

THE BIRCH BARK



White Birch Lakes Recreational Association
4730 Lake Road Farwell, MI 48622
Office: (989)588-7169 Clubhouse: (989)588-2853
Web: www.whitebirch.org

DECEMBER 2024

2024-2025 Board of Directors

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------|--|
| President | Tim Boos | timboos@yahoo.com |
| 1 st VP | Dawn Holzer | muleman2318@gmail.com |
| 2 nd VP | Kevin Dombrowski | kd460@sbcglobal.net |
| Director | Marie Sherry | marie4wblra@gmail.com |
| Director | Jim Ostrowski | valmarco@charter.net |
| Director | Jenny Baker | jen.e.baker@outlook.com |
| Director | Donnie Stanley | Donovan.Stanley1987@gmail.com |

WBL Staff

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------|--|
| Manager | Michelle Waters | admin@whitebirch.org |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Lisa Trojanowski | ecoffice@whitebirch.org |
| Clubhouse | Georgia Romine | Kathy Jerred |
| Maintenance | Mark Mozak | |
| Maintenance | Joe Worrall | |
| Campground | Claudia Pelfery | |
| Safety | Bob Pelfery | |

AFTER HOURS MAINTENANCE/SAFETY (989) 588-7066 IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN AN EMERGENCY, THE MAIN TELEPHONE NUMBER IS, 989-539-7166



COFFEE TALK

Every Friday

In the Clubhouse

9am to 11:00am

Donuts \$1.00



HOURS OF OPERATION WINTER CLUBHOUSE HOURS

Starting Sept 30,2024

8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Monday, Tuesday & Thursday
Closed Wednesday
8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Friday & Saturday
12:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. Sunday

SECRETARY-TREASURER OFFICE HOURS

8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday
Closed Wednesday
8:00 A.M to 9:45 A.M. the 2nd Saturday of the month
Closed Sunday

MANAGER HOURS

8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
Closed Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday

SWIMMING POOL HOURS

9:00 AM TO 3:30 PM Monday, Tuesday & Thursday
Closed Wednesday
9:00 AM to 7:30 PM Friday & Saturday
12:00 P.M. to 4:00 PM Sunday

YOU HAVE A MEDICAL OR FIRE EMERGENCY, PLEASE CALL 911.



Per WBLRA policies, Members must be "In Good Standing" (current on assessments) before using any of the amenities. If a Member is NOT in "good standing," our employees with direction from the Board will turn them away. If a Clubhouse Attendant turns a Member away, it is based upon a list which is updated Every Friday afternoon before 4pm.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Board Meeting | Dec 14 & Jan 11 | 10:00 am Clubhouse |
| Christmas Party | Dec 14 th | 4 pm- Clubhouse |
| New Years Eve Party | Dec 31 | 7 pm - Clubhouse |



Campfire and Seasonal Wood

If you see any downed trees or limbs on the side of the roads they can be taken by the Members for campfires or seasonal firewood. Please do NOT enter other Members lots unless you have permission from the owner.

Fire Danger

Please use extreme caution and follow the Danger Rating system posted by Smokey at the Entrance/Exit

School is in Session!!!
Please SLOW DOWN!

Drive like these are your children or grandchildren!!

Let's make sure we ALL get where we are going safely!

Trespassing

Please be aware that, by leaving WBLRA by any other means other than the Entrance/Exit, you are trespassing on private property. Please be aware that by opening trail, you are encouraging others who do not own property to come in on these unauthorized trails. The only lawful means of ingress & egress into our Association is the Entrance/Exit gates on White Birch Lane at the front of our Association. We encourage all Members to use the gates exclusively, as intended. Please DO NOT enter property that does not belong to



you.

SNOW

With snow beginning to fall, please be aware that it is Members responsibility to keep their mailboxes cleared. The mail carrier will not deliver to a blocked box.

Recreation

A current copy of the DNR ORV handbook is available in the office. Let's all have a great time and enjoy ourselves, safely. Slow down at stop signs and watch for others. Remember children 15 and under must have adult supervision. Please refer to Michigan.gov/DNR.



"Slow down you move to fast, you gotta make the moment last."



If you plan on Winter camping, please be sure to call the Clubhouse at (989)588-2853 during business hours (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM) to arrange to have the power turned on to your particular site. Late calls will cost an additional \$25.00. **There is no one on duty evenings or weekends to turn it on**

ATTENTION MEMBERS

Please mark your lots with the lot number to help other Members and/or potential Members to locate lots or in case of emergency such as fire or medical. If you need further information, please contact the office.

