



WHITEWATER-RICE LAKES MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

P.O. Box 301
Whitewater, WI 53190



MINUTES OF BUDGET HEARING/ANNUAL MEETING August 26th, 2023

The Whitewater/Rice Lakes Management Budget Hearing/Annual Meeting was held at Whitewater Lions Club -Whitewater WI and called to order by Chairman Rich Charts @ 9:02AM; those in attendance included 45 district members; board members Brad Corson-Treasurer, Carol Ducommun-Vice Chair, Chuck Chamberlain, Mike Lindemuth, Jon Tanis, and Jerry Grant; and Sheriff Jake Hintz.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Rich Charts introduced the Board and Sheriff Dave Gerber. He appreciates the sponsorship and support of fellow board members over the years. Jerry Grant motioned to approve the Annual Meeting Agenda for August 26th, 2023, seconded by Jon Tanis, all in favor motion carried. Pat Braun motioned to approve the 2022 annual meeting minutes, seconded by Steve Ducommun, all in favor, motion carried.

Rich mentioned several initiatives this year, including working with Kristion Kozlowski from Creative Solutions Co. to develop a new website for the Lake. Carol and Chuck hired a new harvesting crew. Brad is retiring after 12 years as treasurer and two years as our auditor. Rich thanked Don Olinger, our current auditor. Carol Ducommun will be stepping up as Chairman. Rich introduced Candidates Mike Lindenmuth and Dan Berg for 3-year terms. Dawn Corson and Denise Charts checked in attendees, and they will handle election ballots.

Lake conditions continue to be good. Weeds and algae are down, and water clarity is much better, with visibility has increased from 3ft to 7 ft. Fish quality has been good. Theresa Stegeman is ending her role as shoreline initiatives and will be replaced by Brian Rahmänder.

Review by Commissioners:

SAFETY PATROL/ORDINANCES - Larry Brady - Safety Team leader said Sean Blanton is no longer on active patrol. The district held three safety classes this year with a total of 44 students. Rich introduced Amy Rodgers, who is on our Safety Team, Jake Hintz, head of the boat safety patrol; Sheriff Dave Gerber; Under Sheriff Tom Hausner; and Patrol Captain Rob Hall. Jake Hintz said patrol hours are down due to short staffing. Residents should get a hull number to report a problem. Jake stated a lot of the stops are educational because people often don't know, and we want to keep them safe.

CHEMICAL - Mike Lindemuth- Our provider comes out and maps the areas to treat, then the DNR reviews the report. This year we treated 94 acres vs 174 last year. For the Chemical and Barley Initiative, we used bags of barley straw which decomposes and releases a natural chemical that inhibits algae growth. It is a cost-effective and environmentally acceptable way to control algae in ponds and lakes. Mike introduced Joe Drozd who has been involved with this project, he has taken samples of water for testing.

BOG REMOVAL Rich Charts said the first bog showed up late June, but the others not until August. We have just completed our application for a second, ten-year permit; the current one ends in September. Brandon Riese is our dredging contractor.

WEED HARVESTING Carol Ducommun introduced crew members Scott Center, Todd Griffith, and Aiden Pal who were present. Other crew members are Aiden Allamian, Scott Cashion Jaden Condon, and Paul Klocek. Carol and Chuck worked together to hire our crew, get them trained and begin operations. Carol thanked the lake community for being so cooperative during this process. We are operating Monday-Thursday. The weeds have been light this year. Residents appreciate the Monday pickup of the weeds. Starting our operation this year has been a whole board effort.

Priorities going forward are to retain our staff, and we are looking to buy land for a pole barn for indoor storage for the winter. Carol worked with Mike Ritchie, who connected us to Tim Redenius for temporary storage for two years, with the option of a third. Brandon Schleicher was also helpful in finding some properties. Another priority is understanding chemical harvesting versus manual harvesting.

Carol and Chuck addressed land acquisition for a homebase for our equipment and operations. The district has \$1.8 million in equipment valued at replacement costs, with no place to park it or store tools. Currently our trucks are parked at the DNR property. We need approximately 2 acres parcel for a 5,000 sq. ft. facility that is flat and relatively close.

Storage costs increased from JNT's previous rate of \$6,000 to \$13,600 for space nearby that is sufficiently large for our equipment. Last winter after JNT left, our equipment was stored outside, which was harmful for the equipment. We had to rent a tow truck to get the equipment out of the mud in the spring. Rich mentioned we are the only district he knows who has equipment but no facility.

For property acquisition and improvements, we have been speaking with Jim Caldwell of First Citizens State Bank. The current rate is 7.25% for a 10-year term; we would refinance after ten years to spread that cost over 20 years. Year one land acquisition cost is planned at \$220,000 with 20% down (\$44,000); year two expected to cost \$200,000 to build, with 20% down (\$20,000.) This will not affect your tax assessment this year because it would be funded from the capital fund. If land becomes too expensive, we will continue to investigate renting. We are not ready to purchase anything but are seeking permission to act if the right piece of land comes along.

