walleyes we put in there have a better chance of survival. In September there was a boom shocking - 6.4 - 7.5 range 23 ½ " range – in Pickerel 3 were 18 – 28" none in the smaller range. Recommendation 11,000 little fry survival rate 3.2% and add 6-9" fry. Survival rate is 40% put in October. Greg recommended Twal Lake Hatchery out of New London. They raise the Lake Michigan strain , non VHS, all tested of walleye – even with bid, we can choose because of the quality not just the price. This year they were \$1.85/fry. The rate could change from \$1.70 - \$2.00 depending on weather, food, growth rate. Crappies like to eat small walleye fry, so plant them away from where known crappies are. When planted, they are on a saline low and easy for prey – that is why best chance is to stock larger fry. Greg Matzke will help to write a four year plan, and he would go to his boss and show success of program to help lower the bass size. He has surveys back to the '50s. We have the water quality but the numbers have decreased since then. We would like to make a commitment to 4-5 years – (plan, but not really a commitment) 3,500 fish each year, approximately. How to disperse with live wells. Dan Vosters questioned putting that many fish into the lake at once/ Can we handle that? Response is that 10,000 / acre is fine. When there is more young perch dying, there is more food available. Then there is larger perch. Pickerel could handle 120,000 (\$240,000) Stay in Crane for 4 years – basic plan will be in place by spring meeting as a start point to answer questions. Motion made to stock in Crane for first year and see what happens. Seconded and passed. Can we ask Greg Matzke to come out for the meeting? Weekends are hard.

Harvester Permit - \$300/3 years then it is \$300/year until lake management plan.

Spring agenda – stocking, aeration, stocking of Crane Lake, Lake Management Plan, boat docks, wet lands, bass,

Spring Meeting is set for May 26th 9:30.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30.