

White River Flowage Lake Management District
Minutes of Saturday, September 15, 2012

Budget Hearing (9-9:30 am): Treasurer Fran Geier noted one correction on the financial report to the Harvester Savings Account. The actual amount in that account for 2012 is \$8,150, not \$8,290. \$140 was inadvertently added twice to that account. There were no questions or comments from the members in attendance.

Regular District Meeting (9:30 am): Carol Van Dongen motioned to approve the agenda, Walt Braun seconded. However, Chairman Mike Geier asked to add one addition item – discussion of the drawdown of the Wautoma millpond. Mary Ann Genson motioned to approve the amended agenda, Laura Soldner seconded, and the motion carried. Next, Secretary/Treasurer Fran Geier read the minutes of the April 2012 meeting. Walt Braun motioned to approve the minutes as read, Carol Koester seconded, and the motion carried. Bill Van Dongen reported on the minutes of the previous two Board of Commissioners meetings in April and June which included establishing the 2013 district budget and limiting contracted cutting operations to no more than one per month. Gordie Loehr motioned to accept the Board of Commissioners minutes, Mike Blija seconded, and the motion carried. Finally, Fran Geier gave the treasurer's report.

Drawdown Discussion: Chairman Geier began a discussion on the Wautoma millpond drawdown that was begun in June. He stated that the District was promised that silt would not be a problem, but the Van Dongens noticed the impact right away when the flowage went from approx. 2' of water depth to 3-6". Mike met with the DNR who told him that we must wait a year. Mike suggested to them that the harvester could be used to keep the channel open. Carol Van Dongen stated that the situation at the north end is very bad. Jerry Genson noted that the wild rice is spreading south. According to the DNR, there are three things the District can do to alleviate some of the silt problems: 1) divert the flow by putting a down tree in the water as a berm; 2) dredge; or 3) do a partial or full drawdown. Geier mentioned that Stantec knows of an organization that could do channeling north of Van Dongens to south of Gensons. Trout Unlimited never wrote a letter against the drawdown. The trout are now going into the west branch. Gordie Loehr asked how a drawdown will get rid of the silt. Bill Van Dongen replied that it clears the weeds out and focuses the water through the channel to sweep the silt away. Mike noted that there was 4' of silt behind M&I bank and there are some groups in Wautoma who want to leave the area unfilled and create a park. There is a \$500 fee to the DNR to have a drawdown. The Board will research options of a partial drawdown. Marty Koslucher asked how long after the drawdown before the channels fill back in. Bill Van Dongen said the DNR says it would be 3-5 years before the weeds come back. Dick Meidam asked if individuals should complain personally, but Chairman Geier says the District has more clout. Carol Van Dongen suggested letters to the Argus. The Board will have more information at the spring 2013 meeting.

Guest Presentation: Jim Floeter, Central Region Manager, and Mark Zahar, dam operator, from North American Hydro did a brief presentation. According to Jim, Chuck Alstead (one of the founding partners) sold his interest to Eagle Creek, but the name will stay the same. There were 48 dams before the split, with North American Hydro keeping about half. Maintenance repairs on the dam on County Road YY should be completed by the end of next week. Jim stated that the water level in the dam could be lowered as much as 4' and still operate. He said he would check the records for the last drawdown. Jack Mann asked how the silt affects the turbines. Jim stated that the silt plugs the turbines, requiring yearly maintenance.

Harvester Operation: Chairman Geier announced that the harvester and a crew of two men had been contracted out twice this summer, with a third operation coming in September. The earnings from these cutting operations go directly into the harvester savings account (\$2,750 so

far this year, with an additional \$1,440 still due for the September operation). However, these services require the harvester to be unavailable to the District for up to 2 weeks (5 days before and 5 days after for drying, plus powerwashing) so there must a minimum of 16 contracted hours to make it worthwhile and no more than one contracted operation per month since the Flowage is the main priority. Dick Meidam, Mike Blija, and Mike Geier will be harvesting at the Neshkoro Millpond for the second time this year on September 22nd and 23rd. Teflon strips on the front of the harvester will be replaced either this fall or next spring. The harvester is going into storage at the County Fairgrounds on October 1st. The price for storage has gone up to \$4.25/foot or \$144.50/year.

New Harvester Grant: Chairman Geier reported that he has already written a grant application to be submitted in December for April 2013 awards. He fully expects to be turned down this cycle. He and Bill Van Dongen visited Aquarius Systems in North Prairie in Waukesha County and were impressed with their operation. They are looking at harvesters with a 6' cutting width and more than 200 cu. ft. of storage capacity. There is no firm price yet since there are so many options to choose from. The grant request will be for \$165,000. Mike estimates the price of the new unit to be around \$145,000. The District's current harvester is valued at about \$22,000. Mary Koslucher motioned to approve a resolution authorizing Mike Geier to write and submit a grant application for a new harvester, Brian Soldner seconded, and the motion carried.

White River Trail Landing: Chairman Geier reported that it is getting very hard to get the harvester out of the Flowage due to the condition of the landing. He asked the Town of Dakota Board to put in two 12' x 10' cement slabs and riprap at the landing at a cost of \$5,500 which includes the DNR permit, but doesn't expect anything to be done until next spring. There may be landing improvement grants to help the Town of Dakota pay for it. The District is considering putting in a handicapped-accessible pier (5' wide x 16' long). The DNR may supply the materials while the District provides the labor. Pay stations should be installed at both landings as part of the harvester grant, but that is the responsibility of the Town of Dakota. The District could offer to help oversee them. Bill Van Dongen noted that having pay stations will bump the DNR's harvester grant share by 5% and a handicapped-accessible pier will add another 10%. Mike Geier will inform the Town Board of the grant details.

Workers' Compensation: Bill Van Dongen explained that there is a new requirement that workers' compensation insurance be made available for board members of all municipalities which now include lake districts. The cost for this new insurance will be approx. \$250/year. The Board of Commissioners will review this issue and will decide on whether to get the insurance at the November Board meeting.

Chemical Treatments for 2013: Chairman Geier noted that the 2013 budget includes a pre-treatment survey and chemically treating up to 4 acres of CLP and up to 4 acres of EWM, but skipping the post-treatment survey. The District expects to contract again with Stantec and arrange for the pre-treatment survey to take place in early April of 2013. The low current at the north end may help with the CLP treatment. The District will be paying the entire amount with no grant involved.

2013 Budget: Gordie Loehr motioned to accept the proposed 2013 budget and fees, Walt Braun seconded, and the motion carried.

There was a brief recess while the White River Flowage Association made a few announcements.

Elections: Bill Van Dongen stated that both Mike (Chairman) and Fran (Secretary/Treasurer) Geier were up for re-election and indicated their willingness to serve another 3-year term. Carol Koester made a motion to close the nominations, Gail Herzog seconded, and the motion carried.

Next, Walt Braun motioned to re-elect Mike and Fran Geier to their respective positions, Margaret Heschke seconded, and the motion carried.

Future Agenda Items: 1) Have a DNR representative do a presentation on fish surveys and stocking; 2) Amend the Bylaws regarding publishing the annual budget in the local newspaper.

Adjournment: Gail Herzog motioned to adjourn at 11:45 am, Mary Koslucher seconded, and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned. Lunch was provided by the White River Flowage Association. The Board of Commissioners met immediately after lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Geier
Secretary/Treasurer