

Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board

Meeting Minutes

Monday May 1, 2023

In Attendance : Chairman Bob Browning, , Bob Sutton , Bob Kelly, Larry Iden, DNR: Eric Null, Emily Vainieri, Lt. Jeff Sweitzer

Action Agenda

Chairman Browning asked for a roll call, Mr. Null preformed the roll call at the request of the Chairman. A quorum was not present at the time of roll call, therefore only discussion of the agenda would be performed, all issues requiring a vote would be tabled until the next meeting. Minutes were approved and posted on the DCL NRMA website in March 2023

Old Business

Canada Geese

Mr. Null stated that a meeting with Wildlife and Heritage is set for July. They will be discussing the expansion of the hunt to ground blinds and extending the season further into resident goose season. Mr. Null stated that the issue that was experienced in 2022 where one group booked all the sites and only hunted one will be discussed. Wildlife may instate a lottery for the sites to prevent this from occurring again. Mr. Null asked if anyone knew an HOA that would allow ground blinds and access to them, for the HOA to reach out to him. Mr. Null stated that resident goose banding studies have indicted that their residential area is quite large and not necessarily restricted to Deep Creek Lake.

Lake Management Budget

Mr. Null stated the budget is good. Mr. Null stated that there is new leadership in parks, but all are in acting capacity until the end of the busy summer season. Mr. Null stated that the Lake Management Office is in desperate need of full-time staff, he only has one long term contract employee for the field. He stated that the office has taken on large year long projects like the fish habitat enhancement program, Shoreline Erosion Control Program, and 10 in 10 programs, but with only two, year-round field staff including himself, this was becoming very difficult to manage. The Chairman suggested a regulation committee meeting.

Water Quality Monitoring Mr. Null stated that Julie Bortz has left DNR. Mr. Null gave the water quality report. He stated that the continuous monitoring will continue in 2023. This season will finish the main coves of the lake. He informed the Board that Hydrilla treatment will continue but the SAV transects will

not be surveyed this year due to Ms. Bortz's departure and the loss of one of the Lake Management Divers to a full-time position with the Department of Agriculture. He stated that they are speaking with the NRP dive team to aide with sites for 2023. Mr. Bob Hoffman asked if the Watershed Foundation will get an annual report for the water quality monitoring. Mr. Null stated that RAS is working on the report. Mr. Hoffman informed the Board that the Foundation's tributary study will be released to the public in the near future, he stated that the results of the study have already spawned new projects

Water Level Request

Mr. Bruce Michael of the County stated that the County's request for drawdown for the Arrowhead Dredging Project has been denied by Brookfield due to concerns of having water levels back to the upper rule band in the spring. He said that they are going to refine their request for a smaller time period of drawdown. Chairman Browning stated that Brookfield's denial mirrored the Board's denial for an annual drawdown. Mr. Michael stated that the denial results in a large increase in the cost of the project for the coffer dam. Mr. Kelly asked what if the County does not receive a bid that is within the County's \$2.2 million budget. Mr. Michael stated that the project was released for bid last Friday. The bids will be opened on May 26th and a public meeting will be held at the college on May 24th. The project is estimated to remove 15,000 cubic yards, if the cost is too high, they will remove what yardage they can with the money available. Mr. Hoffman asked if there was a time limit on spending the money for the project. Mr. Michael stated that the County has five years to spend the money.

Mr. Sutton stated that Brookfield was being too cautious with the water level. They should be factoring these drawdowns into there power supply planning. He believes that this situation needs to be elevated to a higher level. Chairman Browning stated that the permit has emergency clauses that allow for deviation below the lower rule band in an emergency such as extreme drought. Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Morgan France stated that the Foundation has installed several USGS water gauges and are planning to install another in the Yough above the powerplant. Once this is installed they will be able to calculate the groundwater recharge rate of the lake. This will allow for accurate predictions of refilling the lake. Mr. Hoffman stated that we are not receiving any help or communication from MDE or Brookfield, he believes the stakeholders should reaching out to the elected officials to ask for help with this issue. Chairman Browning stated that he spoke with Brookfield, they did not seem willing to help or listen to the Board's management concerns. Brookfield claims that they have an accurate model that they use but have not shown any entity the model. Mr. France stated that the Foundation's water budget model will be able to predict how much and when releases can occur.

Mr. Kelly stated that at some point we need to go to a higher authority to get help on this issue since the levels that we are currently working with are not being helpful.

AIS Regulations

Mr. Null stated that the first meeting discussing the possibility of fortifying the current regulations went well. The committee agreed to pursue amending the current regulations as opposed to creating new regulations. Mr. Null asked Ms. Vaineri to send him a couple dates when she was available to meet with the committee.

Publicizing Deep Creek Lake Projects

Mr. Null stated all of the checks for this year's SEC grants have been sent to the recipients. Lake Management is currently evaluating this season's eligible applicants. He stated that it takes a long time for the Comptrollers office to issue the check. He reported that the piolet project of the 10 in 10 reforestation program is complete. The boat ramp area was planted with volunteer help from the Watershed Foundation and Silver Tree Marine volunteered their permit site for the piolet. This fall the project will be fully open to all permit holders. He stated that by June the piolet will have planted over 100 trees in 4 sites. Mr. Sutton asked if the program is relying on forestry grants. Mr. said it is funded by Lake Management right now, but it will expand to the Foundation and POA.

County Commissioner Update

No update at this time

New Business

Mind Your Wake Brochure

The POA provided Lake Management with the new brochure to mail to all the permit holders. Mr. Null informed Mr. Sutton that the brochures will be mailed next week.

Correspondence to DNR

No correspondence but Mr. Null stated that due to the dry conditions there have been multiple wildfires on the Buffer Strip.

Attorney General Office Update

No update at this time.

Public Comment

No Public Comment

The next meeting will be July 24, 2023 at 6:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Null

Lake Manager