

June 22, 2020

## Lake Shamineau Property Owners,

We hope this newsletter finds you all healthy and safe. As we look forward to summer we are concerned for high waters and our flooded neighbors. Earlier this spring our lake level reading was 1278.20 which was over 3 feet above the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL), and over 1 foot above the reading of 1277 in June 2019. The current lake level reading is 1277.89. We know that many of the properties around the lake have water in or surrounding their homes. Although there have been some bumps in the road, we continue to move forward to work on a permanent long-term solution. See below for detail information but ***we want you all to know that the LSLID Board has not abandoned the High-Water Outlet project.***

### The purpose of this letter is to advise all Lake Shamineau Property Owners of the following:

- Nominations for three Board of Director seats are open. Instructions for submitting nominations are below. Please note that nominations will be due and ***must be received by July 14, 2020.***
- An update on recent Lake Improvement District (LID) activities.
- Provide an announcement to Property Owners of a **High-Water Project Informational Meeting that will be held online on Thursday, August 6, 2020 beginning at 6 PM.** To receive a meeting invitation, send an email prior to the meeting date to Fred Comb at [fred@homeinspectionsofmn.com](mailto:fred@homeinspectionsofmn.com).
- Provide the meeting time and location of the ***Annual Meeting, which will be held on Saturday, August 29, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. It has not yet been determined if the meeting will be held online or in person.***

### Nomination information:

- There are three Board of Director seats open for election at the August Annual Meeting. A list of responsibilities below highlights some of the duties that are expected of the five Directors. Incumbents for the open seats are Cindy Kevern (permanent), Rick Rosar (seasonal), and Fred Comb (seasonal). The newly elected directors will take office 4 weeks after elected, for a two-year term.
- One of the open seats requires that the nominee be a permanent resident, and two of the open seats are available to seasonal property owners. Permanent residency requires that your lake address must be your primary residence. All nominees must be a property owner as defined by the Establishment Order for the Lake Shamineau Lake Improvement District (see the LID website for the Establishment Order).
- You may nominate yourself or another Lake Shamineau property owner that meets the requirements.
- For each nomination, submit the name of the nominee, whether they are a seasonal or a permanent resident, their lake address, their mailing address, their email address, and their phone number. We will verify that the nominee meets any required residency and property ownership requirements. We will also contact each nominee for background information to send out with the ballots.
- ***Submit nomination information no later than July 14, 2020 to: LSLID, PO Box 394, Motley MN 56466 OR send an email to [LSLIDBD@gmail.com](mailto:LSLIDBD@gmail.com).***

Following is a list of some of the responsibilities of the 5 member LSLID Board of Directors. Please note that the positions are volunteer positions.

- Attend and present at LSLID Board meetings and at Morrison County Board Meetings (approx. 10 – 12 per year)
- Attend and present at various other meetings with the DNR, Soil and Water, County, Engineering Firms, etc.
- Coordinate communications (website, newsletter, mailings to property owners, etc.)
- Prepare for and present at the Annual Meeting including handouts, room preparations, audio/visual, presentations, registrations, voting, etc.
- Coordinate LID projects (AIS, Ambassador, High-Water, etc.)
- Coordinate with hired contractors for projects
- Answer emails and phone calls
- Take notes and report on meetings
- Track financial information including accounting for expenses
- Coordinate with the county for determining assessment information
- Complete applications, required documentation and track information for grant funding from the DNR
- Familiar with email, Outlook, Word, and Excel are a plus.

