



# Lake Orono Improvement Association INC.

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## Annual Meeting MINUTES February 27, 1996

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. by President Patrick Plant.
2. New members and guests were introduced:
  - a. Terry Olson, District 3. Potential members were mentioned for District 7: Danny & Doris Anderson, and the Guardian Angels Foundation, both who own property in this district.
  - b. Guests Arne Engstrom, Sherburne County Commissioner; Hank Duitsman, mayor, City of Elk River; John Dietz, City Council; Mark Basiletti, Sherburne Water Conservation District; Steve Rohlf, City Building and Zoning Administrator, who is working with our Silting Task Force.

### **II. PROGRAM—SPECIAL REPORT REGARDING LAKE ORONO SEDIMENTATION**

1. a. Patrick Plant gave the following report on the Silting Task Force:

Since our last Annual Meeting, the Silting Task Force has had a continuing dialog with the City. The members of the Task Force are: Ed Buttweiler, Tom Hartman, Dr. Tony Jarmoluk, Barb Kreuser, Miles Knutson, John Weicht, Vance Zehringer, and Patrick Plant, Chair.

Formal meetings with the City began July 11th; we have had monthly meetings since then on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm; Association members are welcomed to attend.

In the meetings we are trying to quantify the issue and make a plan. Patrick is pleased with the support from the City and the County. Steve Rohlf contacted other agencies to attend some of our joint meetings, such as the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; the Department of Natural Resources; the Sherburne Water Conservation District; our State Senator, Mark Ourada; State Representative

Bruce Anderson; and the Army Corp of Engineers. Each agency has a role to play, either in advice, testing, grants, or permits that may be required further down the line.

Timeline of Related Events:

- The lake was formed by erecting a dam for use of a lumber mill in 1851, and a grist mill in 1855
- A new dam was built in 1916 to supply hydroelectric power
- From 1920-1970 Lake Orono became a haven for fish, wildlife, and over 100 homes, as well as being a major source of recreation for the community
- In 1970-'71 was the last time the DNR mapped the lake, where the depth of the north end was indicated as 5' (from Scout's Point on up)
- In early 1970 water quality and management issues began to arise; in 1971 the Lake Orono Improvement Association was formed with four committees: Pollution Control, Water Safety, Conservation, and Lake Level Regulation
- Initial public concerns regarding potential sedimentation problem developed by mid-1970's
- In 1978, the DNR ordered the lake to be drained due to the dam being classified as hazardous; from 1979-'80 the dam repair/reconstruction was done
- The problem of sedimentation appeared to accelerate in 1978-'81 with the dam construction and numerous fluctuations of the water level
- In the mid-1980's the rapid growth of population and improved access to the lake brought more boat traffic
- Mid- to late '80's much of the north section of the lake was now only a 2 to 3 foot depth; new islands began to appear; increased odors, algae, green surface scum and decreased population of game fish and increased population of rough fish began to characterize lake
- 1989-'90 LOIA began discussion with the City of Elk River and the DNR regarding these observations
- 1990 LOIA worked with the City and the County to develop and implement lake safety ordinance

Now with City/County and the various agencies interest, we finally got the ball rolling, we recently applied for a DNR Conservation Partners Grant. The proposal for the grant outlines the need for studying and surveying the lake and watershed, and developing a plan for the future.

b. Guests provided comments:

- i. Arne Engstrom thanked the caterer, Pigs Unlimited, and mentioned that its owner, Kenny Jordan, is also the wrestling coach. Mr. Engstrom likes the fact that the Silting Task Force isn't just sitting back and letting the City and County handle the problem. The County Board didn't have any problem with supporting the grant application. The lake is a community and regional resource.
- ii. Hank Duitsman said that the lake is a valuable resource; what's happening now

with our joint meetings may be a small step but we're going in the right direction. He feels we should identify what is causing the problem, and said the City will continue to work with us.

