

Presque Isle Town Lakes Committee

Minutes January 10, 2023

Presque Isle Town Chairman, John MacLean, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm at the Presque Isle community Center. The following persons attended, either in person or through TEAMS MEETING. John MacLean; Emma MacLean; Gary Owens; Cathy Logan Weber; Gary Kubenik; Bob Berdan; John Pence; Heidi Pence; Kelly Dyre; Mike Czarny; Ronnie Jacobsen; Carol Phillips; Kim Prott; Barb Wood; Barry MacLean; Susan Engsbract; Beckie Gaskill and Peggy Johnson Wiessner. There may have been several more on TEAMS Meeting or who left prior to the end of the meeting.

John MacLean addressed the purposes of the meeting by referencing the Dec. 27, '23 Lakeland Times article which reported the Wisconsin DNR had changed its position regarding the use of local ordinances to deal with the potential problem of wake boats and other types of boats that can transfer Aquatic Invasive Species between lakes and the generate waves that can cause vegetative reproduction of certain types of invasive plants and native plants and potential erosion depending on the distance from shore and the depth of water that certain types of boats operate. An Ordinance addressing the problem of hazardous wakes had been drafted by the town's Ordinance Committee in January 2020. That Ordinance had been negatively reviewed by the DNR and the town's attorney deeming it unenforceable among other reasons for disapproval. MacLean sought input from the PITLC regarding information that the PITLIC members might have to inform the Ordinance Committee so that the Ordinance Committee might be able to better draft an Ordinance to address aquatic invasive species (AIS) in Presque Isle waters. MacLean reported that the town board seeks to limit the effects of waves that cause detrimental impact by cutting plants that allows vegetative reproduction and waves that have negative erosion consequences. MacLean wants better information to give guidance to the Ordinance Committee as it works to present a new Ordinance to address AIS and erosion as the town board prepares to enact a new ordinance. MacLean noted the urgency for this endeavor to meet the time frame necessary for review by the DNR and the publication deadlines to have a new ordinance in place prior to potential ice out dates and the beginning of the 2023 boating season. And, he talked about that perhaps all area lakes will eventually get invasive species but that if we could work together we would have a better chance to stave off AIS in our area lakes thus saving a tremendous amount of money by not having to "mow" lakes and the quality of our enjoyment of lakes would be preserved as long as possible.

MacLean then presented a power point presentation with pictures that he took on 4 different Presque Isle lakes of wave producing activities with 6 different types of boats including two types of barges as well as, a water ski boat, a wake surfing boat, a wake boarding boat, and a fishing boat. The pictures were of boats in use taken from the vantage point of being on the different boats. The pictures showed the waves were almost identical with 30 inches on the leading edge including a whitecap on the initial wave followed by trailing and receding waves that had lost the whitecap, as the energy dissipated, to approximately 200 feet behind the boat with waves there of 9 or 10 inches; the energy being dissipated over distance. Maclean's research introduced information from two companies: 1.) Terra Vigilis, unique proprietary information gathering technologies to measure waves and invasive species distribution and redistribution and 2.)

MacLean then cited the major issues that needed to be discussed in order to give the Ordinance Committee direction. These included operational distance from shoreline; depth of water; clean boats and boat washing methods, and safety of all boats on the water. MacLean noted that many different

types of boats are being used in our waters and all need to accommodate the rights of riparians and share the waters with all boat owners as they balance the use of this common resource.

Carol Phillips said waves up to 4.5 feet can be made by wake boats and the issue of white capping is not determinative. She also stated that a wave 200 feet back can still be 15.89 inches high.

MacLean said that the waves mentioned by Phillips had not been seen in his experience here. And, while he agreed there could be higher waves created, he had not seen them here during his investigation of the subject. MacLean reported he has conservatively logged over 4,000 hours in all types of boats on Presque Isle waters and that he owns and operates boats from the very smallest to the largest used in the area now.

John Pence said that enforcement is the key and we need dedicated observers on our lakes to ensure safety for all boaters.

Bob Berdan indicated the Ordinance Committee will be meeting on January 18th at 9:30 to again take up this Ordinance and consider issues raised at this PITLC meeting. He noted that how few tickets were written by our constable in the Howie Meyer era when boaters were informed of the boating rules. The Last Wilderness Alliance is gathering wake surfing information on Presque Isle lakes. He told of an incident in using his pontoon boat in which he and his neighbors were nearly swamped by a large wave.

Mike Czorny noted that the DNR has approached these problems through education but that they are far behind other states in regulating the transfer of water from lake to lake. Some states require evidence of boat cleaning and inspection requirements at the state line. Manufacturers need to be forced to build a drainable ballast tank.

Gary Owens talked about the need for a problem statement being developed within the desired time frames to address these issues but that the real elephant in the room is the problem of aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Jack Sprackling said Colorado has minimum depth requirements for wave boats. This is essential along with interstate inspection and the use of hot water to clean boats. John MacLean noted that waterless boat cleaning stations are already in use in Vilas County. Why not Presque Isle? We could have them at the Transfer Station and busier boat landings and we could get them going and ready for this upcoming season.

Barry MacLean, President of the Crab Lake Property Owner's Association, spoke in support of boat washing and that the town should charge something, maybe \$10 per wash. Barry said that big boats have been operating on Crab Lake for over 100 years with little to no impact and he also does not want to eliminate the use of any type of boat and it is not a good idea to over regulate.

Kelly Dyre, a member of the Ordinance Committee, noted that there are 2 Mastercraft 23 foot wake boats and 1 wake boarding boat on Presque Isle lake and that their use is not widespread here.

John MacLean cited a 411 acre lake that was home to 61 wake boats - North Lake in Oconomowoc. He also noted one of the issues to come out of this meeting tonight is the interest in boating safety and education for operators.

Kathy Logan Weber, who early on has advocated for and has a long history of removing and managing invasive species of many types in our area, stated that she applauded MacLeans' efforts to go after invasive species like Yellow Iris and she agreed that there is a sense of urgency now about AIS.

Other comments included the need for more education about AIS and boating etiquette and improved signage at boat landings and how to implement a boat washing station perhaps at the transfer station and/or boat landings.

Another meeting of the PITLC will be scheduled for next month.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

Meeting Minutes take by Peggy Johnson Wiessner