Information Station

"Your Destination for Information"

This link should be good for all meetings! Also, because video takes too much data and we would like you to hear the meeting, our meetings are audio only.

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/335630101>

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://meet.goto.com/install>

At the December Board Meeting The Board of Directors passed a \$15 increase in Annual Assessments Fees. Assessment Fees will now be \$440. There will also be a \$5 increase in Pavillion/Clubhouse Rental as well as for Boat and Camper Storage beginning for the 25-26 year.

With the ever-changing weather, maintenance may be working out on the roads. Remember these machines are large and do not stop immediately. If you don't see them, they don't see you. Let's be respectful, as they have a job to do.

Drop your speed to match road conditions. Please give the appropriate space. For those in the back... SLOW DOWN!!

Increase your following distance so that you have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you. Don't crowd the snowplow!! Slow and Steady wins the race!

The Bathhouse is closed for the Winter Season. The Clubhouse is still open during winter hours for use and a port a Jon has been placed at the campground.

The Sand/Salt barrels are now out on the corners for members to use if you need a little extra traction.

The dumpsters of been removed from the Campground for the season.

Sand and Salt barrels are now at the Stop signs for the Winter months.

We would like to wish EVERYONE a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

A friendly reminder, we all live and work here and we have noticed an increase in litter. Let's work together to keep our community clean!



THE CLUBHOUSE WILL BE CLOSED ON DECEMBER 25 FOR CHRISTMAS

Just a friendly reminder, all recreational vehicles, campers, trailers or other camping accessories shall be physically removed from any vacant lot as of Oct 31. Things that need to be removed but not limited to are trailers, watercraft, play structures, water tanks, grills, lawn furniture etc. Please refer to WBLRA C&R's. Have a great off season!

Remember not to blow leaves out to the road. It causes road destruction when Maintenance grades. You can burn them (when conditions are favorable) or take them to the old maintenance yard. Thank you

Friendly Reminders:

End of Season Camping will remain as October 31, 2024
Trailers will need to be removed per *C&R's Article V, Section 11, Paragraph 1*, which states that **“Camping will be allowed without the necessity of a permit each year from the beginning of Memorial Day weekend (May) through October 31.”**

Accessories to Remove: but not limited too

Boats, Canoes, Paddle Boats, Kayak's, Dune Buggy's
Grills

Enclosed and Utility trailers

Curtains & Lights

ALL Temporary Structures such as Screened Tents

Water Tanks, Baseball hoops

Play Houses

Garden tools and Mowers

Garbage Cans, Totes

Lincoln Township Ordinance allows 1 trailer per lot

NO MORE than **2** per 1.5-acre parcel

**White Birch Lakes
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2024**

Meeting conducted through GoToMeeting.com and at the Clubhouse)

I. Call to Order:

President Boos called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

Board Members Present: President Boos, Director Baker, Director Dombrowski, Director Holzer, Director Sherry and Director Stanley Director Ostrowski

Secretary/Treasurer Lisa Trojanowski and Manager Michelle Waters

Board Members Attending by Teleconference/GoToMeeting:

Board Members/Others Absent:

Note: There were approximately 2 Members listening to the meeting through GoToMeeting and approximately 7 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. Additions to the Agenda:

- A. Ratify Email Motion for Repairs on the Sterling

III. Approval of Minutes:

- (1) *Director Sherry moves to approve the minutes from the November Board Meeting, 2nd by Director Holzer All Ayes, motion carried.*

IV. Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Lisa Trojanowski reported the following:

- (2) *Director Holzer moves to approve the financial reports for November as presented, subject to the Auditor's approval, 2nd by Director Dombrowski. All Ayes, motion carried.*

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

President's Report December 14, 2024

The decorations in the Clubhouse creates a good Christmas atmosphere. Thanks to all involved. Remember the Christmas party is this afternoon.

As we approach our fiscal year end, I thank this Board and past Boards for being fiscally responsible. Our Balance Sheet as of November 30, 2024 reflects:

| | |
|------------------|------------|
| Operating Cash | \$ 199,291 |
| Contingency Fund | \$ 119,058 |
| Savings 12-m CD | \$ 21,405 |

Savings 12-m CD \$ 116,038
Total \$ 455,339

We are also under budget by 2 %

I am confident this Board and future Boards will continue with the successful operation of White Birch Lake Recreational Association.

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

The Sterling has been returned from the mechanic and the salter has been reinstalled just in time for the rain/ice event that is in the forecast for overnight. Ice is the worst to manage. Mother nature hopefully will help warm up quickly and melt the ice if we get any.

