

Meeting Minutes
Pickerel/Crane Lake P & R District Spring Meeting
May 28, 2012 – 9:30 a.m.
Nashville Town Hall

Official meeting was called to order by Chairman Chuck Sleeter. Commissioners present for roll call were Chuck Sleeter, Rod Sternhagen, Kathy Kupfer, Dan Vosters, Duanne Marshall. Also in attendance were 55 property owners (18 residents & 45 non-residents).

Paula Hash (substitute for Lauren Freston) read the minutes from the September 3, 2011 fall meeting. Motion was made by Craig Farrah and seconded by Dan Vosters to accept minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Peg Hollmann was honored by Kathy Kupfer and Chuck Sleeter for her past service. It was noted that the closing balance in the newsletter was wrong. The correct closing balance is \$125,000. The Treasurer's Report is now made part of these minutes. Motion was made to accept the Treasurer's Report & seconded. Motion carried.

The March 10, 2012 Budget meeting minutes was read. Motion was made and seconded to accept the budget meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Aeration Report: January 5th stakes went in January 9th the lines were put in and 24 hours later there was open water. We are saving \$5 – 10 / day with the new blowers depending on how many were running. March 15th we had a warm week of weather, system was shut. March 19th stakes came out. Thanks to all the helpers. The old converter that burned out was salvaged and got \$104 for it. Pros and cons of aeration, we get no stocking without aeration. There is conflicting opinions on the benefits of this process.

Lake Docks: Phil Hollman thanked Joe Sanderfoot, and Dan Wellhouse put in the docks. There is an issue with a hole at the boat landing by power loading. Chuck has been trying to research solutions and who to talk about. This is still in the works. Kyle McLaughlin is in charge of this. Will be followed up on this. Crane also has a hole that is affecting the positioning of the lake. There is a sign at the landing, but people are still using their power loaders. Conditions of the docks: Crane Lake's dock is too high for people to get into their boats. These docks cannot be lowered. Phil Holman suggests a new dock, but hesitates until the hole problem is solved. Could a railing be a solution – 32" drop is too much. The issue is the water level has dropped which has caused this issue. Brad Kupfer asked: should we rebuild or replace? We either fix the landing, fix the dock, or both. Motion made by Brad Kupfer: Fix both holes and look at adjusting or replace dock. Seconded by Brian King. Motion passed. Port-a-Potty is in and working. There is a large bin with trash at the landing. It was in the water and dragged out. Smell is rancid. This will be taken care of. Does Crane want one for their dock? Garbage is also a problem on Crane Lake. It had been voted down for Crane Lake. The Pickerel Lake out house was replaced with a port-a-potty. The town does not pick up garbage nor does DNR. Question was posed for Crane Lake residents if they want a port-a-potty there. The cost is \$135/half-year. A port-a-potty invites garbage. Decaying fish is pretty bad. Past experience, there will be a place to dump things. Vote was made. Crane Lake Residents do not want one at this time.

Harvester: Machine is ready to go. Will go in on Tuesday. Request for volunteers made. Contact Keith Verhagen. Keith was thanked for his time and effort in helping Jim Huss with the harvesting effort. We have received the harvesting permit for \$300 for 3 years. This is a benefit of having a lake management plan and qualifies us for this discount. Rod Sternhagen would like the harvester the first week in August. Looks ok for this schedule.

Fish Stocking: Brad Kupfer is the committee working on this. He says: Met with Greg Matzke, fish biologist, from DNR. He is a real ally for us. Helped us write a time-line. Within 15 minutes received turn-a-round from him. He is interested in the success of this project and stands with us. A copy is attached with this report. The board is ready to start in October, but we want your approval. The fish raising is too labor intensive and costly. A better idea is to use Crane Lake as a rearing pond that has a history of survival rates for walleye. The cost could be \$26,000 to put in 13,000 walleye into Pickerel. The same test on Crane Lake to stock 3500 walleye would only cost \$7,000. The Lake

Michigan strain of walleye is the recommended species to be stocked in Crane this fall (Oct./Nov.) The bag limit would remain at 18" minimum / 3 walleye bag limit which would encourage growth in the lake. Three year stocking program with the maximum stocking. Six year restoration plan. This is a plan, not etched in stone. Recommended by Mr. Matzke. The DNR stocking will remain with the fry. The boom shocking has started with the Bass Resolution. Timeline for 2012, May – Bass Survey. By end of June, pan fish survey. Today, we are looking for community approval for year one. We are ready to go if we receive permission. 3500 walleye fingerlings with a survival rate of 40% for year 1. We could have 1400 survive in Crane Lake after winter. This does not include unexpected mortality or die off rate. Growth rate question by Jerry – answer is not known as of now. If approved we will look for bids. The low rate is \$1.70 ; high end \$2.00/fish.

