

Gravel Lake Association
Semi-Annual Membership Meeting – Minutes
August 19th, 2023

Opening Remarks – meeting called to order 10:04am pay dues, buy GL gear

Roll Call: C. DeSimone, Reed, Micheli, J. Pinkos(x), Hochsprung, McDevitt, Rinaldi,, Vitkauskas L. Zwartz(x), T. Zwartz, McGreal, A. Pinkos(x), R. Rogers, M Olds.

Treasurer's Report - \$31, 984.22 dues and apparel sales. see attached.

Committee Reports -

- A. Communications: Jim mcgreal- news letter to be mailed out around Halloween. Newsletters are on line going back to 2005. Need photos for future newsletter. let us know if you'd like to be featured in "meet a gravel laker." The web page is updated regularly, please visit, you can see the Gravel lake 360 video. We are looking for volunteers that have experience in word press that could update the GL web page. Frank Gordon- requests for rules for the lake, direction and boater safety be posted on Gravel lake website.
- B. Membership: Janice unable to give report- phone book next year to members only. Trying to update phone number and address for phone book.
- C. Water Quality: Ken H- PLM out to do spot treatment, pretty good season; low algae and weed treatment. We will likely be stocking perch in the spring. Question asked: Who pays for weed assessment on tax bill? SAD is assessed to 365 billable units/parcels - even houses across the street from the lake. Question: Why was information on SAD meeting given with such short notice. Second meeting will be in September.
- D. Events: Halloween -please contact Mary or Phil to volunteer for this fun event on Oct 7th
- E. Fundraising: Alyssa unable to give report- poker run brought in \$5,000 thanks Liz Zwartz stepped up and did this event. After party requested for future poker runs. Please email information rather than post on facebook -Vicki Carlos-
- F. Safety: Phil -one buoy out of commission- chain broke. Shaw road safety - in the process of getting a safe walking path. Need a second quote for a traffic study. Need to determine cost of traffic study and meet us on costs or association pay to get done. Township is there help and support from them, once traffic study is done, can the road commission put up sign, can they reduce speed, caution signs, the most difficulty we are running into is communication with person who does the traffic study. Do we need help on safety committee? Speed study done on gravel lake channel. Ryan Stewart suggest a walk athon to track pedestrian load on Shaw road. Traffic study may be car traffic not foot traffic. Suzanne-boater safety cards given in welcome basket. Working on getting a sign at the public access.
- G. History: Suzanne - has archived all the newsletters and minutes, they are going to put in bits of old newsletter in the new newsletter. Jim brought original newspaper article on the development of gravel lake. Jim is working on a gravel lake wall calendar 2025, idea is to do origin of each of the beaches.

Old Business - none

New Business

LASA Q&A - Chris Oxley - Cedar Lake-LASA History 1995 porter township did a study for sewers around the lakes. Thanks to those who had passion for water quality, 2007 study was updated 2009 petition and there was overwhelming support for the sewers. 2 counties 3 rural townships. 3 township supervisors mandatory supervisors select board members, LASA bylaws setup as board of peers 6 of 7 pay the bill. Harry Laski board LASA board member present today. 2010 system was built, cedar lake joined LASA in 2013. 125 residents vs 375 gravel lake resistance. 10.4 million cost of whole

project...3.2 million was spent on treatment facilities. The buy in for our treatment plant concerns us. Cedar lake should have to pay a depreciated value.\$378, 000 went to debt relief. debt retirement is covered in quarterly bill. reduction in term or reduction in taxes.- \$250 principle. If cedar lake wouldn't have bought in, gravel lake would have had to pay more. \$45 per month. \$9 was for debt 12\$ then 15\$ then \$1 per year on assessment on loan. no sewer rate increase in \$10 years because cedar lake bought in. Harry- gravel lake buy in cost per customer was \$9,000 and \$500 hook up. cedar lake also paid that to buy in. no benefit for paying off bill early cost the sewer authority early. township got %1 fee so when we paid it off we lost money. administrative cost. refinanced bond to get a lower rate.