I had a meeting with trapper Chuck about the beaver on White Birch Lakes. He surveyed the beaver hut and walked the edge of the lake. He stated we have 2 beaver dens on this lake and numerous muskrats. He will be trapping the lake after it freezes, if we do not get good ice this year he will do the trapping in the spring. This is a free service until May 1. Trapper Chuck traps for ANR pipeline and Lake of the Pines along with numerous homeowners.

The gate was stuck shut on Thursday, the gate company came out and found a mouse house and the mouse unfortunately didn't know his way around the gears and got stuck in them. The technicians cleaned that up and got the gears freed up and the gate operators are back up and running.

The first snowfall of the year went well with Mark and Joe manning the plowing equipment available at the time. Mark is getting time in the grader and is doing a great job.

The MaintainX program is working very well. Data entry is an ongoing project for me. Thank you for approving this purchase.

Activities Committee: President Boos read a letter from Willa Combe

“To the Board of Directors, WBLRA Our Thanksgiving dinner was a huge success There were approximately 50 people in attendance. A big thank you goes out to all the workers and those that brought food to supplement what was supplied by the board. Our total expenditure of \$ 153.01 was substantially under the authorized total of \$350.00. Sincerely, Willa D. Coombe.” Also, it should be recognized that Richard & Carol Hassberger contributed/donated a cooked ham and turkey for the dinner.

C&R Committee: Director Sherry reported the following:

“I would like to go back to a few years ago when the Policy committee was separate, we did a lot of cataloging and looking at all the policies. I would like to start to bringing that information back, because there are policies out there that are duplicate or confusing. So, anyways I am thinking about bringing those back and working on cleaning those up.”

Campground Committee: Steve Brandle reported the following:

“I noticed when I go through the campground there is an awful lot of traffic. I think it is mostly just people driving around just to have a place to go. But, every once in awhile you see things kind of disturbed, you see tracks going up to trailers and I am not sure if it is the owners checking or if it is people snooping around. Director Dombrowski mentioned that there are a couple residents who drive around on their side by sides and while he has not outright spoke to them, he believes that they are just checking things out. Being observant. He was taking notes today especially with the snow to see if there were any tracks going from trailer to trailer. He did not see anything out of the ordinary except that there was once camper with the cover door unzipped, but he did not see any footprints going up to it. Brandle stated that when we had the big thefts back there, a few years back, when we lost all the propane tanks that it is vehicles driving in. It is not people walking in from the road. It is just people driving up with a truck and a trailer and loading up. I don't know what the answer is., he stated. Director Dombrowski stated that he chains things up and removes anything that can be taken. Brandle suggested that put up a padlocked gate at the entrance of the campground. It would keep all the people that don't belong back there out. It would be a nuisance to have to get out and unlock the gate but it is something to consider.”

EPC Committee: Director Holzer reported the following:

“I have 4 tree requests this month and I just want to give some background information. This year there has been 8 new septic tanks put in, which is really helpful for our dump station and everything. There also is still trailers on the lots, which have been turned over to the Township. There are 6 on there lots at this time. They have been turned over to the Township.”

Safety Committee: Steve Biechele reported the following:

“Clare County Sheriff Incident reports, 27- Ambulance & Rescue, 3- Animal Control, 11-General Assistance, 7- Paper Service, 157- Property Check, 1-Suspicious Persons, 57- Traffic Patrol and 5- Traffic Stop.”

IX. Comments from the Floor:

1. Kevin Dombrowski, Lot # 1210, “I know we are in the phase of reviewing the budget, and I had a brief discussion with Tim before the meeting started and we were trying to figure out inflation. This is in consideration to the budget, since 2020, and I looked several times now, I have multiple sources saying 22% since 2020. So, keep that in mind in regards to the budget and our thought processes, expenses that sort of thing.”

X. Unfinished Business:

In regards to Agenda item, “2025-2026 Budget Review” The Board went over the budget proposed by the Finance committee, made a few changes.

(3) Director Ostrowski moves to approve the budget with the increase of \$15 for Assessment Fees and raise Pavilion/Clubhouse rental, Camper Storage and Boat Storage \$5 with \$10 per assessment tagged for Capital Improvement effective March 1st, 2025. 2nd Director Stanley. Director Baker and Director Holzer Nay, Director Ostrowski, Director Stanley, Director Sherry, Director Dombrowski and President Boos Aye, motion carried.

In regards to Agenda item, “Attorney Discussion,” Members of the Board met with a new attorney.

