

MTLC Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2025

9:30, Minong Town Hall

Harlan Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:30. Harlan welcomed those attending and introduced the MTLC officers.

Thirty-one persons attended, including Committee members, Town Board representatives, and property owners concerned about the issues discussed.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer's report: Al Angen gave the treasurer's report. MTLC ended the year with a \$600 balance. With John Ney leaving the grant-writing position in September, Al has stepped in and will be the primary grant-writer in the future. Al briefly described the CWCB process, maximum dollars for the grant (\$32,000), number of lakes served (eight—those with public landings), and the minimum number of hours that each landing must be covered.

Al proposed that we raise the monitors stipend from \$10/hour to \$12/hour and that we pay for the increase by allocating monitor hours more efficiently, as follows: 200 hours minimum for each of the landings (this is the minimum number of hours required by the DNR); the remaining hours will be allocated according to landings with high use. This means a couple of lakes will have hours increased, the rest decreased (some substantially).

No vote was taken but there was general agreement that we should increase the stipend for the monitors and we should allocate the monitors' hours according to boat traffic. Six of eight lakes contribute at least \$1,000 per year to supplement the DNR grant; these funds count towards our match and are used for miscellaneous expenses. There were suggestions that individual lakes may want to contribute additional dollars to increase hours of monitors on their lakes. We also need to find out if any lakes with public landings are not part of the committee. The officers will research these issues and put forward a specific proposal at the April meeting.

Wake boat restriction ordinances and updates: Harlan Johnson led the discussion. He referenced several documents which had either been sent out previously or were available at the meeting (including drafts of possible ordinances for the Towns of Minong and Wascott). Harlan emphasized that both MTLC and Minong Town's subcommittee are only gathering information, data, and sample ordinances, property owner input and so on to present to Minong and Wascott Town Boards.

The discussion was wide-ranging. Opponents of an ordinance argued that none of the four points Harlan made in support of the ordinance are true: they argued that there is no evidence that wake boats damage the lake bottom beyond ten feet; that wake boats do not cause lakeshore erosion (or at least as much as other forms of boating—i.e. tubing—and that it is impossible to stop erosion); that wake boats are no more likely to transport invasive species than conventional watercraft (ballast tanks in wake boats are like live wells, etc. in conventional boats because they are all impossible to drain completely); and that wake boats present no safety issues as their advanced technology makes them among the safest boats on the water.

Harlan and Steve Johnson (Minong Flowage) responded to these points. A Town Board member mentioned that while slightly more than thirty towns have such ordinances and another thirty or so are considering them, there are a couple of thousand towns in Wisconsin so most towns do not seem to see wake boats as a threat or problem. The Board member also pointed out that there will need to be much broader support for an initiative as well as public meetings to get feedback before anything is approved. Harlan acknowledged that we are in the early stages of the process.

Most people at the meeting listened rather than participated in the debate.

The meeting was adjourned for a short break.

Harlan called the meeting to order and we had brief reports from each lake:

Big Bass—Sally Dahlby gave the report. There is a great deal of ice fishing activity this year. There are some erosion issues on the lake and there is some concern about wake boats. The lake does the usual monitoring for zebra mussels and does the usual tests for water clarity.

Gilmore—Fran McClosky gave the report. There is heavy use of the public landing on Gilmore as it is a popular fishing lake. Milfoil mitigation efforts are complicated by wild rice in the lake (hence a full range of possible treatments is not available.) Gilmore's approach to most issues is education and prevention, including things like shoreline preservation and informal wake rules.

Horseshoe—Al Angen gave the report. There are some early discussions on moving from a lake Association to a lake district model. The water level has fluctuated in the past couple of years and the Association has spent a fair amount on dredging.

Kimball—No report.

Minong Flowage—Harlan Johnson gave the report. The use of all the landings on MF is extremely high, and boat traffic in general seems to be accelerating. Treatment for milfoil is complicated by wild rice beds on the lake. The MF Association has hosted some social events which seem to be well attended and well received and may serve as models for events other Associations may want to sponsor.

Nancy—Terry Flaherty gave the report. As a result of doing the plant survey this year, the consultant discovered a new invasive on Nancy, Invasive Phragmites. The consultant said the DNR will probably deal with the issue directly so Nancy's Association will not be involved. Wake boats have so far not been an issue on the lake, and in general things are going well on Nancy.

Pokegema—Bob Hendricks gave the report. Wake boats are a large concern on Pokegema, and members of their Association have done a lot of research on the issue; Bob suggested further study of the issue is a good example of "paralysis by analysis." Pokegema is setting up a de-contamination station. At least anecdotally Pokegema has more particulates than in the past.

Sand—no report

By Laws revision: This should not be a major or time-consuming task, but we need to revise them ASAP. A draft of the revised by-laws should be available before the April meeting. Harlan offered to lead a three-person team to draft the by-laws. Dick Johnson volunteered to serve; they will seek a third person for the committee.

Website: The website will be updated before the April meeting. It will contain basic information about MTLC (Charter, By-Laws, Meeting Minutes, and links to essential information like amount of use of each landing in the Town).

The next MTLC meeting will be in April; the date and time as well as the agenda will be distributed well before the meeting date.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Flaherty

Secretary