**Minutes of Aquatic Invasive Species Committee Meeting**

**Monday, October 9, 2023**

**Amended version with corrections in blue font (10/16/2023)**

**(Approval of this amended version of the minutes will be voted on at our next meeting.)**

The meeting was called to order by Chris Webb at 9:00 am. Roll call of committee members verified that a quorum was present. We met at the Barnes Town Office and via Zoom Video Conferencing.

1. **Roll call and Verification of Public Notice**

**a. Members Present:** Sally Pease, Ingemar Ekstrom, Diane Menard, Chris Webb, Doug Stearly, and Cris Neff (Liaison for FOECLA)

**b. Guests:** David Blumer, LEAPS LLC, Andy Teal (Bayfield County AIS Coordinator), and Tom Renz (Barnes Town Chairman)

**c. Members Absent:** Mavis Gagne, Barb Clements, and Julia Lyons

**d. Verification of Public Notice**: Public notice of meeting via the Barnes website, the Town Hall kiosk, and two local businesses was completed on October 6, 2023 at 8:43 am by Lisa Meyer, Clerk/Treasurer.

**2. Approval of Agenda**: A motion was made by Sally and seconded by Ingemar to approve the agenda. A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

**3. Approval of last month’s minutes**: A motion was made by Sally, seconded by Diane to approve the minutes of previous meeting, held September 11, 2023. A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

**4. Conference Call** **with Austin Dehn, DNR Water Resources Program Specialist**

**a. Aquatic Plant Management Plans**

**b. Aquatic Plant Management grant applications**

Austin Dehn was unable to attend our meeting today. A meeting with Austin Dehn, DNR Grant Specialist, is scheduled on **Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 9:00-11:00 am** to review our APMs and grant applications. Member of the AIS committee and other interested parties are invited to attend at the Barnes Town Office or via Teams link.

**5. Dave Blumer LEAPS LLC consultant update**

Our 2024-2028 Aquatic Plant Management Plans (APM Plan) has been submitted and approved by the DNR. We are now eligible for Surface Water Grants. However, this doesn’t mean everything we put in our grants will be approved. We are writing a 2-year grant for Upper/Middle Eau Claire Lakes and a 2-year grant for Tomahawk/Sand Bar Lakes. Lower Eau Clare/Cranberry Lakes have a 3-year grant in place (in the second year now). We are working on a Rapid Response Grant for Sweet, Shunenberg, and Smith (Headwaters of the Eau Claire Lake Chain); it is not completed yet.

\* A few comments: We are requesting to use the chemical ProcellaCOR for Sand Bar Lake, which has a total of 9.4 acres of Eurasian milfoil. The milfoil is located mostly along the shoreline in the dead trees (dead trees from the high water a few years back). It is impossible to pull weeds among these dead trees, so chemical treatment is the only option. However, ProcellaCOR is expensive, about $50,000, so it puts our grant into a “large scale” category meaning there is more competition and less money available. Another mentioned item was the curly-leaf pondweed in the river channel. The river is covered by the Middle grant above the dam and the Lower grant covers below the dam. Doug reported finding curly-leaf plants below the dam. It will be checked out next season.

**6. County AIS Activities** **& Educational Opportunities-Andy Teal, Bayfield Co AIS Coordinator**

\* Andy taught an indoor lab at Drummond Middle School for the Lake Aquatic Education Program (LEEP) which is run by FOECLA, and he also attended the outdoor LEEP field trip at Bony Lake in September.

\* The last Plant ID Day was September 29th so this program is now done for this year. Plant ID Day is scheduled for six times each year (five this year). It is held at the NGLVC near Ashland.

\* Arrow Arum has been found on Cable Lake. The Arrow Arum on Middle Eau Claire was dug out last year, and a patch of invasive horseradish plants were dug out on Middle EC Lake this year.

\* Cris suggested that the Drummond 8th grade class attend the Symposium in the fall of 2024.

**7. Current Year Activities** **– Grant Requirements & Reimbursements**

**a. Schedule a meeting with Julia to complete documentation of harvesting**

Chris Webb will meet with Julia and Barb about tabulating volunteer hours. Volunteer hours have been difficult to track for our various programs. Better coordination needs to be done. Chris is working on documents and the website to organize our tracking of volunteer hours, even being able to sign up online for volunteer dates. It was suggested that we prepare an outline of duties/activities for each program for our volunteers.

\* Dave Blumer asked for a summary of how FOECLA supports our AIS grants with money, activities, and volunteers.

\* Chris Webb stated that she is attending a meeting on October 10th for the Town of Gordon, Douglas County, about Lower Eau Claire Lake AIS issues. She will request new AIS committee members, volunteers, and monetary support for CBCW and BAISS boat programs. Next year, our committee may ask for more support from the Town of Highland because some of our Eau Claire Lake Chain is in that township also.

**b. Schedule a meeting with Barb to complete documentation of CBCW monitoring**

This past weekend, October 6-8, was our last weekend of the year to monitor three boat landing (Upper, Middle, and Lower). It was busy with the musky tournament and boats being landed for the fall season. Final hours have not been calculated yet.

**8. Volunteer/Employee Appreciation drawings**

We had only 8 responses turned in for our shoreline monitoring drawing. We decided to do some communication work of reaching out to get more people involved and respond with their volunteer activity forms. We discussed why there were so few forms returned in this year (we usually have 30-40 entries in the drawing). We concluded that messaging was not sent as frequently as past years. We must do a better job of communicating with our monitors and the Town of Barnes taxpayer base in the future.

**9. Education and Training reminder – scheduled for April 26, 2024 or May 3, 2024**

Andy Teal put the date of April 26, 2024 on his calendar for our AIS training meeting.

**10. Year-To-Date Expenses** **& Budget Requests for 2024**

* 1. **2023 State Grants AIS/CBCW: $60,277.69**
  2. **56903 BAISS Maintenance/Expenses: $1,695.98**
  3. **#56910 CBCW Expenses: $27,641.60**
  4. **#56911 Tomahawk/Sand Bar Lake Expenses: $33,485.26 (reclassify $1225)**
  5. **#56913 Upper/Middle Eau Claire Lakes Expenses: $12,088.88 (reclassify $1225)**
  6. **#56914 Lower EC/Cranberry Lakes Expenses: $4810.48**

**g. Total Expenses To-Date: $79,722.16**

**Discussion:**

Chris Webb shared her spreadsheet for our budget requests from the Town of Barnes for a 2-year period –2024-2025. Our budget itemized our monetary needs. The budget also listed the number volunteer hours needed to fulfill our grants with each grant item demanding a certain number of hours. That is the reason why tracking of volunteer hours is so important. Most of our AIS budget comes from the DNR grants that we apply for yearly. However, it is not enough money to cover all the necessary expenses to fund our projects.

\* Ingemar will order a steering cabinet for the BAISS boat. It will hopefully be installed yet this fall.

**11. Next Meeting date will be November 13, 2023 at 9:00 am.**

**12. Adjourn.** A motion was made by Doug and seconded by Sally to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Menard

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