

**Lake of the Pines
Association Inc.
7257 Ashard Road Lake, MI 48632
Phone: (989) 588-9304 Fax: (989) 588-4145**

**Lake of the Pines Board Meeting Notes
September 9, 2023**

OPENING

Rick McCombe called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. There were 30 Association Members present. Rick started the meeting, joined by all present, by saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

<u>2021-2024</u>	<u>2022-2025</u>	<u>2023-2026</u>
Cindy LaFave	Geri Shaw	Cheryl Dziurkowski
Rick McCombe	Teri Morrow-Sutton	Jon Thomas
Open	David Lynch	Clayton Basler
Rod Saunders	Open	Open

ROLL CALL

Roll Call was taken. Teri Morrow-Sutton was absent and excused. All other board members present.

WELCOME

Thank you all for attending our BOD meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by **Rick McCombe**, and second by **Cindy LaFave**, to accept the Minutes of Board of Directors August Meeting August 12th, 2023. Vote taken. **Motion was unanimously passed.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- PLM will be performing water quality tests on September 14, 2023 – No need to refrain from swimming in the lake
- LOP Circle of Friends is hosting an Appreciation Bonfire on September 16, 2023 from 6:00-10:00 pm
- Volunteer Day to Prep the Rec. Hall for painting beginning on September 18, 2023. It will probably take a week to finish up the entire project – No color has been selected so you can still vote on your preferred color. There is a sign-up sheet in the office if you are willing to help us out.
- LOP Circle of Friends is raffling a Fall Gift Basket beginning on October 1, 2023
- LOP Circle of Friends will be hosting a Hayride Bonfire on October 14, 2023 from 6:00 pm until 10:00 pm
- LOP Circle of Friends will be hosting a Chili Bonfire on October 21, 2023 from 6:00 pm until 10:00 pm
- LOP Women's Club will be hosting a Boofest on October 28, 2023 in the Rec. Hall from 6:00 pm until 9:00 pm

OFFICER'S REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Rick McCombe

- Our current BOD has nine (9) members and we're supposed to have twelve (12). The opening positions we have are: future planning; special projects; and public relations. If you are interested in joining our BOD, you won't need to be elected, we can appoint you to serve the remaining term for any of the open positions.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Rod Saunders

- Similar to the Shadowbrook situation, we have people living in a garage at 3361 Pinehurst without running water, septic system, and proper living conditions. Please help us by calling Freeman Township (989) 588-2752 and the Health Department (989) 539-6731 to complain. It took a record number of people showing up in court for a resolution to the Shadow brook blight problem so hopefully if a lot of people complain to the health department and the Township, then maybe we can get some resolution to the Pinehurst issue too.
- Donna Saunders offered to donate her time to implement a LOP Automated Association Management System and joined us to speak about some of the benefits of the proposed **AMS** that could be implemented here at Lake of the Pines:
 - Automated billing/payment processes – time and money savings
 - Communications: emails with statistics of open rate
 - Association newsletters, broadcasts
 - Groups: Women's, Men's, Circle of Friends, Security, etc.
 - Replace existing website. Keep domain name – money savings
 - Online store - opportunities
 - Automate Pontoon Island management – manage boat details, billing, etc.
 - Voting can be done online and eliminate US Mail costs – money savings
 - Forum for discussions:

- Public discussions
- Private discussions – this could set up a better communication structure for this BOD and future BOD's
- Board of Directors questions/answers – email communications can be disjointed and hard to track over time.
- Membership directory
- Share important documents with all members:
 - By Laws
 - Covenants
 - Rules and Regulations
- The Wild Apricot company has a 60-day free trial period and then afterwards charges \$240 per month to utilize their software. Donna feels like she can have the system up and running in approximately 30 days, so we would have another 30 days to try the system out to see if it is a good fit for LOP. In addition, Donna will train the office staff and BOD members to be able to run the system on a daily basis. We could have a computer system set up in the Rec Hall with access to the AMS for our association members that don't have access to a computer or are uncomfortable with the software package and require additional help. Note: all of the data is stored in the "Cloud" so you won't need to buy/install any software on your computer.
- **Motion** was made by **Jon Thomas**, and seconded by **Cheryl Dziurkowski** to approve having Donna Saunders implement the Wild Apricot automated management system to determine if this system is suitable for LOP. Vote taken. **Motion was unanimously passed.**

Ruth Boerner - Lot 202-204 - Birchwood

Question – How do you assign a person or group to manage the system?

