

2007 Peppermill Lake District Budget Hearing & Annual Meeting

Lake districts hold an Annual budget hearing and meeting at which some board members are elected, a budget is discussed, voted on and possibly amended. The tax levy and special charges also are decided. Notice of these meetings is mailed (at least 14 days in advance) to all

residents and property owners in the Lake District, with an agenda and proposed budget. Meeting Notices are posted in the district as well as in local newspapers. **Non-resident property owners in the district are eligible to vote** as well as residents (see other side). Please Join us!!

Budget Note

Lake Districts function under most of the same laws as other local units of governments with respect to annual budgets:

1. A budget hearing is held at which the board provides their best estimates of next year's expenses and answers questions.
2. After a budget is approved at that meeting, the elected board uses the allocated funds to meet approved lake management objectives, following two basic legal guidelines (a) not to exceed available funds and (b) carry out lake management in the best way with the funds available.

Often to comply with the second guideline (b) it is necessary to move funds from one budget category to another.

While moving monies between budget categories usually requires a vote of the board, such actions are a normal process in lake district operation. In fact, a responsible elected board should be expected to make such decisions routinely as necessary to better take care of a lake.

Consistent with these guidelines, the 2008 budget is provided using a limited number of major categories, as opposed to listing each small item separately.

2008 Budget Explanation

Estimated 2008 Communication costs include the web site, 5 newsletters (4 quarterly board meetings plus Annual Meeting), newspaper notice for the Annual meeting, with inflation adjustment. Annual directory will be paid for by the Lake Association, as it was originally.

Significant Change: Aquatic Plant Management cost estimates for 2008 reflect a major increase based upon greater plant growth and density this 2007 season (and the end of 2006). As in many other local and regional lakes, this increase is generally understood to be due to shorter ice time (longer growing season). perhaps lower lake levels and warmer water over a longer period, both this year and the last three seasons.

With goals of maintaining navigation channels, controlling nutrients and enhancing edges for predators, proposed are the following: (1) three general harvesting sessions (rather than 2 in previous years), (2) 4 chara mound removals (also an increase), (3) spring and fall Eurasian watermilfoil (EWMF) harvesting sessions, (4) chemical EWMF treatment spring and fall (as before, but increased acreage) as well as, (5) barley straw bag placement under private piers (as before). The plant management budget also includes a chemical treatment permit fee for 2008 and costs to submit a grant to the Wisconsin Waterways Commission to offset Eurasian watermilfoil treatment expenses (not a high probability).

This is an increase in the intensity of plant management, BUT yet a continuation of our balanced, long-term approach. This integrated combination of treatment/harvesting was endorsed by our Lake Advisory Group (LAG) experts. Our lake suffers from being too nutrient rich—too fertile. The key is nutrient reduction. The scientific rationale is very simple: (1) too much reliance on chemical treatment causes dying plants to decay, increasing nutrient levels, producing pond scum algae and poorer water quality, (2) removing/harvesting plants reduces nutrients and works against algae and plant density overall. Alternatively, (3) harvesting too many plants, which otherwise utilize (or tie up) nutrients, in turn thus increases nutrients to feed more algae, which also negatively impacts water clarity and quality. **Finding a sustainable balance for our lake will take patience by everyone (no simple solutions) and adjustments from year-to-year, even if the climate were stable.**

While details remain to be worked out at the autumn LAG meeting, there may be an attempt to manage the east and west end of the lake differently in chemical treatment and harvesting.

Aeration expenses: electricity plus maintenance.

Monitoring Services/Supply costs include supplies to monitor dissolved oxygen (DO) during winter (to reduce electricity cost and optimize aerator use), nutrient analyses of harvested plants, and incidental costs for other lake survey work.

Insurance costs reflect an anticipated increase.

Contingency fund—For unanticipated expenses, i.e., replacement of aerator motors, emergencies.

The 2007 Unexpended balance estimate reflects projected expenses for remainder of 2007. **Special Charges** are proposed to increase from \$100 to \$150 for each riparian owner (originally \$125).

<u>EXPENSES</u>	2007 (Approved)	2008 (Proposed)
Communications	\$ 1,165.....	\$ 550
Newsletters, mailings, postage, Notices Website, Directory, Meetings		
Aquatic Plant Management	\$15,005.....	\$23,340
DNR Permits, Harvesting, EWMF Treatment, Barley Straw, Grants		
Aeration	\$ 1,150.....	\$ 1,250
Electricity, Repair, Signs		
Insurance	\$ 1,350.....	\$ 1,500
Monitoring Services/Supplies	\$ 1,025.....	\$ 500
Signs, Fish Survey, Water analyses, Plant Survey, EWMF ID Training, Plant Analysis. DO Meter Expense		
Miscellaneous	\$ 395.....	\$ 150
WAL Dues		
Contingency fund	\$ 2,500.....	\$ 2,500
TOTALS	\$22,590	\$29,790

<u>INCOME</u>	2007 (Approved)	2008** (Proposed)
General Property Tax Levy.....	\$8,687.....	\$15,000
Special Charges.....	\$7,600.....	\$11,400
Interest.....	\$ 50.....	\$ 50
Unexpended balance	\$ 6,253.....	\$ 3,340
TOTALS	\$22,590	\$29,790

**In the six years of our lake district this is the first year when we have had to increase our Tax Levy and Special Charges. The board views this increase as a reflection of the need to ACTIVELY manage the lake under increasingly challenging conditions. We encourage those interested in this management process to participate in the open and well-publicized Lake Advisory Group meetings held at least twice a year.