EQUIPMENT-Chuck Chamberlain – the best thing we for managing our equipment is using our 5-year plan to look ahead. We may not get the new 7 ft. harvester for Rice Lake until the 2025 season. For 2024 we have an option to rent a unit from Aquarius for Rice Lake. We were awarded a \$134,000 DNR grant for the new harvester. We spent \$5,000 for a cargo trailer for our tools that we need for repairs. The next item to purchase would be a replacement for our 10ft harvester.

Chuck suggested a motion to approve the purchase and funding in 2024 from the capital reserve for a new 7 ft. harvester currently estimated at \$136,000 including a cost share from the DNR. Larry Brady motioned, seconded by Pat Braun, all in favor, motion carried.

FINANCIALS:

CAPITAL PLAN: Brad explained that we had excess funds this year from not having bog harvesting. Instead of adding \$60,000 as we typically do, we will move \$120,000 to our capital reserve this year.

2024 WHITEWATER-RICE LAKES TAX ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2023 Budet	2024 Budget	2023 Projected vs 2023 Budget		2024 Budget vs 2023 Budget	
						Increase (Decrease)	% Change	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
OPERATIONS BUDGET TAX	\$ 223,432	\$ 214,276	\$ 133,950	\$ 193,950	\$ 247,443	\$ (60,000)	-30.9%	\$ 53,493	27.6%
Cost per tax parcel	\$317.38	\$304.37	\$190.27	\$275.50	\$351.48	\$ (85)	-30.9%	\$ 75.98	27.6%
CAPITAL RESERVE FUND TAX ASSESSMENT	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$120,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$ 60,000	100.0%	\$ -	0.0%
Cost per tax parcel	\$85.23	\$85.23	\$170.45	\$85.23	\$85.23	\$ 85	100.0%	\$ -	0.0%
TOTAL TAX ASSESSMENTS	\$283,432	\$274,276	\$253,950	\$253,950	\$307,443	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 53,493	21.1%
Cost per tax parcel	\$402.60	\$389.60	\$360.72	\$360.72	\$436.71	\$ -	0.0%	\$75.98	21.1%

WHITEWATER-RICE LAKES PROPOSED 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

Summary Operations Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2023 Budet	2024 Budget	2023 Projected vs 2023 Budget		2024 Budget vs 2023 Budget	
						Increase (Decrease)	% Change	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Revenue - Tax Assessments	\$283,432	\$274,276	\$253,950	\$253,950	\$307,443	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 53,493	21.1%
Other Income	1,013	2,072	1,241	-	-	\$ 1,241		\$ -	
DNR Grants	-	358	8,437	-	-	\$ 8,437		\$ -	
Launch Fees	1,297	686	747	1,300	1,000	\$ (553)	-42.5%	\$ (300)	-23.1%
Total District Revenue	\$285,742	\$277,392	\$264,374	\$255,250	\$308,443	\$ 9,124	3.6%	\$53,193	20.8%
Operating Expenses									
Weed Harvesting	30,836	19,268	53,913	41,165	42,101	\$ 12,748	31.0%	\$ 936	2.3%
Chemical Treatment & Other	127,330	86,739	86,102	113,200	110,500	\$ (27,098)	-23.9%	\$ (2,700)	-2.4%
Bog Removal	28,078	-	45,780	40,530	48,527	\$ 5,250	13.0%	\$ 7,997	19.7%
Repairs & Maintenance	34,064	31,876	43,276	35,983	35,873	\$ 7,293	20.3%	\$ (110)	-0.3%
General & Administrative	20,587	25,675	26,910	25,988	27,106	\$ 922	3.5%	\$ 1,118	4.3%
Total Operating Expenses	240,895	163,559	255,981	256,866	264,107	(885)	-0.3%	7,241	2.8%
Capital Reserve Fund	60,000	60,000	120,000	60,000	60,000	\$ 60,000	100.0%	\$ -	0.0%
Prior Year Surplus (Deficit) Carryover	88,589	73,436	127,270	61,616	15,663	\$ 65,654	106.6%	\$ (45,953)	-74.6%
Net Surplus (Deficit) Carryover	73,436	127,270	15,663	-	(0)	15,663		-	

	(actual)	(actual)	(est)	(est)
Assessed Valuation (000 omitted)	\$295,835	\$330,886	\$347,430	\$364,801
Change from Prior Yr	4.9%	11.8%	5.0%	5.0%
Mil Rate	0.96	0.83	0.73	0.84
Average Assmt (705 Parcels)	\$402	\$389	\$360	\$436

WHITEWATER-RICE LAKES CAPITAL RESERVE FUND ACTIVITY

Capital Reserve Fund	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2024 Budget
Beginning Fund Balance	\$78,540	\$107,367	\$136,484	\$254,584
Additions:				
Transfer from Operations				
Budgeted capital assessments	60,000	60,000	120,000	60,000
Interest income	92	102	100	10
DNR Grants & Other	12,850	13,800	-	-
Total Additions	72,942	73,903	120,100	60,010
Expenditures				
Equipment Purchases	(44,115)	(44,785)	(2,000)	(138,600)
Ending Fund Balance	\$107,367	\$136,484	\$254,584	\$175,994

2024 PROPOSED BUDGET: Brad Corson - Our 2024 projections include a \$15,465 surplus carryover for 2025. Variances from the 2024 budget include \$14,000 permits and fees for the 5-year lake plan that took seven years to complete. We were billed for that in 2024 but had budgeted for it in 2023. We received a \$8,437 DNR grant for this plan. Chemical spending was \$74,000 with a \$25,000 surplus compared to the budget. We received a donation of \$1,500 from the Lions Club for fish management. We are using an outside vendor for bog harvesting this fall and project spending of \$46,000 based on three weeks of service instead of six weeks; costs are based on the vendor's projections.