Answer – Per Donna Saunders – To initialize the new AMS system, I would upload all of the current association member information (name, address, email address, lot number, etc.) into the AMS system. Then I would train a person or group (office staff or BOD members) that will be assigned admin privileges and they would manage the overall system. However, each LOP association member would have access to their information where they would be able to update their personal information but would not be able to access any other association members information. Separate admin accounts could be set up and managed by Women's Club, Men's Club, Circle of Friends, etc.

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Cheryl Dziurkowski

- A Big "Thank you" to all who donated for the great Labor Day fireworks display. Wally, the volunteer, who shot off the fireworks would like to retire and is willing to train someone new to take over. If interested please let them know in the LOP office.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Cindy LaFave

- **Motion** was made by **Rick McCombe**, and seconded by **Dave Lynch** to approve the bills from August totaling \$16,373.88. Vote taken. **Motion was unanimously passed.**

- **Motion** was made by **Cindy LaFave**, and seconded by **Rod Saunders** to approve the following changes to the Rules and Regulations:
 - **Page 10 – Pontoon Island** - Remove “Effective November 1, 1995, no recreational vehicles or any other items may be on Pontoon Island”
 - **Page 12 – 2nd Paragraph** – Change “ORV’s allowed on designated trails only: are motorcycles, 3 or 4 wheelers, and snowmobiles” to “ORV’s allowed on designated trails only: are motorcycles, 3 or 4 wheelers, snowmobiles, golf carts, and side by sides”
 - **Page 15 – Self Contained Vehicles** – Change “There is dumping of holding tanks for registered campers at the campground.” to “There is dumping of holding tanks for registered campers at the campground and all LOP association members may also dump for a fee of \$15.00”
 - **Page 20 – Association Rules** – Change “2. A 100% deposit must be paid within 7 business days to hold the reservation” to “2. A 50% deposit must be paid at the time of reservation to hold the reservation”
 - Vote taken. **Motion was unanimously passed.**
- **Shadowbrook Blight Update:** Freeman Township is trying to get Marc Davis to show up at the notary office to sign the Shadowbrook property over to the Township with a caveat that all expenses would be waived afterwards. Due to the fact that Marc Davis has been avoiding the situation, on Monday September 11, 2023 our Freeman Township Supervisor is going to the sheriff’s department to have a warrant issued so that the property can be cleaned up. The Township is looking for volunteers to help with this effort. A sign-up sheet is in the LOP office for people to sign-up to help. A limit of 10 volunteers can occupy the Shadowbrook property at one time for the cleanup. Volunteers will need to sign a waiver. You will be provided protective gloves and caution is warned. It should be treated like the Adopt-A-Highway protocol. After 10 volunteers sign up, a date will be set. The Township intends to do a preliminary walk through the property prior to the clean-up.

Brian Bouwens- Lot 138 Tamarack

- **Question** – Who will own the property if the Township gets Marc Davis to sign the property over?
- **Answer – Per Cindy LaFave** – Freeman Township will own the property and can sell the property after they pay the back taxes (approx. \$1,000.00). If the Township did take over the property the LOP BOD would have to determine if they would forgive the lien (approx. \$1,000.00) on that property. If not, then LOP intends to take Marc Davis to small claims court for the back dues.

Pam Machnak- Lot 053 Tamarack

- **Question** – Why would we volunteer to clean up the Shadow brook property if Marc Davis still owns the property? Can’t he just come back with more junk or sell it
- **Answer – Per Cindy LaFave** – Isn’t that what we wanted? We wanted it cleaned up and yes, he can sell it after the clean-up effort but the LOP liens and the Township liens stay with the property and would have to be paid. Right now, the debts are far greater than the property value. If Marc Davis signs that property over to someone else, they would be liable for the debts.

Dawn Basler - Lot 207 & 208 - Birchwood Heights

- **Question** – Do we have to sort all that junk or just put everything in a dumpster?
- **Answer – Per Cindy LaFave** – Just put everything in a dumpster.
- **Answer – Per Rod Saunders** – This is just like evicting someone from an apartment – the sheriff comes in and makes sure that there is no harassment then we move everything into the dumpster.

