

GLA ANNUAL MEETING Minutes

Saturday, August 5, 2023
Lake Geneva Country Club
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin
9:30 a.m.

WELCOME — President Lillie called the 88th meeting of the Association to order at 9:35 a.m., thanking the membership for their support of our mission, their financial support and their attendance. Lillie read the GLA Mission statement and noted that the Association has no authority over the lake path or the lake, but has an obligation to inform and educate members on the issues that arise.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION — EEF President Bill Thompson noted that 14 local scholars had received scholarships from EEF in 2023, and introduced ten of those who were able to attend. The scholars were recent graduates of area high schools, undergrads, grad students, and a technical college student. Thompson gave credit to the Reynolds family which started the EEF and continues to support the programs along with so many other area donors.

MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING, AUGUST 6, 2022 — A motion to approve the minutes as published was passed unanimously (Stuhley/Kenny).

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORTS — Nominating Committee Chair Gee proposed the following slates, which were approved unanimously:

EEF Board of Directors (Voris/Goggin)

Barry Mess, Becky Merwin, Kristen Freytag, Gil Kirkpatrick, Skip Mosshamer, Jill Lorenzi, and Cindy Milojevic

GLA Board of Directors (McClayton/Gardiner)

GLA Directors with three-year terms to expire in 2026: E. Lynn Grayson, David Anderson, Tricia Forbeck, John Goggin, Scott Craven Jones, William McClayton, James Reuland, Susan Whiting, and George Atkinson

Gee announced the EEF Officers elected by their boards:

EEF: Bill Thompson, Pres.; Gil Kirkpatrick, Vice Pres.; Jim Smith, Secretary-Treasurer

GLA: Mark Lillie, Pres.; E. Lynn Grayson, Vice Pres.; Robert Morava, Secretary; Tom Gardiner, Treasurer; Jim Smith, Executive Secretary.

Gee recognized the dedication of retiring director Colman for her contributions to not only the GLA but to many community groups. Gee attributed the Fire Boat to her efforts as well as the rescue and revitalization of Yerkes as chair of Yerkes Future Foundation. This was met with resounding applause.

GENERAL REPORTS:

Lake Geneva Water Safety Patrol: Director Ted Pankau revealed that WSP lifeguards had saved two unconscious swimmers at beaches within two weeks, and emphasized the importance of WSP swimming classes. The patrol averages 20 rescues each season from boats and beaches.

Brigid Cashman noted that the WSP has on-line and in-person boating safety classes which result in licensing. While the state of Wisconsin teaches state boating rules, it does not cover some of the special requirements that apply only to Geneva Lake, such as the requirement that skiers, tubers, and surfers have a spotter in the boat in addition to the driver. The classes teach boating safety and regulations, but also inform about invasive species and good environmental habits. Many adults are finding the classes beneficial.

Real Estate Trends: Director Tricia Forbeck from Compass Realty provided a hand-out identifying some of the recent residential sales and residences for sale around the lake.

GLA Finance and Grants Report: Treasurer Gardiner noted the strong support from regular and commercial donors, the latter having improved from 60 to 90 memberships in 2023.

Lillie related that such strong support enables GLA to help with area organizations that complement GLA's mission of education and communication, and are beneficial to lake water quality. Financial support has been provided for the Environmental Education Foundation, Holiday Home, Geneva Lake Level Corp., Geneva Lake Environmental Agency, Yerkes Future Foundation, Geneva Lake Water Safety Patrol, and Lake Geneva Ministries.

CD3 Boat Launch Cleaning Apparatus Report: Secretary Morava described the traveling CD3 system that last year was shared a month each by the municipalities around the lake. The unit was an experiment financed by GLA and Geneva Lake Conservancy. Today, via a grant obtained by GLEA, five smaller units have been purchased and are in use by the municipalities. Williams Bay has two in service, Fontana, one, and Lake Geneva, one. The units clean, drain, dry and contain invasive species either coming from our lake or going from our lake. The original portable unit is available for use, and all units act as an educational billboards for environmentally sensitive boating.

DNR Lake Use Report: DNR Warden Brad Wilson reported on citations that the DNR has given for various boating infractions, such as Slow No Wake infractions, Boat Registration and licensing inadequacies, PFD inadequacies, OWIs, and boating accidents. The DNR is also watching for trailers entering and leaving Wisconsin on highways 120 and 14. Citations for trailering with weeds hanging from the trailers or water draining from the hulls are costly.

LAKE USE / WATER QUALITY CONCERNS

Challenges Facing Municipalities

Town of Linn Chairman Jim Weiss identified the pressure for development in Linn because it has more open space than the municipalities. Linn is able to control development because it has a good comprehensive plan. Linn also has only well and septic, which also limits the feasibility of large developments. One concern is the diminishing interest in volunteer fire fighting, so an agreement with LG provides some coverage during weekday hours. The town needs to work on getting response time under ten minutes. When asked about large hog farms, Weiss responded that as farms grow, the DNR takes over as the regulating body.

Williams Bay President William Duncan notes that the village is home to two universities and four camps, all of which have significant lake frontage. Aurora Univ. is discontinuing its academic programs, and is now for sale. Williams Bay has some controls as these entities are zoned Public and Institutional, but still a concern is what might become of the property. The Bay struggled with EMS services and has joined with Fontana to maintain paid staff. Outdated infrastructure will require millions of water and sewer work in the near future.

Fontana President Patrick Kenny notes that Fontana has been very active in curtailing water runoff and related issue by enforcing green space and constructing drainage basins. Fontana has worked with the Abbey and Big Foot Country Club providing over 24 retention areas in the village.

Lake Geneva Mayor Charlene Klein recognizes the lake as the draw for the economic health of the municipalities. In Lake Geneva, the importance of the dam and upcoming maintenance is looming. As the new Chair of the Geneva Lake Law Enforcement Agency, Klein related the numbers of citations given for various boating infractions given by the GLEA. Big Foot Beach is busier than it ever was, and safety is critical there. Development of the former Hillmoor Country Club is still in the study phase, but Klein promises the city will take all environmentally sound measures to make sure the final

project is an asset to the community and not detrimental to the lake. Highway 50 construction will run right through the city in 2026 and 2027. It will be a hardship, but replacing 100-year-old infrastructure will be good for decades to come.

Geneva Lake Management Plan Update

Director Tom Nickols reported that as part of the plan a survey was sent to 2000 lake area residents and produced 280 responses, mostly from long-time residents of the area who are passionate about the lake. The respondents represented the four municipalities fairly evenly. The goal is to identify the issues that threaten the lake, and to devise actions of remedy. Some of the same issues that were noted in the 2008 plan are still present, but bigger boats, number of boats, invasive species, and other issues are arising. Planners will use drones to count all of the boats on Geneva Lake, including those in operation and those that are moored. The plan is identifying all of the tributaries that at some point feed into the lake, so that they can be studied for what they contribute either positively or negatively to the water quality. More information and communication will be forthcoming in the next month.

What is a Lake District? Should Geneva Lake Consider Having One?

Vice President E. Lynn Grayson reviewed many questions about a lake district, including the purpose of a lake district, how to form a lake district, identifying the boundaries of a lake district, the day-to-day operation and control of a lake district, funding a lake district, and the potential benefits of a lake district. A paper representation of her report is available from the GLA office, and a link to the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point web page about Lake Districts is on the GLA web site at www.genevalakeassoc.org under the *Water Quality* menu.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further reports, President Lillie adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m. (Goggin/Morava)

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Smith
Executive Secretary