Brad made a motion to increase the 2023 Capital Reserve Contribution by \$60,000 to a total of \$120,000. The surplus was created in 2022 when operations ceased unexpectedly due to the sale of JNT. Motion was seconded by Bernie Labovitch, all in favor, motion carried.

Brad continued review of the budget regarding weed harvesting, chemical, bog and repairs/maintenance. Brad made a motion to approve the 2024 operating expenses of \$263,909 and the 2024 capital reserve fund of \$60,000.00 with a tax assessment of \$307,443. Seconded by Stuart Hersh, all in favor, motion carried.

Brad motioned to approve the Board's ability to acquire Land and to build improvements on that land for the purpose of storing District equipment not to exceed a total of \$450,000. Such purchase and build costs will be financed with a 20-year amortization. Larry Brady seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Brad motioned to approve funding financing costs in 2024 related to the acquisition of land and improvements from the Capital Reserve currently estimated at \$61,000 for down payment, principal and interest in the first year, seconded by Val, all in favor, motion carried.

Brad made a motion to enter into a two-year rental agreement with Tim Redenius for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 seasons for the purpose of storing our equipment indoors at \$13,600 for each year, contingent on the adding the 7 ft. harvester which would then require \$14,600 in year two. Seconded by Elaine, all in favor, motion carried.

Audit Report - Don Olinger provided and Rich presented on his behalf the verification of receipts of taxes and validation of disbursements. All tax assessments were received as budgeted and approved by the electors. 98% of expenses were validated for proper approval, documentation and purpose. Revenue and expenses for 2022 were accurately reflected in the information provided.

Presentation of Candidates to the Board and Elections: Rich stated it is now required to have a ballot, one of which will be kept on file with the Town office, which states members put an X next to the candidate or, if a no vote, then cross off the name. Rich introduced the candidates: Dan Berg and Mike Lindenmuth.

Presentation on Lake Initiatives:

Wildlife Management-Ernie Roy- Rounded up 62 geese including 20 on Whitewater and 42 on Rice Lake. Geese generate one to one and a half lbs. of goose poop a day; with 60 geese that is about 90 lbs. a day

Fish Management- Tom Potrykus – We will continue stocking walleye, crappie and northern pike; the State will continue to supply walleyes. We will continue building fish crib habitat in September. We are working on carp management with the State, but sufficient funding and planning is an issue; both of our lakes are authorized to remove the carp.

Navigator Teams/Survey Update -Carol Ducommun/Amy Rodgers

We have a lot of flyers at the boat launches for Boater Safety and Wakes and Shoreline Erosion for community education. For Pier and Boat Density, the only way to improve this is to have a locally funded pier inspector. For the Good Neighbor efforts, fireworks, noise and lights continue to be issues; for all these issues statutes already exist. The Government Support team focused on a variety of issues, all of which are covered by current Town or County ordinances. New signage at all launch sites was donated by Jon and Lori Tanis. Thank you! There are also "take-one" boxes that contain safety flyers/lake rules at all launches.

GWLPOA Annual Meeting Nancy Lindenmuth

Input from Towns of Richmond and Whitewater - Lowell Hagen Whitewater Town Chairman -

Lowell mentioned the City of Whitewater/Ambulance has now hired 18 full-time people who get retirement benefits and health insurance. The budget projects \$150,000 more than what they were paying, which is 25% more than currently budgeted. Whitewater Township is 19% of their total emergency services.

By the end of 2025 we must do a state-mandated tax reassessment on all the properties; Whitewater chose to use an outside contractor, which will cost about \$40,000. The Town acquired a new snowplow, single-axle truck for \$213,000 with a five-year warranty. The County approved the Township's contract for road repair.

Election Results Rich announced 45 ballots went out, with 45 votes received for each candidate. Mike and Dan were congratulated.

Open Discussion- Resident Input/Debate Continuations – Don Oker asked if anyone is involved with law enforcement or patrol regarding unauthorized use of fireworks into the lake late at night. By the time it takes law enforcement to arrive, they would be over. Stuart Hersh thanked everyone for setting up the meeting and the volunteers involved did a great job with the presentation.

Next annual meeting is August 24th, 2024.

Adjournment- Rich asked for a motion to adjourn Chuck Chamberlain motioned to adjourn at 11:29 A.M.; Scott Center, all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Sherman - Clerk