COMMITTEE'S REPORTS

EXECUTIVE'S REPORT – Rick McCombe

- Thank you, John & Teena Ritchings for donating a megaphone that we can use at different social events.
- Most of the WIFI equipment is purchased and in the LOP office awaiting installation. The WIFI is needed for security cameras. We'll be installing a WIFI hub on a pole outside the Rec. Hall and the specifications say that it can reach a distance of 2.5 miles. Hopefully, that hub will be able to provide a strong enough signal in the campground otherwise we may have to install a 2nd hub. The installation will be managed with volunteers. The Stanley Painting Co. – Bill Stanley is loaning us a manlift to use for the hub installation. We will ensure that safety harnesses are used. The installation is scheduled to take place within the next couple of weeks.
- Our Bridge leading into the campground is in need of repair/rebuild. We feel that it is time to stop kicking the can down the road and fix the bridge the right way. That bridge is a big liability for the LOP Association. However, the campground is a good source of income for our association. Spicer Engineering is going to give us some idea on what it will cost to replace the bridge and whether or not we can use culverts. We're anticipating a big expense for this rebuild and expect to have to institute a special assessment.

ARCHITECTURAL'S REPORT – Clay Basler

- No report

ECOLOGY'S REPORT – Jon Thomas

- We met a professional beaver trapper (Chuck Harris) that is willing to volunteer his time and equipment to trap our nuisance beaver and muskrat. The beavers play a big part in the lack of water flow into our lake. Chuck intends to make hats and mittens from the beaver pelts and sell them to LOP association members. **Motion** was made by **Jon Thomas**, and seconded by **Cindy LaFave** to approve letting Chuck Harris trap our nuisance beavers on LOP property. Vote taken. **Motion was unanimously passed.**
- The "Stock the Lake" Breakfast was a huge success and to date we've collected \$3,500 to purchase fish to stock our lake.
- We are slowly initiating the boat sticker system. We knew it was going to be a slow process but hopefully we will eventually be sure that all the boats on Doc and Tom Lake belong there.

MAINTENANCE'S REPORT – David Lynch

- The Swimming pool and Cabin #4 closed now for the season
- Docks coming out the week of October 16, 2023 – Please remove your watercraft before October 16, 2023.
- Campground closes October 22, 2023 for the season

NOMINATING/BALLOTING REPORT – Geri Shaw

- No report

PERSONNEL'S REPORT – Teri Morrow-Sutton (Absent)

- No report

PUBLIC RELATIONS'S REPORT

- No report

SPECIAL PROJECT'S REPORT – Teri Morrow-Sutton (Absent)

- No report

FUTURE PLANNING'S REPORT

- No report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- No report

NEW BUSINESS

- No report

SUB-COMMITTEE'S REPORTS

WOMEN'S CLUB REPORT – Geri Shaw

- Women's Club Meeting scheduled on Tuesday September 12, 2023 at 12:30 pm in the Rec. Hall
Women's Club will be hosting their annual Boofest in the Rec. Hall on October 28, 2023 from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm – More information to follow

MEN'S CLUB REPORT – Al Bywater (Absent)

- Brats and Beer event turned out to be a successful event.
- Men's Club Meeting scheduled on Wednesday September 13, 2023 at 5:00 pm in the Rec. Hall

LOP CIRCLE OF FRIENDS – Dave Lynch

- Circle of Friends is hosting an Appreciation Bonfire on September 16, 2023 from 6:00 - 10:00 pm - BYOB
- Circle of Friends is raffling a Fall Gift Basket beginning on October 1, 2023. You will find the basket in the LOP Office and will be able to purchase tickets at that time – The raffle drawing will take place at the Chili/Bonfire event on October 21, 2023
- Circle of Friends will be hosting an Adult Hayride and Bonfire on October 14, 2023 from 5:00 pm until 10:00 pm – Meet at the Pavilion – Please sign up in the LOP Office
- Circle of Friends will be hosting a Chili Bonfire in the Pavilion on October 21, 2023 from 5:00 pm until 10:00 pm – Please sign up in the LOP Office

VOLUNTEER SECURITY PATROL REPORT – Leo Stevens

- Basically, an uneventful summer
- Just a couple of small issues: gas stolen out of boats and a boat battery stolen
- Sticker violations are way down.
- A Big “Thank You” to all of the security volunteers for doing a great job.
- Preliminary plans for the fall casino trip are underway for potentially taking place at the end of October. More information to follow.

