

Big Swan Lake Improvement District (LID), Todd County, MN

Annual Meeting – August 29, 2026 – Hub Supper Club

The meeting was called to order at 11:01AM by Board Chairman Chuck Macy. Board members in attendance were Chuck Macy, Mike Wolters, Al Leinen, and Lee Daly. There was a total of 49 property owners and 2 guest speakers. Chuck Macy reviewed the agenda and the meeting proceeded.

Chairman's Statement: Chuck Macy stated that the LID has had a really good year for getting things done with the first year of Alum treatment completed, the proposed Schwanke Creek Delta project, and a new comprehensive survey for CLP (Curly-leaf Pondweed) treatment. He gave a big thank you to everyone in the LID who has helped out this past year and to Todd County Soil & Water.

Secretary's Report: Lee Daly presented the annual meeting minutes from August 23, 2025 for review and recap including last year's work by Steve Baker on the CLP treatment and survey proposals, approval of \$8,000 for 2026 walleye stocking, and updates on the Alum and Schwanke Creek projects. The minutes were accepted as written with a motion from Sue Krippner, second by Steve Richter, motion passed. The minutes will be published on the Big Swan Lake Improvement District and Association website.

Treasurer's Report: Mike Wolters presented the financials from 8/22/2025 through 8/25/2026 detailing our starting balance of \$104,243.93, deposits, checks, and a final ending balance of \$94,377.03. He stated that the largest checks written were \$26,846.00 for the LID's share of Alum treatment and \$7,830.00 for the AIS treatment. A motion was made by Greg Hegeholz to approve the report, second by Steve Richter, motion passed.

Old Business:

- Chuck Macy and Steve Baker reported on the CLP treatment for 2026 and discussed possible plans for next year. A new survey was completed in May by Steve Henry of Aquatic Survey Professionals that recommended 11 areas be treated for a total of 24.9 acres in 2027. However, Steve is concerned that some of the new treatment areas may be too small and the DNR may only allow 17.5 acres again next year. Chuck reported that he will apply for the AIS grant money next year in January. Sue Krippner is concerned about the narrows having too much CLP and is worried that it may spread from there. Chuck stated that they will publish the new survey report on the Big Swan website and keep everyone up to date going forward.
- Chuck Macy discussed the bog removal permits that we get every year and he'll be applying again in January for 2027. He stated that we can remove any bog less than 6 foot by 6 foot in size by cutting them up into smaller chunks for easier removal. He also stated that there were a lot of larger bogs this spring on the east side of lake, but when he called the DNR about staking them down they said we need to get permission from the land owner before proceeding. He will ask for clarification from the DNR when he applies for the permit this year.
- Al Leinen reported on the Walleye Stocking Program that we are currently doing every other year. The DNR stocks small fry on odd years (2025) but they are not very good at producing good size walleye. We will be stocking 400 pounds of fingerlings on even years (2026) in mid to late October depending on water temps. Al requested that we increase our budget to \$9,000 for 400 pounds again in 2028 due to higher costs from supplier. A motion was made by Sue Krippner to approve funding, second by Jim Bieniek, motion passed.

