

White Birch Lakes
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2022
(Meeting conducted through GoToMeeting.com and at the Clubhouse)

I. Call to Order:

President Boos called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Board Members Present: President Boos; Directors Blaisdell, Ostrowski, Brandle, Dombrowski, Bryant and Baker also, Secretary/Treasurer Lisa Trojanowski and Manager Michelle Waters

Board Members Attending by Teleconference/GoToMeeting: None

Board Members/Others Absent: None

Note: There were approximately 5 Members listening to the meeting through GoToMeeting and approximately 18 Members in Attendance at the Clubhouse.

The Invocation was given by President Boos.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present and listening.

II. Approval of Minutes:

(1) Director Brandle moves to approve the minutes from the September Board Meeting, 2nd by Director Ostrowski. All Ayes, motion carried.

III. Secretary/Treasurer's Report:

(3) Director Brandle moves to approve the financial reports for October as presented, subject to the Auditor's approval, 2nd by Director Dombrowski. All Ayes, motion carried.

There were no Accounts Payables for November to present at this time.

V. President's Report: President Boos reported the following:

“Camping season has ended for most. A few diehards and hunters are still here. Hunters keep in mind, there is no hunting in White Birch. You may refer to the Hunting Policy date 2013.”

“We thank the staff for their efforts in making this another memorable season.”

“Smokey the Bear has a new caretaker who is the fire hazard signs. Thank you, Kim Mitchell for volunteering.”

“The Board continues to work on the new C&R proposal and the R2A zoning issue of which both are on the agenda.”

VI. Manager's Report: Michelle Waters reported the following:

“Good morning, everyone.

I would like to acknowledge Jess for being on call for 5 weeks straight during the hiring and training process for our new maintenance person. Thank you, Jess!

The gate repair is finally finished. They were out yesterday and replaced the last part and painted the new arm.

Our fall fish planting was done on Nov 1st. I would like to thank Dave Conley and Steve Bryant for watching the planting.

The large oak tree was cut down at the gate. The tree service did a great job cleaning up.

Jess is working on Lake Rd reclaiming the ditch. I would like to remind everyone that you are responsible for keeping your culverts cleared.

I have 3 small storage sites left open if anyone needs one.

I have a couple reminders for our members

- 1 Please do not leave trash at the dumpster site in the campground. There are trashcans here at the clubhouse you can utilize for small garbage disposal.

- 2 Please slow down when encountering the grader and dump truck on our roads. I have had reports that vehicles are getting too close and flying by our operators, making them feel unsafe, they cannot stop on a dime and do not maneuver like a passenger vehicle.

Pear Way also had new electric poles installed last week.”

VI. Maintenance Report: No report was given

VII. Committee Reports:

Activities Committee: Marney Frank reported the following,

“October was a busy month. We had about 70 – 75 people for the color Hay Ride, on October 15, in spite of the cool weather. I would like to thank my activity committee and their spouses, Dick Hassberger, Jess, Nancy & Carl Buchholz, John and Debbie McDonald for all their help, as well as everyone who came and participated. Kim and Laura with help from their spouses and others got wood and started a bonfire to help people stay warm. Dick Hassberger was very kind and generous to drive his tractor and pull the wagon. Jess was very helpful making sure the wagon was cleaned up and ready for the hayride. Nancy and Carl Buchholz made and donated a huge pot of delicious Chili. Carl played music for people to listen to. Jim Ostrowski picked up and donated the straw for the hayride. Chloe Ostrowski cooked the hot dogs. John and Debbie McDonald helped Nancy and Carl get the stairs they had made for the wagon to the campground and back. Carl is storing the stairs in his pole barn to keep them in good condition for next time. The colors were beautiful to look at that day. This year the colors have been spectacular. Bingo was on October 22, with 12 people in attendance. A good time was had by all. Thank you to my son John for setting up, calling the Bingo numbers and cleaning up afterwards.