ASSOCIATION TIME

Rick McCombe reminded everyone that Association Time is for members only and that you must state your name, subdivision and lot number. Please limit your time to three minutes.

Kim Rolfe – Lot 236 & 237 - Birchwood

Comment – Regarding the changes last month to the Rules and Regulations, I think the home owners should be present with their guests. People are going way too fast on dirt bikes, 4 wheelers, quads, cars, and golf carts in the neighborhood. The young kids at Lot #577 – Birchwood Heights Sub where the family is living in a tent is causing some of the problems. People are driving fast with small kids.

Answer – Per Rick McCombe – We can send them a letter.

Answer – Per Cindy LaFave – Call the sheriff.

Comment – Someone is unplugging the cameras on Pontoon Island. Unfortunately, the picture was the back of the head.

Comment – A campground in Harrison Hilltop Campground is charging \$60 a night to camp and another campground in Lake George is charging \$60 a night. Why can't we raise our prices?

Answer – Per Rick McCombe – We can raise the price.

Comment – What are we going to do with the Pontoon that a resident donated? Sell it? If not, we will have to insure if we were to rent it out.

Comment – Our covenants state Article 7 Section 1 - “No businesses allowed” but there are many businesses here in LOP. The covenants were changed last year so why didn't we address this issue last year when we made the changes. It's not fair if some people get away and others don't.

Answer – Per Rick McCombe – Are you speaking about one particular business? It will require changes in the covenants to put some teeth into enforcing the covenants

Answer – Per Geri Shaw – How would you enforce these rules?

Tim Beckett – Lot 070 – Pinehurst Estates

Question – Does the court order for the Shadow brook property say that we can go on the property? Or will we be trespassing?

Answer – Per Cindy LaFave – Yes, we can go on the property with the sheriff.

Question – Was the Clare County Drain Commissioner consulted about the beaver trapping and the bridge?

Answer – Per Rick McCombe – Yes

Comment – I'm sure what the trapper is telling us is correct but there always a concern when someone is profiting off of the beaver pelts at our expense. Just like the people that cut down all of our pine trees. It's always weary when someone comes in and says do this then they end up benefitting.

Answer – Per Jon Thomas – Yes, the beaver guy is benefitting but so are we. He is trapping the beaver utilizing his own equipment for free and we were paying someone else \$600 a month to do the same job. We have a beaver issue and we're saving \$600 per month so we felt like this is a win-win situation. In addition, the drain commissioner is also helping us by tackling some of the outside culverts at their expense.

Comment – Is there any other reason to have the bridge then to access the campground?

Answer – Per Cindy LaFave – Yes, to access the dam and that was included during the negotiations with the transfer of the dam to Clare County. We've let infrastructure things go here at LOP for far too long with patches that now have to be addressed.

Comment – Regarding the enforcement issues here at LOP we have three choices: Let it go; start a court case (see how long it will take and how much money it will cost); and finally apply social pressure. Really the only one we can truly control is choice #2 hiring an attorney and charge the attorney fees back to the violator. We would have to update our by-laws, covenants, and rules and regulations to clearly state the consequences of violating our rules otherwise we will come here every month with the same complaints.

Answer – Per Cindy LaFave – If we had an association member that was willing to donate those legal services is the only way we could afford to pursue your option #2. We were told that we can have lawsuits drawn up for \$10,000 to start and they may or may not work in our favor. Most people violating the rules can't afford to pay our legal fees so we would be stuck.

Steve Andrews - Lot 280 - Woodland Heights

Question – Regarding commercial property or businesses; there are many businesses here in LOP. Many of which are Air B&B's and the people are customers and not guests. These customers should not have access to our common properties.

Answer – Per Rod Saunders – Prior to purchasing property, approval was given by both my realtor and people in the LOP office to rent out my property. So, the decision to purchase the property was based on that knowledge.

