

Big Blake Lake Association Spring Meeting

May 30, 2009

Meeting called to order @0906.

Introduction of board members Sam Weber[president], Brenda Clarkson[secretary], Jim Maxwell[treasurer], Judy Everson [commissioner] and Cedric Sollard [commissioner]. Ron Ogren [Georgetown Board], Hershel Brown [Polk Co.] and Andy Magnuson [Georgetown Board].

Loey Weber motioned that we accept minutes of the August 2008 meeting as presented in the newsletter. Jim Filkens seconded the motion, which was then carried.

Trent Walden is a new member of our association who introduced himself as the owner of the "Dairy Queen" cabin. Welcome!

Treasurer's report by Jim Maxwell as appeared in the newsletter. He explained that the balance appears low due to waiting for monies owed us from the Spooner DNR for Harvey expense reimbursement. Ford Elliott motioned to accept report as written second by Ken Knutson. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Sandi Randall [sea plane owner] attended the meeting as an invited guest to discuss her sea plane's takeoffs and landings. Jim Loeffler and Ken Knutson voiced concerns about safety especially during weekends and holidays. Sandi informed us she was not doing training during these times, but did use the lake to pick-up clients on weekends and holiday's for training elsewhere. She informed us boats have the right-of-way and planes must defer to them. There was some discussion of the verbiage on Sandi's web site calling Big Blake Lake a training lake; she assured us there is no training here and she will see to the removal of the word training from her web site. A motion by Ken Knutson to accept verbal agreement of no weekend or holiday training was seconded by Cami Bona. Because of the close verbal vote and the sensitivity of the issue a hand count was taken. Yeas 33, nays 9. Motion carries.

Ron Ogren, chair Georgetown Board came to discuss the use of ATV's on Baker Rd. as the issue has been brought in front of the board for a vote. Ron wishes to know how the association feels about allowing the ATV's to be used by licensed drivers 16 years and older with a 10mph maximum speed. This would be a trial period for only for 1 year. Some residents on the east side of the lake wanted to know why they were not included; he explained it was the "squeaky wheel" theory and that the board did not wish to add any other roads to the discussion. A poll was taken with: Yes-24, No-6. The official vote will go to public hearing after being published for public notification. Ron spoke briefly about our taxes, he wishes us to know there is a new assessor and we should contact him with any questions.

Gene Schmidt brought to the association a proposal to change the current fee funding to the association from a mill rate format to a special assessment format. The implications of the change would be that the monies to each owner would be a fixed rate of \$90.90 instead of a mill rate based on the yearly assessed value of a property. The collective amount paid to the association would not change from the current \$20,000. Motion by Ken Knutson to vote on the proposal at the annual meeting held in August. Motion seconded by Joan Maxwell. Motion carried.

Jim Filkins and Bob Sherrard spoke with the DNR about doing a fish study which the DNR has completed. The data of the study has not been compiled at this time, but someone from the DNR will be at our August meeting to report the results and answer questions.

Ford Elliott updated us on Harvey. Last year 105 loads of curly leaf and 16 loads of coon tail were removed. As of this meeting date 16 loads of curly leaf have been removed. Last fall Harvey struck an object south of the north landing and the head had to be rebuilt. Ford has an underwater camera which he will use to hopefully locate and identify the culprit. A reminder Harvey harvests in 36 inches of water or deeper and 10 yards away from docks.

Clean Boats Clean Waters will be headed by Vicki Dorner for the west side and by Jim and Sandy Thorn for the east side. WAL convention per Ford has new standards, which no longer uses exclusion process but containment process. Exclusion means nothing in or out of the lake. Containment means since we already have the weeds we need to protect others from them therefore no water or minnows are to leave the lake and the boats are to be clean when they leave. We received \$4000 for 2008's Clean Boats Clean Water participation.

Ford wishes us to know that Polk County Land and Water has sustained budget cuts and that lake residents pay 60% of Polk Co. property taxes. Call your representative, Hershel Brown, with questions or comments.

Deanne addressed complaints of her horses on her land near the bridge. Polk Co. zoning has said there is nothing illegal with the horses being on the land. If anyone has further questions please call Roxanne at the zoning office.

NEW BUSINESS

July 4th will be the annual boat parade 1600 will be the start time all boats come to the north landing. Lori Sandell and Linda Schmidt will be sending flyers.

The annual picnic will follow the August meeting at last year's very popular picnic in the park location. A motion to allot \$500 for the picnic was made by Jim Filkins and seconded by Allen Moe. Motion carried.

Jerry Merth brought his concern of not following proper boating safety regulations on our lake. Several people voiced their concerns also. Jerry has agreed to write an article for next newsletter. Continued safety training was briefly discussed to be followed up later.

Jim Filkins made the motion that we adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Ken Knutson and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1126.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Clarkson

Blake Lake District

Special Assessment vs. Mill Rate

Background Information:

Whether or not Blake Lake property owners are aware, they are association members and currently they pay their association dues through property taxes in, what we term, a Mill Rate format. As of recent, there has been some interest in changing from the current mill rate to an equal rate per membership. If we would change to an equal rate, the county will create, what is termed, a "special assessment" on your taxes which will be nothing other than the total annual amount the association requests divided equally by its property owners. Over 50% of lake associations in Polk County have switched from the mill rate to the flat rate per membership. Some of the lakes that are on special assessment include: White Ash, Round Lake, Deer Lake and Antler Lake.

- We hope by listing the flat rate amount, or special assessment, on their taxes, members will become aware that they are part of an association and will participate more in the association meetings and activities.
- All property owners' enjoy access to the lake to the extent to which they desire.
- Please note we are not asking for any additional money for the association, but rather we are simply setting an average cost per membership.

Special Assessment Budget:

Current Levied Amount = \$20,000

The number of property owners = 220

Therefore the average annual amount per property owner = \$90.90

Proposal:

Our proposal would be to adopt the special assessment means of collecting membership dues.

Blake Lake District
Special Assessment vs. Mill Rate
Annual Meeting – August 15, 2009

One of the Many Ways to Approach this Subject:

- It is not about taxes, but rather it is about membership to our lake District.
- The District has 220 members with one vote for each member.
- By ownership of property, you are a member of the Blake Lake District.
- Our District currently has a mill rate based on property values. (Over 50% of the Districts and associations have switched from having a mill rate to equal special assessments.)
- Blake Lake District has costs each year to run its business. (We will vote on our budget at this meeting.) Each member should make the same contribution to the District's business.
- The average costs of \$90.90 per member divided by 12 months would only equal \$7.57 per member per month.
- It seems to be a reasonable request for all owners to pay the same amount to the Lake District for the benefits that the District spends it's time and money on.

Member Involvement verses Non-Member Involvement

Example: Some members give a lot of their time to the Blake Lake District. Under the current mill rate system, these members may also pay more than the average cost per member. It seems unfair. All members should pay the same amount regardless if they are involved or not. **It's not the taxes, but rather the membership participation in Blake Lake's business. Today you are participating. So.....Let's Vote!**

Please consider a motion!