- Is there oxygen problems in Crane? - Not that we are aware of.
- Is there money for this? - There is a line item as of last Labor Days meeting there was \$2,000. A person has also donated \$5,000 and is ear mocked for walleye stocking.
- Is there and DNR subsidy? - No there is not. We can do this three year straight in Crane. Every other year the DNR will continue to stock the little walleye (1 ½" walleye). These just feed bass.
- What problem is this plan designed to address? Is there any way to gauge success? - What is the mission? The walleye population in Crane has dropped since 1985. Bass population has grown substantially. Crane used to be known as a walleye lake. Pickerel also sustained walleye. The larger walleye will eat more of the little bass. A good checks and balance between the two species.
- Will these reproduce? - That is our hope and expectation. It has happened in the past. This is Greg Matzke's hope as well as ours.
- Is there anything in the plan to reduce the bass? - Greg Matzke stated that a walleye will not eat a 6-8" blue gill. Can't get it down their mouth. Will eat smaller bass. The only predator for the bass is the northern. Not enough to keep their numbers down.
- If we move forward with this? Are we voting for all three years? – No, just one year at time to evaluate it year by year. We made a plan in conjunction with the DNR to at least have a goal. If it works, great. If not, we can adjust.
- If success with year one and want to go to year two, are we establishing a budget to continue? We may not have another \$5,000 donation. - We have the resources available to continue. Chuck feels comfortable that we will be able to continue the plan. There is a capital purchase can be used for this. There is \$5,600 there now.
- Do we need to make a line item in our budget for this? - Chuck said we could do this.
- If we go through with this and walleye increase. Will spearing have an effect? - Word of mouth, spearing will happen. We don't want to broadcast it, but this is a concern. If it works, we will stock in Pickerel. Every other year. Eventually, if we do nothing the DNR will pull the plug and not help stock us. We are being pro-active hoping to preserve walleye.
- Could we reduce the daily bag limit which could reduce the drive to come? – There are those who come back daily. It's possible.

Brad says it is time to be pro-active and try to take initiative to fix the walleye level in our lake. Any other questions, Brad Kupfer said you can call him.

Matze has said that shocking in Crane Lake says that it shows good sized blue gill and crappie. Pickerel also is good. He agrees that reducing the size limit for bass to 14" for both of our lakes. (It is not up to him, but he supports us.) Matzke also addressed that if we stock, when do we stop, when do we know when to stop? If we get enough walleye and they are reproducing ourselves, then we will be ok. We will know in a few years, and then we will need to decide for ourselves if we have a sustainable walleye, do we want to continue purchasing fish so that our sportsman can get walleye? This will be a decision that needs to be made in the future?

Motion made to move forward and purchase 7,000 walleyes over the period of two years because there will not be enough data after one year; and seconded. Motion carried.

Lake Management Plan: Submitted for review but not reviewed yet. Wausau staff is overworked and under staffed, so it is not yet completed. It has not yet been fully paid for yet. We did have to extend the grant until

the plan is reviewed. The most interesting part of the plan is the survey to Lake Management Plan – we had a great response and Chuck Sleeter was very pleased.

Weevil Project: Chuck, Keith Verhagen, and Phil Hollman attended a meeting in Rhinelander for four hours. We were on a potential list to try this experimental problem, but since we have the hybrid form of EWM we are not eligible for the list. Besides, at the price of be \$1.28 per bug with a low survival rate and we would need thousands of them, the weevils at this point is not a good investment.

Bass Resolution: Dan Voster, even if the vote is there (the numbers come out in May) and the recommendation passes, the DNR does not have to agree with this recommendation. We have to trust the science behind the decision here. An update will be given later.

Committee for Re-election: Rod Sternhagen (vice-chair) and Lauren Freston (Secretary) are up for re-election. Both are willing to stay.

Public Comment: Question from the floor about the Port-a-Potty – Does the state have to supply it? Why do we have to pay for it. The answer is that we wanted it. We are not mandated, but thought it was a good idea.

Motion to adjourn, seconded, and passed. Meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Freston (per Paula Hash's notes and audio tape)