

CLRA Aug. 24, 2024, Meeting

Porter Township Hall

In memoriam: Ron Terrill

President Jane Harvey called the meeting to order and welcomed all. About 40 people were present.

Dane Terrill spoke about the recent death of his father, Ron, whom President Jane called a “Marcellus icon.” In honor of his father, a meal featuring some of Ron’s classic meats will be held the first Friday of September along with the other Marcellus festivities customarily held on first Fridays. All are invited.

Water quality: Dane Terrill

Dane presented an update on the Bio-Pad system that he and Mark Harwood have had installed under their docks in June, along with 40 “nano pods.” The system is designed to manage weeds and excess muck accumulation by broadcasting native microbes through aeration to reduce muck accumulation, sequester excess nutrients and over time change the environment that promotes the growth of undesired weeds. Dane said the nano-pods so far appear to be effective in collecting algae.

If testing proves this method effective, it may be considered as an alternative to the chemical treatment the lake now receives. According to data from PLM, the treatment company, the number of species of native plants has dropped from 17 to 7 over the last decade, President Jane stated.

More information on the Bio-Pad aerators is available in an article on CLRA minutes from June and by talking to Dane.

Dane reported that the lake clarity level, measured by the Secci Disc, is at 14.5 feet. Normal for this time of year. Michigan State has found the highly invasive weed hydrilla in Berrien County.

Minutes from June 2024: As per an approved motion at the June meeting, the minutes were not read but have been on the CLRA website for more than a month. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Jim Harvey

Jim Harvey reported a balance of \$6216 in the CLRA checking account and \$6182 in savings. Report was unanimously approved. Details are available on the CLRA website.

Lake Treatment: Andy Tomaszewski

Andy Tomaszewski of PLM Lake and Land Management Group reported a substantial reduction in Eurasian Water Milfoil, one of the major non-native weeds invading Cedar Lake when CLRA hired PLM: From about 20 percent coverage in 2010 to what he described as “spots here and there,” currently.

He reiterated that one pound of phosphorous from lawn fertilizer or agricultural run-off could produce 500 pounds of algae. Since 2016, the phosphorous level of the lake has been stable, he said.

Curley pondweed and starry stonewort are two species that are not native that residents should watch out for, he said. Cabomba, also known as fanwort, has been confirmed on Bankson Lake, he said.

Eurasian milfoil can spread from a tiny fragment into 200 plants. Purple loosestrife displaces native plants near shorelines. Such plants and seawalls can prevent a natural shoreline that is essential to a healthy lake. He recommended residents leave a buffer zone of natural shoreline.

Creation of Treatment options committee

CLRA members voted to create a committee to consider options for treating the lake after a discussion sparked by a proposal from Jim Walters to suspend chemical treatment for one to two years, assessing the result after that time. Jim said that since he moved on to the lake 30 years ago, he is hearing fewer frogs and seeing less bird life, as well as a seeming drop in the number of fish caught.

Asked by Jim what might be the implications of a break in chemical treatment, Andy Tomaszewski said that he did not know for certain, since there is no known data on that being done. But he added we would probably see an increase in non-native weeds. Aquatic herbicides are very closely monitored, and there is no proven correlation between chemical treatment and the changes to which Jim referred. The best thing residents must do for a healthy lake is to keep as much natural shoreline as possible. Additional suggestions are published on the lake website.

Although she thinks PLM has done a good job in knocking down non-native weeds, its dual role to monitor and to treat, "Is like the fox watching the henhouse," Jane said. The fact there has been a substantial drop in the number of species of native plants needed for a clean and healthy lake is of concern and merits forming the committee, she said.

The purpose of the committee will be to gather information and present a recommendation to the association. Volunteers include Dane Terrill, Jim Walters, Patti Kane, Jim Harvey, Jane Harvey, Chuck Rishel, Del Wilkins, Lynn Steil, Doug McLaughlin and Jon Bingaman. The meetings will be virtual.

Lake Level: Jane

The lake level has increased all summer due to heavy rainfall but doesn't seem to be receding as it normally does. Checked at the M-40 connection pipe, Big and Little Cedar seem to be at about the same high level with some flow from Big to Little Cedar. At the weir, on the southwest end of Little Cedar, there is no sound of water flowing and almost no water is moving through the drainpipe into the stream at Strawberry Fields. It has been difficult to get a call back from the drain commissioner's office, but we will continue to call that office and also try Porter Township and Van Buren County officials.

Geese: Jane

"Goose Busters," the firm hired by the association to bring down the excessive number of geese, came last spring at a cost of \$100 to come and \$25 a nest. Eggs from several nests were destroyed, but many goslings had already hatched. Next year Jane said she will ask the company to arrive earlier. Money for Goose Busters was approved.

Cedar Lake History Book Second Edition: Barb Walters

The association voted to order 150 of the new books, which Barb estimated would cost \$55 to \$60 per book. Residents have submitted at least 15 additional stories and many interesting photos that will be

added to the original book, which sold out within a year. Dave Fodor said preorders can be taken on line for the book, which Barb said is expected to be ready before Christmas.

Other business: Jane

Residential spraying for mosquitos was discussed. The runoff into the lake of the pesticides used could have detrimental effects. Spartan Mosquito, a 100% American made, eco friendly tube attractant system has been very successfully used at a cottage next to a swamp on Becker Beach. It is \$25.00 at Adams Hardware. Dave Fodor will put info about it on the website.

Invasive species: Hydrilla has been identified in Berrien Springs, in addition to Flowering Rush and Cabomba, which apparently was introduced on a jet ski lift. Keep your eye out for these species and make a note of where you see any. A colorful but harmful moth, "Spotted Lantern Fly" should be "squished" if possible.

Treatment notification: Jane will send an email blast out to residents in advance of treatment.

A new CLRA directory: will be printed with larger lettering.

The meeting ended about 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by Barb Walters, acting secretary