

October 17, 2020

MINUTES

Secord Lake Association (SLA) meeting was called to order via Zoom at 10:00 A.M. by Phil Dast. Board members present: Phil Dast, Chuck Sikora, Susan Morgan, Jeanne Ballor. Board members present via Zoom: Richard West, Deb Stover and Rita Lewis. Also present Sandy Sikora and guest Commissioner Joel Vernier, Gladwin County Board of Commissioners

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Motion made to approve Minutes from September meeting was made, seconded and passed. No further report.

TREASURERS REPORT: Current bank balance is \$9,816.64. Motion to approve treasurer's report made, seconded and passed.

Bills for office supplies \$165.00 and Zoom \$53.00 were presented. In addition, Sandy informed us that the Secord Lake Association banners have been printed and an invoice for \$132.50 is forthcoming from Village Printing. Motion made to approve these bills for payment was made, seconded and passed.

INTRODUCTION: Phil thanked the two resigning board members, Carl Kerr and Bruce Plowman, for all the work they have done on behalf of the Association. Carl has sold his Secord Lake home, and Bruce is resigning for personal reasons. A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept these two resignations.

Phil then introduced the two new board members, Steve Slaga and Tami Johanson. These two responded to the Board's request for people interested in filling the empty positions. They were interviewed by the Board, and both were found to be qualified in all ways to serve the Association as Board members. A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the appointment to the Board of Steve and Tami to complete the terms of Carl and Bruce. Both will be up for reelection in August 2021.

Phil invited Joel Vernier to update us on news relating to Gladwin County. Joel stated that the fire hall water well has now been drilled, to 375 feet. It can pump 340 gallons per minute. Electrical and pump work remain to be completed. Joel also conveyed a request from Bob North that we remain off the lake bottoms this winter. There are many stumps that will make snowmobiling very dangerous. If there is an emergency on the lake bottoms, it will be dangerous for first responders to arrive safely.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Two new committees have been formed: Promotions and Fundraising.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Sandy reported that our current membership is 453.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Sandy thanked the supporters who donated time and money for the recent Newsletter: Mike and Gail Szuch, Mike and Sharon Byler, Scott and Danielle Gratopp, and Doug Smith.

PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE: At the present time, Chuck is chairing this committee. This committee is working with vendors to identify items to print or embroider, with profits going to the Association.

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FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE: This committee was formed to identify ways to raise funds for repairs to Secord Dam and to support the Association in its endeavors to bring back Secord Lake. The first event will be Sunday October 18.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: Phil acknowledged that this has been a challenging year, but also noted that Secord homeowners are very lucky compared to our friends down-river. FLTF is working daily on issues relating to all 4 dams. Repairs to Secord Dam remain the most affordable of the four. He recommended watching the documentary "Breached," which is about the collapse of Edenville Dam and its aftermath. He also noted that as usual, Boyce has done nothing at all to clean up or repair the dams. He has missed all deadlines. Possession of the dams by FLTF is ongoing in the legal system, both in bankruptcy court and in the condemnation action. He is proud of the increased communications by the Association to its members. He hopes next year we will be able to have in-person meetings, although Zoom will probably continue to be a part of future meetings. Today is the last scheduled public meeting of the year, although more meetings may be called, as the near future is likely to be active. The Board will keep in touch with membership.

FOUR LAKES TASK FORCE UPDATE: Phil stated that the bankruptcy court granted one-week access for inspections of the 4 dams by EGLE, FLTF, engineers and others. The inspections were for the purpose of determining what needs to be done to prepare the dams for winter, as well as identifying any immediate critical issues. Carl Kerr will no longer represent Secord on FLTF. SLA Board has appointed Chuck Sikora to take his place. In a recent News You Can Use, members were informed that FERC has denied Boyce's request for an extension of time to perform repairs and clean up. FLTF has recently sent out a News Flash, noting that planning is still a work in progress, so things will continue to change as we go forward. The methodology for assessments probably won't change for Secord, although it will be reviewed in early 2021. Surveys will be sent to homeowners as part of that review.

Joel explained that it is important to keep in mind that the assessments include operational and capital improvement costs. The capital improvement portion is estimated at \$24 million for Secord. The estimated range of assessment for capital improvements on Secord is \$350-450 per year for the duration of financing. This assessment can be paid in its entirety if a home is sold, or the assessment can stay on the tax records and pass to the buyer. Operating assessment is the working and management of the dams' gates, water levels and storm preparation. This amount is estimated at \$200-300 per year for 3 years. Once the dams are up and running, this will drop to about \$100. It might also be reduced if hydro power is utilized.

Phil stated that both of these elements are legally required. The goal remains to keep total assessments as low as possible, hopefully within the \$350-450 range. It is hoped that these costs will be further refined by April of 2021. Critical repairs will be done now, before winter. State funding and private donations have paid for everything up until now, so homeowners have incurred no assessment liability as of now. Government grants and private donations will continue to fund FLTF's efforts until ownership is transferred and assessments are finalized. Joel added that financing and assessments will be done lake by lake as the lakes come back up.

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There appears to have been more damage to Secord Dam than was earlier thought, so the likelihood of water in Secord Lake next summer is not promising. The outlook for 2021 is to complete all studies and start some of the construction. Engineering studies to date indicate that the gates on Secord dam need to be updated. At this time, a statement of when it will be safe to re-fill the lake would only be a guess. There will be public hearings in 2021, at which homeowners will have a voice as to their assessments. FLTF is committed to keeping the assessment affordable. Secord's affordability is better than the other dams, but there are still issues. Joel noted that there are several programs that may be able to help with affordability, including a state program for seniors over 65.

Chuck noted that he will be working on weed and tree control and erosion control, so he will have more information about those issues in the coming year.

QUESTION AND ANSWER: Phil opened the meeting to questions via Zoom Chat.

1. Realtor Deb Stover commented that most assessments remain with the property upon sale. She provided examples of other lakes in the area with dam assessments where this occurs.
2. Q: what portion of the \$208,000 is allocated to Secord?
A: This question isn't clear. No one seemed to know what this number meant. Engineers doing dam specs are doing all 4, so those costs are shared. What has been done to date has definitely included Secord; it is not being slighted. The total cost estimates for all 4 dams is \$338 million, which includes the \$24 million for Secord. Any grants received are prorated among the 4 dams. Legal costs for bankruptcy and condemnation are also shared. A recent state grant of \$2.5 million was mainly for a specific purpose, namely clean up at Sanford, although some was set aside for critical repairs.
3. Q: What is being done with the State grants of \$2.5 million and \$15 million?
A: These are going for critical repairs, and for final engineering, legal and administrative expenses. Secord is taking part, not just sitting back. It is important to note that critical repairs done now will not go into capital expenses, so won't be assessed to homeowners. Account transparency is important and is being pushed.
4. Q: Is there a percentage for Secord's costs?
A: No, at this time, total costs for each dam are not known, just estimates. The target is to have refined costs by April 2021.
5. Q: Is Secord or FLTF looking for erosion issues or is it a homeowner's responsibility to report issues?
A: It is up to the homeowner to reach out. Information about how to make a claim was included in an earlier News You Can Use, which are archived on the Association web site. Also check FLTF web page. This discussion reminded Phil that Bob North has suggested moving lifts that are still in water, as winter ice could damage them.

Motion made to adjourn with support; passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

JB