The Halloween Party and Trunk or Treat was on October 29. We had a really good turnout with about 50 children plus at least 1 or 2 of their parents or grandparents. The weather was really nice that day. I really appreciated all the help I received that day. Kim and Laura Mitchell helped set up in the morning. Laura cooked the hot dogs. Char Lieblich, Rose and Linda Boos, Kim Mitchell, Lyndsay Mack, Willa Coombe, Laura Mitchell, Dawn Niemeyer, Lisa Trojanowski, Bob Mitchell, Ray Thompson, Jess and Michele all pitched in and helped make things go smoothly with whatever needed to be done. Without people like we had step up, things wouldn’t have turned out as good as they did. I really appreciated everyone who helped in one way or another. Thank you to all who came and participated in the events from bringing and passing out candy, or to just being there to have fun and enjoy the day. It takes everyone getting involved and participating to make things a success and run smoothly.

The next activity will be the Thanksgiving Dinner on November 19 at 4:30 P.M. at the Clubhouse. We will be having turkey, ham, dressing, gravy plus the dishes people are bringing to pass. Some sound really yummy that have been listed on the sign-up sheet so far. If you haven’t signed up already, please do so soon so we know how many tables, chairs, etc. to set up for.

Bingo will be held on Nov. 26th from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

The Christmas Party will be held on December 10 from 4:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M. with a Christmas Carol Sing a Long following from 6:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

We will be having Sloppy Joes, Potato Cheddar Bacon Tots, Boneless Chicken Chunks, Barbeque Cocktail Sausages, Swedish Meatballs, Assorted Puff Pastries, Veggies and Dip, Cake and Punch. Laura Mitchell has volunteered to make a Vegetable Lasagna. Please feel free to bring your favorite Christmas cookie or dessert to share. If you want to bring the recipe for those who sample your goodies so they can get a new recipe for their family. If anyone wants to bring something else to share that night, please feel free to.

When we set up the Christmas Decorations on Nov. 27th there will be a tree for Mittens and Hats to be donated to the Farwell Schools for children who need them. Please bring them in and set them under that tree. It is the tree set up on a table. Thank you.”

C&R Committee: Marie Sherry reported the following:

“I just wanted to give a quick shout out to the committee members Nadine Grabowski, Ron Youngblood and our Board Liaison Jenny Baker. There was a lot of work into actually meeting our deadline to get this to you at this meeting. I also want to also thank 3 stakeholders, Dick and Carol Hassberger and Tim Vajcner, they gave me kind of a gut check on this.

Policy and Procedure Committee: Marie Sherry reported the following:

“Policy has been relatively inactive, as you know, we are still aware that there is a charge for us to talk about noise and we will get to it eventually.”

Campground Committee: Debra McDonald reported the following,

“On October 22, Kim painted the power box while I repainted a few lines.” On October 29, I had help from Craig Davis, Tom Mitchell, Char and John Lieblich, Kim and Bob Mitchell and Linda and Tom Boos, to stack the tables under the pavilion. I would like to request a picnic table to be put by the children’s playground. So, parents have a place to sit and watch their children and use for cornhole as well. Campers are removing everything from their lots, which is great, but they are shoving it on their storage site around the camper and it looks terrible. It should not be allowed. This service is for the campers. They should have to remove the rest. We want to have a meeting with Kevin to talk about possible changes. #1 Raise rates to \$100 and \$10 for power. And #2 Change Storage from October 1- April 3 only. We need more time to clean up the campground, this year the grass was so high and only 2 weeks to get things ready is not enough”

EPC & Conservation / Grounds Committee: Bob Mitchell reported the following,

“There was a total of 9 permits, 3 off season camping permits, 1 carport and shed, 4 tree removals, 1 garage, 1 culvert, 1 fence and 1 contiguous lot. Steve, Bill Frank and Debbie and myself, on November 2, drove the whole Association and wrote down the violations and this is what we have, we have 20 campers still on lots. Some are off now and I need to go back through and see which ones. The letters are going to go out this week. We have 43 boats, 35 utility trailers, 16 blite, (stuff all over) 19 sheds and temporary garages, 15 frames of temporary garages, dog kennels and things like that and we had 58 misc. grills, chairs, wheel barrels, small storage containers and things like that. We had 7 vehicles, 3 fences and 2 tents. The letters to the campers will be going out this week, I am going to drive around in the next day or two and see what is left. Other than that, the committee will just wait and see what the Board wants to do about writing letters to everyone else.” The goal of driving around was to see who was in violation and there was no differential between homeowners and vacant lot members.