- Lee Daly reported on the Alum treatment plans for this year. Last year's treatment has proven to be very successful with much better water clarity being reported after treatment and all this year. In addition, we are sending water samples every month to RMB Labs in Detroit Lakes for analysis and our phosphorus readings have been excellent. As reported by Greg Wilson from Barr Engineering the levels on Big Swan are about one half from previous years and well within the recommended levels from the MPCA. The RMB Labs final report will be posted on the Big Swan website in October. Lee stated that even though chemical costs increased this year we are still in budget due to a 10% contingency amount in the grant. Lee reported that the Schwanke Creek project has found a funding source through the Nature Conservancy group in Minnesota to rebuild the dirty creek bottom with a new Delta design for better filtering. A new feasibility study will be conducted in early 2027 and if all goes well the project will start in 2027 or 2028.
- Guest Speaker Paul Kretsch from Lake Restoration, Inc., our Alum treatment contractor, was introduced. Paul gave a power point presentation and explained how Alum (aluminum sulfate) removes phosphorus and seals the bottom of the lake to protect it from releasing. He stated that aluminum sulfate is a natural element common in Minnesota has been used to treat water basins successfully and safely for over 40 years. Lake Restoration applied 87,000 pounds of Alum last year over a 95-acre area in the main basin of Big Swan and will do the same this year in early October. He showed a drone video of the treatment last year using a large barge on the lake taking about 7-8 days. This year they will be using 3 smaller boats and expect completion in 5-6 days. Paul explained that even though Alum is extremely successful in reducing phosphorus and will last up to 10 years or longer we still need to do other things to protect the lake from incoming sources such as at inlets and over land. A question was asked about how treatment effected PH levels and Paul stated that it was monitored by Barr Engineering during each application and never dropped too low with a final report issued to MPCA. Al Leinen asked for Paul to contact him directly by phone when he knows the exact days of treatment so it doesn't interfere with the walleye stocking.

New Business:

- Guest Speaker Adam Osserfoort, Director of Todd County Soil & Water was introduced. Adam gave a power point presentation regarding the EARTH program, cost-share project opportunities, and lakeshore owner types of improvements needed. Adam thanked Deja Anton for all her hard work in getting our MN Clean Water grant approved for \$625,000 that includes alum treatment and other projects needed for phosphorus reduction on Big Swan. Adam provided a lot of handouts for our group on potential cost-share projects, lake buffers, rain gardens, and the EARTH program. He explained that one pound of phosphorus in the lake can result in over a 1,000 pounds of algae and how our approximately 156 lakeshore owners can help by using less fertilizer and having less grass by shorelines. He also provided a study that showed an average property value reduction of 11% on lakeshore with impaired conditions. He stated that lakeshore buffers have the most impact on phosphorus reduction and showed before and after slides of restoration projects. He said that the property owner can pick what plants and flowers they want. A discussion was held regarding goose problems on Big Swan and he stated that they naturally hate buffer areas and love grass so you'll be less likely to have geese on your shoreline with buffers. If anyone is interested in doing a project, he recommended an EARTH assessment first (at no cost and no commitment to owners). To proceed on a project plans will be developed and then you need at least 2 bids with the county allowing 75% cost share on the lowest bid. However, you can still pick whatever contractor you want to use. Once contract is signed the county board of commissioners must approve before proceeding. A question was asked about the minimum buffer size and Adam stated it would depend on the property and onsite review.

Adam then discussed the EARTH program and asked people to review the handout sheets for analysis and how scores are given on each property. A perfect score is 700 with bronze, silver, and gold awards available. It's a free program and you will not be reported for any septic system or other deficiencies on your property. Chuck Macy stated that he had the assessment done last year and he was never called or pressured to do anything and it helps on our grant program. Adam then awarded last year's EARTH signs to Chuck Macy, John Fodstad, Mark Brauch, & Tom Zerull.

Open Discussion:

- Greg Hegeholz asked what could be done about the low water levels this year. Chuck Macy said that he had a water level monitoring device installed this year and the lake is down 13" so far. A question was asked about the north end outlet culvert and Denny Harder said that it was adjusted several years ago because there was never anything there before. Chuck will contact the DNR about what we can do, but he stated that a \$15,000 study may be required and that the dam would have to be raised. The DNR doesn't like making changes regarding water levels. Steve Richter will post any new information on the website.

Election of Officers:

- Chuck Macy reported that the term of board members of himself for chairman and Mark Brauch are due to expire and asked if anyone wanted to volunteer. Chuck stated that he's been on the board for more than 13 years and said that we need some new future replacements. There were no volunteers so Chuck and Mark both agreed to be reelected for another three years if approved by a majority of membership. A vote was made to approve Chuck Macy and Mark Brauch as board members and passed.

Motion to Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was made by Nancy Hillman at 12:13PM, second by Greg Hegeholz, motion passed.

Submitted by Lee Daly, Secretary