Bankson lake is petitioning to join LASA in the next 2 weeks. 50 assessment properties. The buy in reduction indebt offset property taxes and should offset increases in operational Board administration of LASA- \$65,000 a year - \$11, 000 full govt gas audit \$2, 000 computer soft ware, mailing postage, \$100 a month for board members. Stacie Oxley same salary since 2009. latest increase in sewer cost- 99% of latest increase has to do with inflation a rebuild pump \$3400, \$16,400 same pump post covid. \$178k in 2010 now over\$300k contractors negotiated other contractors. 3 years ago signed a new contract that went with the cost of living increase. 7.9% cost of living increase. renew old septic tanks charge fee to dump tanks into our plant. put in to increase revenue that help to keep cost down. raised the rate. clear earth bought out septic that cost us between \$80k and \$100k per year. SAW grant. state of mi took a look at all the sewer plants. gave grants to study annual audit how much over the next couple of years. things will start failing need to fix up. 2019 recommended us to raise the rate to \$75 a month..lasa declined and did a survey. pursue adding customers. shared savings and reduce cost. 1 in 4 people doesn't pay their sewer bill on time. 1 in 5 don't pay the sewer bill at all. LASA has to wait 13 months for that money that comes out of property tax. Don't flush condoms or tampons this ruins parts on the pump plants. Despite the cost, water is clear on GL after sewer installation. Is there a way to pay bill online? 2.5% to LASA for credit card payments. LASA is working on automatic bill pay. Misprint in paper that marcellus sewer bill went up by \$1 village of marcellus owns 3.7% of capacity of the sewer system. Can we expect continuing increases or will there be cost cut, will do financial analysis to try to keep costs down. in the process of keeping \$12.50 the same. if we wanted to petition to LASA board. take to board meeting. about reducing cost for those who paid off their upfront cost initially.

- H. June membership meeting location- Desimones will no longer be able to host picnic. Tom K volunteered to host the June 2024 meeting and picnic.
- I. Other- mobile boat was placed at the public access. News to us that the boat wash was placed by the DNR. So far, we were unable to hear why that was placed there. Having the boat wash permanently would help stop the spread of invasive species. DNR would know if anyone used the tools. Missy to get info on that.

Announcements –

- J. Next BoT meeting: September 16th 2023, 10am, township hall + Zoom
 - K. Membership meeting: June 2024 date & location TBD
 - L. Vik of idle ease passed away, our condolences.
- Garden club at Lynn morkunas- Kathy Stefo has more details.

Adjournment – 11:34am

Given the last two sewer charge rate increases, the Gravel Lake Association has the following questions for LASA:

- **What are the drivers of the last two sewer charge increases?**
 - Inflation, post-covid economy
 - Pump rebuilt = was \$3400 and is now \$16K
 - Contracted services (e.g. lab work, collection system) = was \$170K, now \$350K
 - LASA is trying to negotiate for lower rates of increase
 - Septage receiving: per gallon fee: was a revenue driver, recently lost contracts to Clean Earth (who bought out many septage haulers and leverages their own system), now lost revenue
 - LASA is on the low end of monthly fees
 - Is there cost savings for working with other communities/sewer authorities
 - Pursuing state funding (grant money)
 - 1 in 4 GLers don't pay on time
 - 1 in 5 GLers don't pay at all
 - Be careful what you flush down the toilet
 - Pay bill online? Working on this, but it costs money?
 - All lakes received the same increase
 - Marcellus township newspaper article was a misprint
 - Village of Marcellus owns 3.7% of *capacity* of treatment plant – failsafe for village and LASA can charge them if they use it
- **What is the difference between the last increase and the most recent one?**
- **How are new members charged (e.g. Cedar Lake) vs. founding members (e.g. Gravel, Big Fish lakes) when joining LASA? – see below**
- **Where can LASA board meeting minutes be found?**
- **How often is the management contract renewed?**
 - Is it sent out for bid every time?
- **When are meetings and can we have a representative attend?**
- Bankson Lake may be joining LASA in the future
 - Benefit would be buy-in to treatment plant
 - Treatment plant only runs at 20% – new members helps plant efficiency – plant is overbuilt
 - Benefit = reduce quarterly bill and/or offset property taxes
- Admin costs = \$64K/yr (software, bonding, board member per diems, bus. admin. [since 2009], annual audit)
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HISTORY (Chris Oxley):

