

**APPROVED MINUTES  
CHISAGO LAKES LAKE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
Monday, August 7, 2023**

The Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District (LID) Board of Directors met for their regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, via both an in-person and virtual meeting held at the Chisago County Government Center, Room 150B, in Center City, MN with the following Directors present: Jill Behnke, Travis LaMotte, Todd McBride, Mike Mergens, Steve Paquay, and Gary Schumacher. **ABSENT:** Margaret LeVasseur

\*\*\*Notice of Participation via Teams\*\*\*

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.02, Subd. 3, persons interested in monitoring the meeting electronically from a remote location viewed the meeting through the Microsoft Teams meeting link.

Others present attended the in-person or virtual meeting at a location of their choice through a personal device (e.g., laptop, tablet, cell phone, or personal computer). Each LID Board Director and others present were allowed to view documents presented during the in-person and virtual meeting via their devices and to participate in discussion through microphones located in their devices.

Also present: Chisago Lakes LID Administrator Ben Elfelt, LID Water Resource Specialist Monica Kinny, Chisago County Water Resource Manager Susanna Wilson Witkowski, Chisago County Commissioner Marlys Dunne, and EOR Engineer Greg Graske.

Chair Mike Mergens called the business meeting to order at 6:30 pm and lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Director McBride offered a motion to approve the amended agenda for the LID meeting. Motion seconded by Director Schumacher and, upon a roll call vote being taken thereon, the motion **carried** as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Jill Behnke, Travis LaMotte, Todd McBride, Mike Mergens, Steve Paquay, and Gary Schumacher. **OPPOSED:** None **ABSENT:** Margaret LeVasseur

Director Behnke offered a motion to approve the items on Consent Agenda for the LID meeting, including a) Approval of Minutes from the Board Meeting on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the b) Financial Report, and c) Approval of Invoice Payments. Motion seconded by Director LaMotte and, upon a roll call vote being taken thereon, the motion **carried** as follows **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Jill Behnke, Travis LaMotte, Todd McBride, Mike Mergens, Steve Paquay, and Gary Schumacher. **OPPOSED:** None **ABSENT:** Margaret LeVasseur

| August 2023 LID Invoices Received |                     |        |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--------|
| Invoice Detail                    | LID Budget Category | Amount |

|                                         |                                       |                  |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Alliance Labs</b>                    | <b>Sample Analysis (June)</b>         | <b>246.00</b>    |
| <b>Alliance Labs</b>                    | <b>Sample Analysis (June)</b>         | <b>1,680.00</b>  |
| <b>Alliance Labs</b>                    | <b>Sample Analysis (July)</b>         | <b>1,722.00</b>  |
| <b>EOR</b>                              | <b>Meeting Attendance (May)</b>       | <b>250.00</b>    |
| <b>EOR</b>                              | <b>Water Levels (May)</b>             | <b>2,167.80</b>  |
| <b>EOR</b>                              | <b>Meeting Attendance (June)</b>      | <b>250.00</b>    |
| <b>EOR</b>                              | <b>Water Levels (June)</b>            | <b>2,538.16</b>  |
| <b>SWCD</b>                             | <b>Water Quality Report</b>           | <b>2,302.50</b>  |
| <b>SWCD</b>                             | <b>Landowner Cost Share - Posner</b>  | <b>782.99</b>    |
| <b>Washington Conservation District</b> | <b>Shared Water Resource Educator</b> | <b>1,671.40</b>  |
| <b>Monthly Total</b>                    |                                       | <b>13,610.85</b> |

The Chair opened the Citizen's Forum at 6:33 p.m. No citizens offered comments. The Chair closed the Citizen's Forum at 6:34 p.m.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Elfelt shared with the Board the status of the Chisago Lakes Water Trail and the current discussion surrounding its promotion and stewardship. The Water Trail is loosely managed by individual cities and was initially funded by grant monies awarded to the communities as a result of being a finalist in the America's Best Communities competition. Signage, maps, and other promotional materials were created several years ago, but ongoing maintenance and supply replenishment has not been addressed. The LID Board would consider taking over management of the Water Trail if all parties were in agreement. LID staff will reach out to the community partners to continue the discussion and determine the status of maps, signage, trail conditions, etc.

Elfelt relayed to the Board that according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Chisago Lakes LID and surrounding areas are currently in a *Drought Warning Response Phase*, meaning public water suppliers in the watershed must implement water restrictions. LID staff will draft a letter to both DNR and Chisago City conveying the LID's concerns regarding the water appropriation permit held by Green Lake Villas; in particular the lack of a real-time reporting requirement for water taken from Little Green Lake as allowed by the permit.