Election Committee: Teresa Stephens reported the following,

“We just had our meeting in October to go over dates for next year and changed the forms to reflect those dates and a couple minor things to make it easier to follow. Our next meeting will not be until June.”

Safety Committee: Steve Biechele reported the following,

“Just a follow-up on the incident report I get every month for Lincoln twp. It went up from 247 to 319. Most of them were property checks which is a seasonal thing and the other reason is traffic monitoring.

Technology Committee: Director Blaisdell reported,

Jessica sent an email that was read by Director Blaisdell,” I happened to come across a woman who works for the companies that install cell phone towers and according to her, towers do not need to be within a certain range of a paved road. They can be erected at no cost to the landowner but the landowner will be compensated for having the equipment on their property. She said that we would just need to call the company that installs the towers and request one be put up and they then get in touch with the cell providers to have them cover the cost of the equipment and service. I found this all out when she came into my work and we were chatting. I believe she said the name of the company is US Tower, but give me a little time to do some more research or to talk to her the next time she is in.” This is a little conflicting to what Director Blaisdell was told, so they will research this further. Both Director Blaisdell and Jessica have busy work schedules which makes this process a little slower.

VIII. Comments from the Floor:

1. Tim Vajcner, Lot 034, “Two quick items, 1 I am opposed to Lincoln Twp eliminating the R2A zoning and just request that the Board to move forward with that position. The second topic, is the upcoming C&R changes and the voting that comes with that framework. The C&R language is very vague on how the actual framework is developed. I would encourage the Board to fully understand and publish to members how and what framework will be used for the upcoming C&R. One topic is the eligible vote, so does each member just get one vote or does the member with multiple lots get multiple votes and if so, how would contiguous lots be treated? So eligible votes in one unclear coming out of the language and second when the votes get counted up Yes votes to affirm a C&R change, what quantity of yes votes is needed? In the past it has been generically said 50% plus 1, but of what. Is it majority of votes received or is it majority yes of eligible voters? There could be many eligible voters not vote. Just ask that that be fully communicated to all of us before the formal vote process starts. And please in the next C&R update, please provide a little bit more definition because what is there right now is extremely vague. In 2002 language on this voting methodology is slightly different verbiage than all prior C&R’s. So, there was a change in the 2002 C&R’s. there must have been a point of the change. Personally, I view it as a majority of the votes received. So, if you don’t vote you don’t get a say.”
2. Bob Cooley, Lot 419, “I would just like to encourage the Board to please get in touch with Lincoln Twp and please keep the R2A, it doesn’t make sense to get rid of it.”
3. Stan Achram, Lot 126, Stan gave Lisa a copy Lincoln Twp Planning Commission Ordinance #40 where he had highlighted Section 5 Conflict of Interest. He stated, “We have some people that are on Boards on Lincoln Twp and some here, so read that.”
4. Deb McDonald, Lot 038, “Going around with the EPC, the biggest problem we had was that lot numbers are not out there, and trying to figure out what lot belongs to who. So, if everyone could please put lot numbers out, even if it is a little tiny thing nailed to a tree. Homeowners and vacant lots. That was the hardest part of the whole day. I think that is what took the longest, trying to figure out who went with what.”
5. Dawn Holzer, Lot 1101, “I do also agree with the R2A, I know that a past president Sharon Bridges worked very hard for us to get that designation and I don’t see why or now that it is being brought up now. Just leave it as it was.”