**Following is an update on recent LID activities:**

1. **AIS:** The LSLID received the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Partnership Grant from Morrison County. The grant provides: a survey to target the locations of AIS (\$3,500.00), to fund the repair of flooded signage at the West DNR Access, (\$200.00), and to provide chemical and scuba diver treatment of EWM at the NW bay, (\$5000,00). Please note that if any property owner does not want the treatment to occur adjacent to their property, they need to notify the LSLID with their name and property address, at either PO Box 394, Motley, MN 56466 or at LSLIDBD@gmail.com.
2. **Ambassador Program:** This year the LSLID has hired Ambassadors who will be staffing the East Scandia Valley Township Access only, until the West DNR Access is opened because of flooding. Ambassadors greet and educate visitors at the access to inform them of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and the requirements for cleaning their boats and trailers before they enter the lake and exit the lake.
3. **Communications:** We have continued to improve communications with the following -
  - A mailing was sent to property owners in January 2020 and several electronic newsletters have been sent to subscribers to provide an update on activities.
  - Several LID Board of Director meetings have been held. Meetings are announced on the website, held at a local location or online, are open to the public, and notes are posted on the website.
  - The website is our official source of information and meeting announcements, and includes information on all Board and LID meetings, engineering reports, financial information, and information of interest.
4. **High Water Project:** The goal of the high-water project is to determine a solution to the high-water problem that is the most feasible, cost-effective, and timely, and will minimize ongoing maintenance and future operating costs. While we have some disappointing news to share, we continue to move forward to work on a permanent long-term solution.

**Following is background on the High-Water project from the last several months:**

- Last summer (2019) the LSLID announced a plan to pump water to an infiltration site at a gravel pit to the NE of the lake. Infiltration held many advantages with cost and viability for permitting.
- After approval at the Annual Meeting and through the Fall, the LID, with the engineering firm of Widseth, developed more detailed plans, including a route from the lake to the infiltration site. Letters of Intent were obtained from the property owners at the pumping site and along the route to the infiltration site.
- This past winter we learned that there was a lack of consensus with the owners of the gravel pit for the use of the infiltration area. Given this lack of consensus, and at the suggestion of an adjacent property owner, we moved the design of the infiltration basin to an area east of the gravel pit (East Site). Drafting of documentation for permitting began and a draft of the Operations and Maintenance Plan was completed. The LID and Widseth held meetings and corresponded with neighboring property owners to the project.
- The LID issued a discretionary Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) on February 24, 2020 regarding the need for an Environmental Impact Statement, which included hundreds of pages of detail. During a 30-day comment period thirteen written comments were received from agencies and from the public.
- The LID and Widseth met and corresponded with neighboring property owners to the project and worked to obtain flowage easements. This was made more difficult with increasing wet conditions on their property along with a coordinated effort with a group opposing the pumping project.

**Project Update and Recent Board Actions**

- On April 10, 2020, the LSLID Board voted to delay the issuance of the Finding of Facts, Conclusions and Record of Decision for the EAW to no later than June 30, 2020.
- With further meetings with down gradient property owners, it was then determined that the LID would not be able to obtain needed flowage easements from key property owners for the East site. For this reason, we believed that the infiltration site to the east of the gravel pit was no longer viable as a primary infiltration location. At this same time, we received contact from the owners of the gravel pit and we were informed that they were now in agreement for the use of the gravel pit for infiltration.
- On May 16th at the LID Board Meeting, the LSLID voted to withdraw the EAW. The reasons for withdrawing the EAW included: 1) the LSLID would be exploring another water deposit site (i.e. gravel pit); 2) the LSLID needed to gather more data and conduct more testing in the area and 3) the LSLID would be working with adjacent property owners.

- In the weeks following the May 16th Board action, we held meetings to explore the gravel pit again as an infiltration site. The LSLID had positive conversations with the owners of the gravel pit infiltration area. However, a group that includes a few lake shore owners and Scandia Valley property owners to the NE of the lake that opposes the High-Water Outlet Control project, were able to mobilize property owners that were necessary for the use of this site, to block signage of agreements.
- The LID also received a call from Representative Kresha stating that the group opposing the High-Water Outlet Control project contacted Rep Kresha asking him to oppose the bill that included funding of up to \$2.275 million for the project for Lake Shamineau. Because there was not consensus for our project the Representative could no longer support the Lake Shamineau bill. In addition, we were forwarded a letter from the DNR that included signatures, which the DNR had received from the same group of individuals indicating that they had committed not to give flowage easements and that they opposed the project.
- At the LSLID Board meeting on the evening of June 1, the Board approved action to 1) alter the High-Water Outlet project away from infiltration in the NE part of the lake and 2) determine alternative water deposit locations. ***With this action, the LSLID Board has not abandoned the High-Water Outlet project but will instead be determining an alternative water deposit location.***