- 3 township supervisors + 4 lake reps appointed by supervisors
- 2006-2007 - petition drive started...eventually creating LASA
- Harry Laski (Dugan's Landing) is Gravel Lake rep
- System built in 2010 (\$10.4M project total, \$3.2M = treatment plant)

- Cedar Lake joined in 2013
 - Had they joined in 2010 it would have cost LASA more (because it is an expensive lake to serve)
 - Received grant money
 - Buy-in to LASA treatment plant: did not buy-in at a *depreciated* value, +\$378K buy-in fee – used to pre-pay debt for all of LASA
 - If Cedar would not have bought in...the debt would not have been reduced – *does that mean that our FDA (?) loan has been paid down further? How does that manifest on taxes? Reduction in terms or reduction in assessment.*
 - Could impact quarterly bill, could reduce term of loan, could reduce tax assessment
 - Paid buy-in at or more than GL amount (\$8500+\$500)
 - *What about owners who paid sewer assessment in-full?* No benefit for this.

Other questions:

- What is the board make-up of LASA and to what body is it accountable?
- Who are the members and customers of LASA?
- What is the staff make-up of LASA?
 - Number of Staff on payroll
 - Number of billable hours
 - Hourly rate
 - Positions they hold
 - Description of duties
 - Salary of board members
- Can storm sewers be installed to handle excess water that accumulates during high precipitation events?
- Is (or has) LASA received additional funds from septage haulers that dump into the system?
- Provide a brief review of our sewer system and the events leading up the installation
- How does the sewer system incur costs?
 - Is it a static/fixed cost or does it fluctuate based on volume/ usage? I.e when a majority of Gravel Laker are using their homes June - August is there a higher cost to operate LASA?
- How many parcels around GL are connected to LASA & paying the \$202.50/Qtr?
 - How many are full-time residents?
- Does LASA get revenue from Marcellus township or the village of Marcellus?
- Why is our increase so much higher than that of Marcellus?

Beginning Operating Fund Balance as of 1/1/2023	\$44,52 7.71
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Deposits

Membership Dues -16	\$1,405 .00
Gravel Laker Newsletter Advertising (Fall Issue)	\$910.0 0
Membership Dues -13	\$965.0 0
Advertising Gravel Laker	\$315.0 0
Membership Dues -1	\$50.00
Membership Dues Via PayPal - 28	\$1,887 .48
Membership Dues - 24	\$1,900 .00
Membership Dues - 24	\$1,435 .00
Membership Dues - 11	\$665.0 0
Membership Dues Via PayPal - 9	\$564.9 9
Advertising - Gravel Laker	\$70.00
Split the Pot	\$120.0 0
Membership Dues - 24	\$1,825 .00
Membership Dues - 24	

	\$1,350
	.00
Membership Dues - 9	\$560.00
	0
Apparel Sales	\$2,371
	.00
Membership Dues - Via PayPal -10	\$785.97
	7
Advertising - Gravel Laker	\$840.00
	0
Membership Dues - 11	\$635.00
	0
Apparel Sales	\$270.00
	0
Apparel Sales	\$1,281
	.00
Advertising - Gravel Laker	\$315.00
	0
Apparel Sales	\$3,000
	.00
Membership Dues - 3	\$160.00
	0
Apparel Sales - Venmo	\$1,107
	.00
Apparel Sales - Venmo	\$3,023
	.00
Apparel Sales - Venmo	\$1,730
	.00
Membership Dues Via PayPal -7	\$421.21
	1
Split the Pot - Fun Run	\$240.00