6. Deb Gerish, Lot 372, "I agree with R2A, I also would like to that I went on the hayride and I walked the trail at the campground, I appreciate all the work that everybody been doing and I really appreciate that people are working so hard to get campers off the lots and cleaning up the lots."
7. Bill Frank, Lot 227, "After the last side by side accident, Bob Pelfrey called the sheriff's office and we got no response. I just thought that was terrible. I also would like to say that I understand the reasons to remove R2A and I agree with it."
8. Bob Mitchell, Lot 477, "Everybody knows that the house when we first come into the Association, with the broken windows. I have been working with this lady and she has agreed to sell the place for \$35,000.00 and I talked to a couple people that flip houses and thought they might want to do something with it. So, I encourage everybody here that if you know somebody that might be interested in buying it and flipping a house let me know and I will contact this lady with their name and number and maybe we can get it sold and get something done with that house."
9. Teresa Stephens, Lot 1323, "Regarding the R2A, I don't think that I understand or have actually heard what the benefit to White Birch it would be to remove it and just go back to R2. I encourage the Board to decline requesting that to be changed back. We need support from the Board, because I do not see anything that has been working this long or for however long change. If it is not broken, why are we trying to change it."
10. Steve Biechele, Lot 1321, "I agree with keeping the R2A designation for White Birch."
11. Deb Gerish, Lot 372, "This whole thing about somebody driving their side by side and rolling it, none of us can fix stupid. If people are going to drive 55mph, we can put stop signs on every corner but if they are not going to abide by it, we cannot make them listen."
12. Bill Frank, Lot 227, "That is the importance of a police report, the police office should have shown up on the scene and if necessary issued citations."
13. Marie Sherry, Lot 713, "I would also like to encourage the Board to reach out to Lincoln Twp and ask them to not change our R2A and keep it the same. And also, I have a question, had Lincoln Twp updated their master plan? Because usually, when you look at zoning map changes and zoning changes like this it is done as part of the master planning process and the master planning process is supposed to reach out to the different communities and hold public forum to see what vision the community wants before they start making changing to the zoning ordinances. I think that that point needs to be made to Lincoln Twp."
14. Steve Bryant, Lot 001, In 2017, not positive of the date, there was a revision of Lincoln Twp and that is when the R2A was brought up. The reason it was brought up was because they were in the new proposals that they were not going to allow camping more than 30 days now they made a revision in the township that they can all camp from May 1 to November 30th. Therefore, there is no need for a R2A or an R2, whichever way you want to go with it. But there is no since in having 2 designations if they are the same. That is the whole purpose about talking about dropping it. Like I said he was on the Planning committee and one of the first comments brought up was to make it all R2A. You can do either one but there is no sense in having both say the same thing."

IX. Unfinished Business:

In regards to the Agenda item of "Common Property Taxes Update," We are still waiting for the judge to decide. Lisa stated that she had asked for an update from Paul in fear that the case had been lost because so much time has passed and his response was "about a month ago I received a notice from the tribunal about Tara Hovey no longer being counsel for the township (she's a judge now). That all it said nothing else. From that, would guess that the case isn't lost. But it has been a seriously long time too. I'll discuss contacting the tribunal with the partners at my firm and see what they think."

In regards to the Agenda item "2023-2024 Budget Review," A proposed 23-24 Budget and recommendations from the Finance Committee on how to absorb the short fall we will have in the upcoming year was presented to the Board. The committee has given quite a few recommendations in order to not have to raise assessments. There will be a shortage of \$26,496.00 at this time. The Board needs to approve this budget by next month in order to have it completed before statements are sent out. This item will be revisited to finalize the budget next month.

In regards to the Agenda item, "Communication-Website" Director Baker stated that she had sent out our first email update a few weeks ago and so far, the feedback has been positive. There is no schedule at this time on when the next one will be sent out. The website developer was unavailable last week and we have just started to work on the website. A copy of the home page was presented to the Board. There was discussion on different items that some members would like to see. This is an ongoing project and we will continue with updates.

In regards to the Agenda item "R2A Discussion," The Board began discussion on the topic of R2A and whether or not a letter is to be sent to retain R2A. President Boos presented a letter to be sent to the Lincoln Twp Planning commission for discussion only. Director Ostrowski presented a different version of a letter and read it to the members.