#### **Next Steps - Where do we go from here?**

- The LID Board is discussing options for alternative deposit sites. We are meeting with a project team made up of commercial and residential property owners, and with the DNR, Soil/Water and others.
  - We have received many good ideas and options that will be explored over the next couple of weeks. At that time, viable options will be vetted against our goals of determining a solution that is most feasible, cost-effective, and timely and will minimize ongoing maintenance and future operating costs.
  - While we also continue to explore emergency water removal options, we are focusing our efforts on a long-term solution for reduction to lake waters.
  - We will be working hard on a solution as well as updates on the project, cost, and schedule information for our Annual Meeting in August.
5. **Preventing Inflows to Lake Shamineau:** On June 9, the Morrison County Board approved the funding and the oversight of the "Turn off the Faucet" project which creates an impoundment system to minimize inflows to Lake Shamineau and to return the Scandia Valley watershed to its natural flow. We want to recognize the work of the Scandia Valley Township, Morrison County, Soil and Water, the DNR and especially the Emergency Task Force to achieve public consensus. We greatly appreciate all their efforts.
6. **DNR and Grant Funding:** Recently, two Board members were invited to an online meeting by Bob Meier, DNR Assistant Commissioner, and Dan Lais, Regional Hydrologist. The DNR officials communicated that they want to work with us and be advocates. In addition, they stated that they are committed to remaining engaged for an effective solution and assist with hurdles. We have received information that the DNR may be able to provide additional grant funding in the amount of \$52,000 for pre-construction services. In addition, we remain hopeful that we will be able to obtain grant funding through the State Flood Mitigation Grant if the legislature approves funds in the bonding bill.

#### **Other:**

- Visit the LID Website for up to date information including meeting minutes and other materials.
- Send your email address to [LSLIDBD@gmail.com](mailto:LSLIDBD@gmail.com) to subscribe to our electronic newsletter.
- Make sure your mailing address is up to date with the Morrison County Auditor's Office as we use the County property information for our mailings.
- The next page includes summary results of the 2020 Lake Shamineau Association High-Water Impact Survey. It illustrates the wide range of damages and shares the perspectives of many property owners.

Respectively,

*Bob Koll, Rick Rosar, Cindy Kevern, Fred Comb, Ardis Sandstrom*

Board of the Lake Shamineau Lake Improvement District

<https://minnesotawaters.org/lakeshamineau/LID/>

## **Results Summary of the Lake Shamineau Association 2020 Lake Shamineau High-Water Impact Survey**

Spring 2020 brought record high water levels to Lake Shamineau, 1278.2 feet above sea level which is 3.1 feet above the ordinary high-water level (1275.1 feet). The non-profit Lake Shamineau Association conducted a survey of property owners seeking information on the impact of the current high water. The survey was distributed via known email addresses and as a print insert in the [Spring 2020 Lake Shamineau Association Newsletter](#). Responses were accepted from May 12 to May 30, 2020. A lake property address was required to ensure only one response per property. Responses could be submitted online through a Google survey form or a paper copy mailed to the Lake Association. There were 132 responses accepted (115 online, 17 paper)

Questions asked about how owners' properties have been affected and damages sustained, economic impacts and actions taken. There were three questions that were also asked on a 2017 survey for comparison.

Along with cabin/home damages, many respondents listed other effects on outbuildings and the land, including access to their property, driveways, landscaping, trees, shoreline, aquatic vegetation, water clarity, and utilities. One disturbing effect is to wells and septic systems.

The estimated cumulative dollars spent on response to high water in the last five years was reported by 115 respondents to be over \$1.7 million. Responses from 116 properties estimate dollars lost from damages and/or reduced property value to be \$10.279 billion. The taxable market value assessed by Morrison County was perceived as higher than the actual market value by 65% of respondents.

Comparing the 2020 survey responses to the 2017 responses indicated more properties have suffered. Also, 79% rate effects as serious compare to 51% three years earlier.

All except 3.8% of respondents have taken some type of civic action in response to the high water by keeping themselves informed, attending public hearings, and submitting comments. Over half have contacted lawmakers and public officials, 10.5% have donated to the emergency task force and 15.8% have volunteered their help. The full 24-page report on the survey which includes many extra comments can be viewed or downloaded from the Lake Shamineau Association website:  
<https://minnesotawaters.org/lakeshamineau/wp-content/uploads/sites/106/2020/06/2020-Survey-Results-Report-COMPLETE.pdf>