Director Travis LaMotte left the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Elfelt introduced Sophie Greene, PFAS (Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) Coordinator at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Greene discussed PFAS testing throughout the state

and shared some insights into surface water testing for the LID lakes. PFAS are a persistent bioaccumulative toxin found in plastics, Teflon, Scotchguard, fire suppressant foam, and chrome plating byproducts, among other things, and can cause negative health impacts at very low levels. PFAS may accumulate in fish tissue at concentrations 7000 times greater than the surrounding water. State agencies have been testing fish since 2004, and LID staff can request this data from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Lake testing data can be requested from DNR, and well testing information from the Minnesota Department of Health. Greene provided a link to the fish consumption advisory tables: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/fish> Greene stated that it would be beneficial for the LID to have a composite/homogenized sample from multiple fish tested to obtain a PFAS baseline. She cautioned that analysis turnaround times are long due to high demand, and to have a backup lake to recommend to anglers if any of the lakes return high PFAS results.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Elfelt discussed the takeaways from the LID Tour of Projects which took place on July 31st. Twenty-five people were in attendance, including staff from Chisago City, Center City, and Lindstrom, as well as the Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District Board and a state Senator. Topics included soil and water health, the economic and recreational benefits of clean water, and current and future water quality projects within the LID. Photos and a video created by the Lower St. Croix Water Resources Education Specialist have been shared widely on social media as well as at the LID meeting.

Elfelt updated the Board on the 2024 LID Budget, which was submitted to County Administration with a recommended 5.5% levy increase. However, after administrative review, the levy request was increased by 11% to cover next year's anticipated LID expenses. The Environmental Services budget is scheduled to be reviewed by the County Board on August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Elfelt shared with the Board that the East Basin Carp Study being conducted by WSB is underway: the contract is signed and the permit completed. The first step consists of electrofishing surveys on the Center Lakes, the Lindstrom Lakes, and Chisago Lake. Three survey days are scheduled one week apart for the latter part of August.

Elfelt reminded the Board that several time slots need to be filled for the Ki-Chi-Saga Days LID/Lake Associations booth on August 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **STAFF & ENGINEER REPORTS**

### **LID Updates**

Elfelt shared the Hinckley Area Fisheries Newsletter and stated that this week DNR is utilizing trap and gill nets to survey fish on South Center Lake.

Elfelt relayed to the Board that on August 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, he and EOR staff conducted a point intercept survey on Little Green Lake. It was noted that there is a dead zone lacking in vegetation in the 6–10-foot depth littoral area where Curlyleaf Pondweed has died back for the season. A written report will be available soon.

Kinny shared with the Board the time and date of an upcoming Shoreline Showcase on Green Lake. A LID resident installed a vegetative buffer several years ago and is offering tours of their property as a demonstration opportunity.

LID Chair Mergens reviewed what he learned on the Workshop on the Water on July 25<sup>th</sup> in Stillwater.

### **Chisago County Water Resources Updates**

Wilson Witkowski stated that Chisago County has been selected as a semi-finalist for the 2024 We Are Water exhibit. The next step is a group interview on Thursday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm.

Watercraft inspections and decontaminations continue, and the Decontamination Blitz will take place in collaboration with Wild Rivers Conservancy August 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> at the Taylors Falls Lions and Osceola Landings.

The Board was reminded that they can sign up for Starry Trek taking place on August 19<sup>th</sup> to help search for invasive algae Starry Stonewort.

Wilson Witkowski informed the Board that a free well water screening clinic will take place on September 7<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with Chisago County Public Health, and shared updates on the Lower St. Croix, One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) activities.

The Slow-No-Wake ordinance change for Moonlight Bay on South Lindstrom Lake is nearing completion with updated documentation, new signage in the works, and new placement of safety buoys.

### **EOR Update**

EOR Engineer Graske reviewed with the Board a report summarizing the summer channel and weir inspection that took place on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Water levels are low throughout the system and no immediate concerns were noted.

Director McBride offered a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Motion seconded by Director Paquay and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion **carried** as follows:

**IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Jill Behnke, Todd McBride, Mike Mergens, Steve Paquay, and Gary Schumacher. **OPPOSED:** None **ABSENT:** Travis LaMotte, Margaret LeVasseur



Mike Mergens, Chair

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Benjamin Elfelt, Administrator

Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District