

Spring Meeting of the Big Swan Lake Improvement Association of Todd County

Saturday, May 21, 2011 at the Hub Supper Club

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m. by President Mark Brauch.

Minutes from the fall meeting were approved on a motion by Sue Krippner and seconded by Mike Heimerl. The treasurer's report by Bonnie Alsleben showed a balance of \$1,674.98 in the checking account and \$23,092.21 in the money market account was approved on a motion by Sue Krippner with a second by.

Eric Altema, Department of Natural Resources area fisheries manager, updated association members on activities of the Little Falls office, which covers Todd, Morrison, Benton and Mille Lacs counties. It surveyed Big Swan Lake this spring with trap netting and electrofishing and planned to do a lake vegetation survey during the summer, followed by fall electrofishing to survey for walleye fingerlings. He also reported on walleye fry and fingerling stocking activities.

Altema told members that the 24- to 36-inch slot limit for northern pike has been effective on Big Swan. Gill net surveying shows pike sizes are increasing while sizes below 24 inches are decreasing. He said all survey data shows that the regulations are doing what they are expected to do; they are producing larger fish, although not necessarily trophy size. The crappie population is also doing well, although their sizes are not huge either. The decision about whether regulations will remain in place will be made in 2013.

Altema said Big Swan Lake rates well with similar lakes, with good water quality and good fish habitat. Statewide there hasn't been much change in water quality as a result of Curlyleaf pondweed infestation. He said they don't see natural reproduction of walleye in the lake and they haven't seen an increase in walleye population with yearly stocking. He said the DNR's focus in the watershed that includes Big Swan is on water quality issues.

Denny Harder reported the DNR approved a permit to treat only 37 acres of Curlyleaf, compared to 46 acres last year and up to 60 acres in previous years. The DNR did not find the invasive weed along shorelines so it did not issue permits for treatments by individual property owners. Harder noted treatment has resulted in much improved boat navigation and water clarity.

George Brezinka reported on upcoming inspections of lake sewage systems. This summer the county planned to visit all sites on the lake to identify immediate problems, then follow up with compliance inspections in 2012. He also reported on inspections of feedlots in the watershed west of the lake. He indicated the county had identified potential runoff problems with three feedlots on one farm. He said the association and lake improvement district may want to consider helping with cost-share funding for installing filter strips and redirecting runoff flow. That could help improve lake water quality by reducing phosphorus in the lake.

Bonnie Alsleben suggested the group thank George and Kathy Brezinka for all their volunteer work on behalf of the lake and its property owners. Mark Brauch thanked Pat Masloski for maintaining the lake

web site. He also reminded members of elections scheduled for the fall for the positions of president and secretary. He suggested members consider holding elections for the president and vice president in the same year.

Jim Hobbs, who runs Hobbs Hereford Farm near the lake, introduced himself and talked about his grass-fed beef operation. He said he had invited the county soil and water office to visit his operation to ensure he was in compliance with all regulations and hoped he was on the same team as association members.

Sue Krippner gave the gambling report noting they lost money the previous month, but that's unusual. She recommended continuing membership in Allied Charities, a group that oversees issues involving charitable organizations. Her motion to approve the \$250 membership fee was approved.