(4) Director Ostroski moves to approve up to \$5000 to pay the initial meeting and investigate possible moving forward with the investigating of platting and protecting the property. 2nd Director Baker, All Ayes, motion carried.

XI. New Business:

In regards to Agenda item “Activity Budget” President Boos presented the Board a breakdown of all expenses to meet the budget. This was discussed and this topic will be brought back for further discussion next month,

In regards to Agenda item “Publish Past Due Members” The board has decided to seek a legal opinion before publishing any past due member list.

In regards to Agenda item, “Winter Board Meeting Hours” The Board discussed adhering to a policy made to have winter board meetings start at 11 am and decided that there would be no change and the Board meeting will continue to start at 10 am.

In regards to Added Agenda item, “Ratify Email Motion for Sterling Repairs”

(5) Director Ostrowski to approve the email motion for up to \$9500 additional for Sterling Repairs to come out of Capital Improvement. 2nd Director Stanley. All ayes, motion carried.

XII. Additional Comments from the Floor:

2. Steve Biechele, Lot# 1321, "Just a comment on what the impact of raising the fees are, I think there are less then \$1000 on people who pay association fees. That's \$13,000. What is the total impact these fees are going to be on the budget? It wasn't discussed and I am curious. I think that helps on the discussion what is the impact of this money. As far as setting aside money, it is a good gesture and it is what you want to do or what you think you can do. But a serious weather event or equipment breakdowns can stop all of it. Where it is pigeon holed probably has less of an impact of how you are going to use the money anyways. And then, I am not a big proponent of raising the assessments when we are paying \$100 a month on bingo, my personal opinion."
3. Jenny Baker, Lot # 731, "I would like my reason for voting no on the assessment and \$5 dollar rate hikes noted. My reason for saying no to the assessment and fee rate increase, I support the increase in the assessment fee, I do not support the services fee. I feel it puts an unfair burden on specific people for expenses that affect an entire association. I would have passed it if it was one or the other. I did not want to pass both."
4. Steve Brandle, Lot# 1369, "So far over the past 2 or 3 months while the budget was being discussed, there has been a lack of any kind of information being published in the minutes as far as transparency about what the discussion has been about. There has been no discussion about raising fees. There has been nothing published about any of it. And I would like to see in the minutes exactly what is being raised as far as the fees, for transparency. The increase in assessments always has to be put in the minutes. But these fees, you know you are putting a lot of burden on these girls in the office, if you raise the fees and you don't notify the membership. Now, next year when people start paying these fees, it is "oh, when did that get raised" and it is a big surprise. Put, a notice in the statements when they get the next assessment bill that the fees for next year are going to go up. Give them a heads up. It is not going to soothe the unfavorable result, but at least the office girls don't have to bear the brunt of it. Just my opinion."
5. Marie Sherry, Lot# 713-714, "As a member, it has always been a concern of mine that Capital Improvement planning, it can always be improved. I really appreciate the willingness of this board to recognize that by identifying a certain amount of that increase is going towards Capital on not towards frivolous things."
6. Kylie Stanley, Lot# 1150, "I'm going on what was said about the storage fees and how ours are so much cheaper than anyone else. I do agree with that. I am not opposed to the \$5 extra. Other places, if you go outside of here, it's gated. Everything is gated and safe. I hear a lot of people talk about theft happening in the storage spots. I think if you wanted to raise it to everyone else around us you would want to get some safety features in place. I wouldn't want to pay. But if it had a gate or better safety features, I would be willing to pay \$100 a year if I knew my things were going to be safe."
7. Marney Frank, Lot# 227, "A couple of things, #1 I am in favor of you guys raising the storage fees for the boats and campers that type of thing in order to bring it up to today's money standards with other places. #2 I would like the activities to either be totally pay as you go or so you don't end up with \$700 for a DJ or \$1000 for the 4th of July and other things get practically zip. All these people that come in, there are people coming in from all the way in Mt Pleasant that don't have lots here and I have others, repairman and health people come to my house and say "Oh yeah, we come here all the time for this stuff." I say do you have a house or a lot in here and they say No. So, you are paying for all these people, you might get a lot more people for the 4th of July or whatever but they are not even members. So, you can't think oh this is wonderful we are accommodating all these people, you're accommodating them but they don't even belong here. That is my point. So, make it pay as you go then if you're going to cut back."
8. Jim Ostrowski, Lot# 1150, "I will not be here for the January or February board meetings."

(6) Director Ostrowski moves to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 am, 2nd by Director Holzer All Ayes, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 11:50 am
Submitted by,
Lisa Trojanowski Secretary/Treasurer