Answer – Per Clay Basler – Yes, we can hire an attorney and run all of the businesses out of LOP but those businesses have a whole lot more money than LOP association has so unless we have

a volunteer attorney step up and take on all of these businesses in court cases free of charge then we will continue to come to the BOD monthly meetings and complain.

Comment – Everyone keeps saying that we should run this place like a business. It is not a business! It's an association!

Question – Directed to Dave Lynch - Why was the backhoe sold? The guy you sold it to had it up and running in 5 minutes.

Answer – Per Dave Lynch – Because we got a quote of \$6,000 to repair that may or may not work. The previous \$9,000 repair didn't work. The gentleman who bought the backhoe said he would come and help us out if we need it.

Ruth Boerner - Lot 202-204 - Birchwood

Comment – We're currently having our Annual Clare County Veterans Collection in conjunction with the DAR group. They prefer to receive checks, so if you are interested in donating, please drop your check off in the LOP Office and make the checks out to: Clare County Veterans Services. This collection will go on until the first week in October. This is a worthy cause and your donations are much appreciated.

Bill Gardner - Lot 60 & 61 - Pinehurst

Question – Based on the engineering study we had done on the bridge, was it determined that the footings were damaged due to the increased water output of the lake?

Answer – Per Rick McCombe - The area around the footings were damaged

Question – Does the drain commissioner share any of the responsibility due to the high-water levels?

Answer – Per Rick McCombe - The drain commissioner did not adjust the water levels. Someone did, but it was not the drain commissioner. That problem was caused by water going over the dam rather than through the dam. The bridge is on LOP property therefore it is our responsibility to repair or rebuild. FEMA might be able to help us out with the expenses and Rod Saunders is looking into it.

Rick Seig - Lot 152-154 - Villa

Question – There isn't anyone messing with the lake water levels. Correct?

Answer – Per Rick McCombe – No, the dam most of the time controls itself but we can call to have to water levels adjusted. The dam is Clare County property now.

Deb Van Dyke – Lot 406, 407, & 449 Birchwood

Comment/Question – Deborah Van Dyke reminded the group that the action research project is not hers but an association project. She will facilitate the project until resolutions are presented to the board for a vote.

The project work begins when meeting with the board president to review the preliminary project action items included on the project timeline. This meeting was held immediately following the board meeting on Saturday, September 9, 2023. The board president approved the preliminary project timeline, see below.

Progress review meetings will be offered as special LOP board meetings to support a collaborative data-gathering and information-sharing process. These meetings will provide a venue for members to inquire about the status of the investigation. In addition, this allows members who want to be involved with the research for resolution options an opportunity to do so. Membership participation is essential to project success.

Lake of the Pines				
Action Research Project				
Timeline for Plan Phase: Preliminary				
What	When	Who (including self)	Where	How
Review preliminary timeline	Sep-23	Board president	LOP Office	Preliminary interview
Revise/Confirm timeline	Oct-23	Select board members	LOP Conference Room	Focus group
Obtain history and current state	Oct-23	Select board members	LOP Conference Room	Interviews: guided conversations
Progress Review	Oct-23	Full membership	LOP Board Meeting	Focus group
Obtain and review documents	Nov-23	Office personnel	LOP Office	Review documents and records
Develop resolution options	Nov-23	Select board members	LOP Conference Room	Focus group
Analyze options for profitability	Dec-23	Select board members	LOP Conference Room	Focus group
Progress Review	Jan-24	Full membership	LOP Board Meeting	Focus group
Membership Survey	Feb-24	Full membership	Virtual	Interviews: guided conversations
Share survey results	Mar-24	Full membership	LOP Board Meeting	Communication and reporting
Board Vote on resolution	Mar-24	Board members	LOP Board Meeting	Normal voting process

Closing

Motion was made by **Rick McCombe**, second by **Jon Thomas** to adjourn the meeting @ 11:44 AM. Vote taken. **Motion was unanimously passed.**

These meeting minutes were approved at the October 14, 2023 Lake of the Pines Board Meeting

Respectively recorded and transcribed by:

**Cheryl Dziurkowski, Secretary
LOP Board of Director**

**Rick McCombe, President
Lake of the Pines Board of Directors**

**Cheryl Dziurkowski, Secretary
Lake of the Pines Board of Directors**