

RECAP OF THE JULY 9, 2025 ANNUAL LAKE MALLALIEU ASSOCIATION MEMBERS MEETING

At the start of the July 9, 2025 Annual LMA Members Meeting, LMA President Susie Gilbert announced three prize-winners in the July 4 Lake Mallalieu Boat Parade; welcomed two new LMA members in attendance; and introduced the LMA Board members in attendance.

In meeting business:

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Members approved the Minutes of the last prior LMA meeting, from Oct. 15, 2024.
- **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** LMA President Susie Gilbert gave a verbal President's Report.
 - The LMA Board now is seeking a WDNR permit to drawdown Lake Mallalieu.
 - At the request of the LMA Board, the four local governmental units are supporting the lake drawdown permit application (City of Hudson, Village of North Hudson, Town of Hudson, and St. Croix County).
 - The LMA Board has contracted with Stantec to complete the lake drawdown application. Stantec has submitted the preliminary permit application, and the WDNR recently has requested more information from Stantec.
 - At this time, it's uncertain whether the lake drawdown permit will be granted, and if a drawdown is permitted, it's uncertain whether a drawdown could begin in the Fall of 2025 or would be delayed to the Fall of 2026.
- **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Mike Laatsch, LMA Treasurer, gave a verbal Financial Report. The LMA has several financial accounts and lots of money.
 - One account is for LMA Member dues.
 - Only 40 of the about 96 households on the lake have paid 2025 LMA member dues so far, compared to the highest membership of about 80+ lakefront households in prior years.
 - Jeff Lavers, LMA Secretary, clarified that WI law specifies people living within one mile of the lake also are eligible to become members; the LMA website and the 2025 LMA membership invitation letter incorrectly defined eligibility to join the LMA as being limited to property owners within one mile of the lake.
 - A money market account holds most of the \$1-million advance that the LMA received in 2023 from the \$2-million total state grant to the LMA for Lake Mallalieu.
 - Another account holds a small portion of the state grant to the LMA, and is used to pay on-going project expenses, such as the carp reduction and management project approved by LMA members at the Oct. 15, 2024 LMA meeting.
- **LMA Members requested a detailed written financial statement showing income and expenditures be provided.** LMA Treasurer Mike Laatsch said he would send a written financial report to LMA members sometime soon.
- **UPDATE ON CARP MANAGEMENT PROJECT:** Bill Fristad, LMA Board Member, gave a verbal report on the carp reduction and management project.
 - The LMA Board has contracted with Carp Solutions (<https://www.carpsolutionsmn.com>), founded and operated by U of MN Professor Przemek Bajer in the Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology (<https://fwcb.cfans.umn.edu/people/przemek-bajer>) for this project.
 - **Phase 1** of the project has been completed at a cost \$6,600. This was an assessment of the carp population in the lake (now estimated at 160,000 pounds and at six times the

environmentally appropriate mass for the lake), and a test of the effectiveness of bait netting in the lake (evaluated as quite successful).

- **Phase 2** of this project is to obtain WDNR permits for bait netting to reduce the carp population, and then implementing the project, anticipated to occur in August and September 2025.

- **LMA Members made comments and asked questions about the carp reduction and management project**, including:

- Could the carp be donated to Asian food shelves, rather than put into a landfill?
- How would fish-eating predators be protected from harms during carp netting?
- How would desirable fish species be protected from harms during carp netting?
- How would netting locations be marked?
- Provide a map of netting locations in the lake.

- **UPDATE ON DRAWDOWN PROJECT:** Jeff Lavers, LMA Secretary, gave a verbal overview of the LMA Board's proposed drawdown and/or dredging projects for Lake Mallalieu.

- The LMA Board has contracted with Stantec to obtain WDNR approval of a lake drawdown.
- The first proposed drawdown would be about three- to five-feet, drawn down at a rate of about five-inches per day; if approved soon by the WDNR, the lake drawdown could begin in September or October of 2025, with the lake water level remaining lowered until about April 2026, when the water level would slowly be restored.
- The purpose of this drawdown is to hasten the consolidation of soft sediments that have reduced water depths in order to achieve greater water depths in shallow lake areas. A lake drawdown typically results in about 50% compaction of soft sediments, although sometimes the compaction is only 30% to 20%.
- The LMA Board also is seeking WDNR approvals to routinely conduct lake drawdowns every five to seven years.
- Stantec is responding to WDNR requests for more information as part of the lake drawdown permit application. The WDNR may not approve any lake drawdown; if the WDNR does not soon approve this first requested lake drawdown, it may be too late to start a lake drawdown in September or October of 2025, and it would be delayed to Fall 2026.
- All boats must be out of the lake before any drawdown begins.
- Stantec's Dredging Feasibility Study DID find deposits of soft sediments that make water depths shallow in some lake areas, but it could NOT determine the source of these soft sediment deposits or when they were deposited.
- Sediment core sampling done as part of Stantec's Dredging Feasibility Study did NOT find arsenic levels in sediment that were high enough to prohibit dredging.
- Stantec's Dredging Feasibility Study DID find that dredging to remove soft sediment deposits presented very complex issues, and dredging would be logistically and financially very challenging to accomplish. Local municipalities have refused to permit the number of heavy truck roundtrips on local roadways that would be required to transport dredge materials to disposal locations; no disposal locations have been secured; the WDNR has refused to permit islands of dredge material in the lake; and a dredging project would cost much, much more than the \$2-million state grant to the LMA.
- However, when responding to member comments and questions, **Jeff Lavers said the LMA is now pursuing a drawdown of the lake as only the least invasive first step to increase water depths, and he twice said that "dredging is NOT off the table".**