- iii. Steve Rohlif mentioned that he is not a volunteer, and the reason that the Task Force got the City, SWCD and County to support the grant was because they're volunteers. The other agencies, once they attended a meeting, are behind us and coaching us, especially the Army Corp.

With the grant, we intend to quantify and qualify the problem; without this, we will never get a permit.

We applied for a \$24,000 grant: \$5,500 from the City; \$1,500 from the SWCD; \$4,000 from the County; and \$3,000 in inkind services from LOIA. Mr. Rohlif said he would like to save the agency dollars for down the road, and would like us to volunteer our time first.

The notice of the grant award will come this spring.

We will need one full year of data. We started gathering data ourselves, but it wasn't an agency-sanctioned study. Hopefully we'll avoid loss of data by doing studies "officially".

- c. Miles Knutson, Silting Task Force, has been involved in studying similar projects, and reported on project backgrounds and timelines:

- i. Lake Hanska in southern MN. This lake is 1800 acres, of which approx. 200 acres were dredged. Project started in 1978 with a feasibility study conducted by TKDA, a consulting engineering firm. In 1980, Brown County began an annual levy of \$140,000. This fund grew to \$880,000 by 1985. A dredging machine was purchased in 1985 for \$140,000 plus \$30-\$40K for a workboat and other equipment. Average water depth after dredging was 12 feet, removing 2,900,000 cu. yards of sediment from 1985-1994. The project used county employees.
- ii. Five Island Lake, Iowa. 1,000 acre lake, 600 was dredged to an average depth of 10-14 feet. Project was started in 1990 with the support of a \$400,000 bond issue; in 1994 they received \$400,000 from the federal government (EPA Clean Lakes Fund). Dredging just about done.

- d. Discussion:

Sara Hartman asked what will happen while the dredging is going on—is the lake going to be down? Patrick said it depends on how we dredge—either a "wet dredge" or have it hauled out. Steve Rohlif said dredging is extremely costly; we're looking at a number of years before it would start; the gravel pits may take the silt if it is not contaminated. He would guess that the lake would be lowered during the winter and silt hauled when the lake is not in much use.

Rickie Buttweiler asked how large our lake is and what about cost. It was mentioned that the lake is about 300-350 acres. Miles Knutson said it will cost about 40¢/cubic yard, depending on how deep we want to dredge.

Pat Prody said that they lived on a different lake before that was dredged, and said

there was concern about not disrupting or building a “core”, and asked what that might mean. Mr. Rohlf said that the core is what holds the water in; usually it’s clay, and you don’t want to go below the original lake pan; you can go deeper, but you would have to re-line the lake with a core.

Pat Mikols asked if we are going to be able to determine what’s causing the silting and prevent it from happening again. Patrick Plant said that the major part of the study (grant) is to determine the answer to this; we need to demonstrate a good return on investment to agencies providing permits.

2. Mark Basiletti, Sherburne Water Conservation District, passed out some handouts and gave his presentation.
  - a. Sedimentation. It is normal for a river to have moving silt, some is deposited. We have no idea if the silting rate in Lake Orono is abnormal. The SWCD is planning an Elk River watershed study with Benton County, as the Elk River’s watershed encompasses 70% of Sherburne County and 50% of Benton. The SWCD plans to start with the lake shoreline and go upstream from there. They will attempt to study sources of erosion, and also do what they can to fix any obvious erosion problems with riprap, etc. They have funds to do this; SWCD will pay 75% of the cost of repair, the property owner the balance. The intent is to do the study this summer, and hire an intern.
  - b. Lake Day is March 30th. The SWCD, Sherburne County Extension Office and Sherburne County Coalition of Lake Associations is sponsoring this event. A number of topics will be covered, including septic systems, fisheries, lawn fertilization and lake property assessment. This is the second event of its type.
  - c. Exotic species. Eurasian milfoil is not in Sherburne County yet, but if it gets in a shallow lake it will clog everything. The brochure on exotic plants has a checklist; if there are any weeds on your boat/trailer, remove them. Drain water from boat, live wells, etc. onto land so it won’t get into water; zebra mussel larvae may harbor there. The DNR have speakers available to give an exotic species talk to your association; they bring samples for you to identify; phone # is (218)828-2535.
  - d. Septic systems. Mr. Basiletti referenced the handout about a \$4 packet — we can get the packet at the County Extension Office or send away for it. A septic system can pollute lake with phosphorous, fertilizers or coliform bacteria if not properly maintained or built. The water treatment actually happens in the soil, and there needs to be proper distance between the soil treatment area and the water table. In our sandy soil the movement is so rapid it may go straight into the water table. Sherburne County Extension offers classes on septic care; their phone # is 241-2720. Ken Olson has already set up Community Ed classes and will give one to our group if we’d like.
  - e. Discussion:

Sara Hartman asked if anyone knew if anyone was inspecting systems. Steve Rohlf said the DNR has required that the City pass an ordinance. There is not enough money to send inspectors around; ordinance is enforced on a case-by-case basis when a building permit is required, or by citizen complaints. His office does the enforcement. Patrick Plant said our own Pollution Committee may be

able to help the City with this.

Sara Hartman asked if anyone was in place to check trailers from out-of-town for milfoil. Mark Basiletti said that the DNR sets up sites for inspection, but we ourselves or some other voluntary effort like the boy scouts can hand out brochures and check to make sure the DNR posters are posted at the boat launch.

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

- 1. The minutes of the last meeting on February 23, 1995 were read. They were moved to approve and seconded; minutes were approved.
- 2. Treasurer’s Report was read by Patrick Plant; report was approved.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. Dates were approved for '96-'97 events:
  - a. Smelt Fry – May 22, 1996
  - b. Progressive Dinner – 2nd week in July
  - c. Last year we had a “Luau on the Lake” instead of the Game Dinner. General consensus from the membership was to do the same in late September.
  - d. Annual Meeting is usually 4th Thursday in February. Patrick Plant said that maybe we should think about changing the date as a lot of members seem to be out of town in warmer climates at this time of year. Rickie Buttweiler and Joe Berglove said they still think early in year would be good; it was determined that we should maybe have the board members discuss the issue.

- 2. Budget proposal for '96 -'97:

Donation for baseline reading to City .....	\$200.00
Printing costs for Shorelines .....	165.00
Photocopying costs for event flyers .....	15.00
Mailing costs for Shorelines.....	195.00
Miscellaneous event supplies .....	100.00
Safety deposit box rental .....	25.00
Total	\$700.00

- 3. Election of Officers/Reps.

Barb Kreuser will be President, Vance Zehringer Vice President

Nominations:

Parliamentarian: Vern Draxler

Secretary: Cindi Edwards-Plant

District 2 Rep: Judy Halgren

District 3 Rep: Pat Mikols

District 4 Rep: Betty Zehringer

Patrick asked for a unanimous ballot; moved, seconded, approved.

4. Committee reports:

- a. Water Level & Flow Control: No members present.
- b. Safety Committee: no one is on this committee. Patrick read description of function and asked for volunteers. Rickie Buttweiler and Sara Hartman agreed to be on it.
- c. Pollution: No members present.
- d. Communications: Cindi Edwards-Plant asked that representatives give address updates to her.

5. Other New Business:

- a. Tom Hartman and Rickie Buttweiler thanked Patrick Plant for his activity in the Association.
- b. Sara Hartman asked if there has been any thought about charging for outsiders dropping their boats in the lake like there is in Big Lake. Patrick said that we could ask the City again about this. Barb Kreuser said that the Elk River runs through the lake so we probably couldn't do this. Harry Kreuser asked who controls the parking at the boat launch, as he was asked for his ID once. Tony Mikols said the City does that; the Chamber does it on 4th of July. Patrick said we could ask the City about this and we could propose an ordinance or a nuisance fee to the City.
- c. Tony Mikols said that if you see a violation on the lake, call the Sheriff's Department; don't be bashful.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.