(4) Director Ostrowski moves to approve the letter presented by Director Ostrowski and send it on behalf of White Birch Lakes to Lincoln Twp Planning Commission and the Lincoln Twp Board of Trustees. 2nd Director Dombrowski. Ayes, President Boos, Director Brandle, Director Dombrowski, Director Baker, Director Blaisdell, Director Ostrowski, Nay Director Bryant, motion carried.

The letter will be emailed and Director Ostrowski will present it at the Lincoln Twp meeting.

In regards to the Agenda item “C & R Discussion,” A new revised packet that Marie Sherry and the committee has worked on was presented to the Board for approval to send to the attorney. Marie and the Board went through the different changes line by line. Marie was instructed to make some changes before this is presented to the attorney.

(5) Director Bryant moves that everyone needs a permit to cut any tree over 3 inches in diameter dead or alive. 2nd Director Blaisdell, Director Blaisdell, Director Bryant, Director Brandle, Director Ostrowski and President Boos Ayes, Director Dombrowski and Director Baker Nay, motion carried.

X. New Business:

In regards to the Agenda item, “Ratify Email Motion for Tree Removal Bid at Front Gate.”

(6) Director Brandle moves to ratify the email motion to hire Timberman to remove the tree at the front gate, not to exceed \$800. 2nd Director Bryant. All Ayes, motion carried.

In regards to the Agenda item, “Employee Gift Cards for Christmas.”

(7) Director Ostrowski moves to purchase a Gift Card in the amount of \$100.00 for each employee working for us at this time., 2nd by Director Blaisdell. All Ayes, motion carried.

In regards to the Agenda item, “Approval of Revised 2023 Application for Absentee Ballots and Policy,” A proposed revised copy of 23-24 ballots and policy was presented to the Board. Teresa Stephens stated that the committee meet and made changes to coincide with 2023 dates and the Board will take a look at it and table this until Decembers board meeting. Teresa also cautioned the Board that if we are going to have a special election, we do have to notify them through first class mail and it would behoove the Board to do this during the June mailed Birch Bark or when the dues go out. The committee will not meet again until June 2023.

In regards to the Agenda item, “EPC Direction for Vacant Lots/Camping Policy,” The Board’s direction is that a letter will go out to the members that are in violation explaining what they are in violation for and ask them to become compliant. The decision is to leave the enforcement up to the township at this time. Bob Mitchell will draft a letter and will be presented to the Board before being sent out.

XI. Additional Comments from the Floor:

15. Steve Biechele, Lot 1321, “If the Association is going to pay for some food at Christmas and other holidays, I think that some sort of food should be provided at the Annual meeting also. Another thing camping fees, Dawn was talking a little while ago about a shortage in the budget, I think I mentioned a few months ago, camping fees should be raised \$10-\$15 more just to help with that. As far as the fine structure, sitting back here it sounds very vindictive. We don’t know about the letters and other things you are getting just sitting back here it sounds like that. Pick some big items that really are an eyesore, as much as I don’t like blue tarps, I don’t think that should be one of the things we should be fined on. So, if it is a camper, a trailer, a boat whatever, those are the things that should be on the fine structure.”
16. Laura Mitchell, Lot 589, “If I heard correctly, you said you are not going to put in the C&R’s more than 1 camper on properties under an acre and a half. Are we not going to be able to enforce this is it is not in our C&R’s? Has the township enforced this in the past, because it seems like last year they did not. It is not just the campers its all the 4 wheelers and stuff. But if we do not have this in our C&R’s, how are we even going to control it?”
17. Steve Bryant, Lot 001, “I would agree that. I think we have to have it in our C&R’s that it is an acre and a half.”

The Board went into closed session at 2:25 pm

(8) Director Bryant moves to return to open session at 2:35 pm, 2nd Director Dombrowski. All Ayes, motion carried.

XII. Closed Session:

Employee matters

(9) Brandle made a motion to ratify the motions made in closed session and to adjourn closed session at 2:35 pm, 2nd Director Ostrowski. All Ayes, motion carried.

(10) Director Ostrowski moves to adjourn the meeting at 2:36 pm, 2nd by Director Brandle. All Ayes, motion carried.

Submitted by,

Lisa Trojanowski Secretary/Treasurer