- **LMA Members made comments and asked questions regarding the LMA Board's proposed dredging and/or drawdown projects, including:**
 - Because Lake Mallalieu is an impoundment, the water is public but the impoundment lakebed may be and is privately owned; even if the WDNR issued a dredging permit to the LMA, the LMA could NOT legally dredge any privately owned lakebed area without ALSO first obtaining permission for dredging from the owner of the impoundment lakebed in the dredging area.
 - Many shoreline and/or lakebed modifications that a property owner may want to do during a lake drawdown also require first obtaining WDNR permits and approvals.
 - Do “muck-er-ators”, which are operating in the lake along some properties, contribute to soft sediment disruption? No one knew. It was noted that high carp populations disturb soft sediments and reduce water clarity.
 - How would desirable fish species be affected by a lake drawdown? A member suggested placing a net on the lake side of the dam to prevent fish from going into the St. Croix River along with the lake water.
 - How would the “success” of a lake drawdown be measured and determined? Stantec will perform a post-drawdown assessment of lake water depths and soft sediment deposits.
 - Some members stated, contrary to claims by Jeff Lavers, that in their observations of the Willow River between the Little Falls Dam and Lake Mallalieu, sediment and/or sand are NOT continuing to flow down the Willow River below the Little Falls Dam and are NOT continuing to reduce Lake Mallalieu water depths.
 - Some members doubted a lake drawdown would appreciably increase water depths. One member said he has wanted the lake dredged to be made deeper since he bought his home 25-years-ago, and he strongly opposes a lake drawdown rather than dredging the lake.
 - Several members requested the LMA Board provide the Stantec Dredging Feasibility Study, along with the updated maps of lake water depths and sediment deposits within the dredging study area of the lake to LMA Members. Mike Laatsch said he would send those materials to LMA Members sometime soon.
 - Several members asked for current information on the water quality of the lake. There was discussion of the LMA possibly contracting with a professional water testing service for the purpose of providing regular water quality reports during the Spring, Summer, and Fall.
 - Several members asked how much money the LMA contract(s) with Stantec cost. Susie Gilbert, LMA President, said that so far the LMA has contracted with Stantec for an expanded scope of services, many of which have not yet been performed and billed for, at a total contract cost of about \$900,000.
- **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - A LMA Member provided draft replacement LMA Bylaws to the LMA Members for information, with consideration and a vote by the LMA membership to occur at a future date. The LMA Member explained the draft replacement LMA Bylaws had been prepared for the 2024 Annual LMA Member Meeting but had not been included in that meeting's Agenda; the 2024/2025 draft replacement LMA Bylaws were based on model bylaws and recommendations for the operation of an incorporated lake association from UW-Stevens Point Extension; and the 2024/2025 draft replacement LMA Bylaws also incorporated requirements of Wis. Stat. Chapters 181 and 281 that apply to operating a qualified lake association such as the LMA.
 - The LMA Member and LMA President Susie Gilbert explained Wisconsin law provides for both LMA Members and/or the LMA Board to draft and introduce LMA Bylaws

amendments and/or replacement LMA Bylaws; at a future date, the LMA membership would consider and vote on LMA Bylaws changes.

- LMA President Susie Gilbert and other members of the LMA Board said the LMA Board has retained another attorney to eventually prepare the LMA Board's draft Bylaws amendments for consideration and a vote by the LMA membership.

- **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A LMA Member, shared concerns about increased exterior lighting impacts resulting from more intensive redevelopment of properties on Lake Mallalieu. LMA President Susie Gilbert suggested contacting the neighbor and asking them to turn off the lights.
- A LMA Member recommended watching the meeting agendas of local governmental units for items that may affect interests in Lake Mallalieu. The LMA Member said upcoming meetings of the St. Croix County Administration Committee (July 15, 2025, at 5PM), the Hudson City Council (August 4, 2025 at 6PM), the Village of North Hudson Board of Trustees (August 5, 2025 at 6PM), and the Town of Hudson Board (August 5, 2025, at 6PM) may take up competing purchase offers for three parcels amounting to about 5-acres of undeveloped land around the dam forming Lake Mallalieu. The LMA Member said one land purchase offer was \$61,000 total, made with the intent to create a \$16-million residential development, and the other land purchase offer was at a higher purchase price, made with the intent to preserve the undeveloped land.
- Several LMA Members and Board Members recounted issues with high lake water levels and discussed how the lake water level is controlled via operation of the dam by City of Hudson employees.
- A LMA Member proposed creating an Advisory Committee to assist the LMA Board.

- **NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF LMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

- Warren Schneider, LMA Vice President, said that the incumbent members of the LMA Board had agreed to run for re-election, with the exception of incumbent LMA President Susie Gilbert who was stepping down after many, many years of service.
- LMA Members and the LMA Board thanked Susie Gilbert for her service and presented her with a flower bouquet.
- Incumbent members of the LMA Board standing for re-election were:
 - Warren Schneider, Paul Gavic, and Bill Fristad in the Town of Hudson;
 - Jim Fahy and Jeff Lavers in the Village of North Hudson; and
 - Mike Laatsch in the City of Hudson.
- Warren Schneider opened nominations from the floor for additional LMA Board candidates. Four LMA Members were nominated from the floor:
 - Emily Janisch and Tim Huntley in the City of Hudson; and
 - Dylan Seurer and Pam Raven in the Village of North Hudson.
- A LMA Member moved that all nominees be elected, and the motion was seconded. After discussion, LMA Members voted unanimously to elect all incumbent and new nominees to the LMA Board, thereby increasing the size of the LMA Board.
- The 2025 LMA Board will elect 2025 Officers from among the Board Members.

- **MEETING ADJOURNMENT:** Following the election of the 2025 LMA Board, the 2025 Annual LMA Members Meeting was adjourned.