	0	
Fun Run - Donation	\$40.00	
Advertising - Gravel Laker	\$70.00	
	\$140.0	
Advertising - Gravel Laker	0	
	\$350.0	
Membership Dues	0	
	\$675.0	
Poker Run Sponsorship -3	0	
Membership Dues Via PayPal	\$507.5	
-	7	
Total Deposits		\$31,98 4.22

Expenses

Paw Paw Rentals	\$200.0 0
Melissa DeSimone - Water Quality Testing Materials	\$252.0 0
Melissa DeSimone - Water Quality Testing	\$1,725 .20
Spencer McGreal - Website Hosting	\$120.0 0
State Of Michigan	\$425.0 0
Suzanne Reed - Welcome Baskets	\$57.64
Printing By Joe - Invoices	\$105.0 0
Janice Pinkos - Envelopes from Amazon	\$30.69

USPS - Stamps for Invoices	\$127.50	
		* amount was
Savannah Nursery	\$385.05	adjusted from last stmt
		* amount was
Crown Trophy	\$339.35	adjusted from last stmt
Flory Septic Services	\$115.00	
Printing By Joe - Gravel Lakers	\$855.00	
DLG - Surety Bond	\$100.00	
Postmaster - Lock Box Rental	\$138.00	
Midwest Promotional Group - Apparell	\$4,010.38	
T-Shirt Printing Plus - Apparell	\$3,085.13	
Craig DeSimone - Mtg Agenda Printing	\$54.33	
Dave Brown - Reimbursement for Picnic Expenses	\$1,360.05	* amount was adjusted from last stmt
Dock Host Stipend - Patti Faustino	\$150.00	
Dock Host Stipend - Kelly Patterson	\$150.00	
Dock Host Stipend - Matt Olds	\$150.00	
Dock Host Stipend - Lezley Sugden	\$150.00	
Dock Host Stipend - Liza Frohnapfel	\$150.00	

Dock Host Stipend - Lydia Menci	\$150.0 0	
Dock Host Stipend - Susan Betteridge	\$150.0 0	
EZ - Sign- Poker Run	\$134.3 8	
Midwest Promotional Group - Apparel	\$1,553 .99	
Total Expenses	\$16,22 3.69	
Operating Fund		
Checkbook Balance as of 8/15/23		\$60,28 8.24
Special Fund Balance		<u>\$40,00</u> <u>0.00</u>
Total Funds		\$100,2 88.24

Gravel Lake Association 2023 Calendar

Date	Event	Notes
Saturday, April 8, 2023		Easter
Saturday, April 15, 2023	BoT mtg	
Saturday, April 22, 2023		
Saturday, April 29, 2023	MLSA Region 3	township hall
Saturday, May 6, 2023	MLSA Conf	Crystal Mtn (Thompsonville)
Saturday, May 13, 2023		Mother's Day
Saturday, May 20, 2023	BoT mtg	
Saturday, May 27, 2023		Memorial Day
Saturday, June 3, 2023		
Saturday, June 10, 2023	Membership mtg + picnic	
Saturday, June 17, 2023		Father's Day
Saturday, June 24, 2023		
Saturday, July 1, 2023	GL 4th	4th of July
Saturday, July 8, 2023	Garage sale	
Saturday, July 15, 2023	BoT mtg	
Saturday, July 22, 2023		
Saturday, July 29, 2023		
Saturday, August 5, 2023		
Saturday, August 12, 2023	Poker Run	(tentative)
Saturday, August 19, 2023	Membership mtg	
Saturday, August 26, 2023		

Saturday, September 2, 2023		Labor Day
Saturday, September 9, 2023		
Saturday, September 16, 2023	BoT mtg	
Saturday, September 23, 2023		
Saturday, September 30, 2023	MLSA Region 3	township hall
Saturday, October 7, 2023	GLA Halloween BoT mtg (early start)	Columbus Day
Saturday, October 14, 2023		
Saturday, October 21, 2023		
Saturday, October 28, 2023		Halloween