

# Geneva Lake Use Committee

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Wednesday, April 22, 2015 – 7:00 PM  
Williams Bay Village Hall – Board Room

## Meeting Minutes

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Chairman Sparky Lundberg called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Present: Sparky Lundberg – Williams Bay  
David Jameson – Williams Bay  
Charles Colman – Linn Township  
Roy White – Linn Township  
Bill Binn – Lake Geneva  
Don Holst – Fontana  
Rick Pappas – Fontana

Absent: Sarah Hill – Lake Geneva

Also In attendance: Jim Connors – City of Lake Geneva Mayor  
John Marra – Village President of Williams Bay  
Peg Pollitt – Geneva Lake Use Treasurer  
Jack Goggin – President of the Geneva Lake Association  
Jim Smith – Secretary of the Geneva Lake Association  
Merilee Holst – Geneva Lake Conservancy  
Wendy Perks Fisher – Geneva Lake Conservancy  
Jeff Prey – WI DNR Planner  
Penny Rohrer of the Friends of Big Foot State Park  
Dick Malmin of Linn Twp  
Jim Strauss of Lake Geneva  
Tom Leith, Retired DNR Warden for the Bigfoot State Park.  
Mary Jo Fesenmaier of Lake Geneva

Chairman Lundberg inquired if there were any public comments. There were none. Then he stated the purpose of the GLUC was environmental and safety of Geneva Lake and its surrounding area. The Committee consists of a board member and citizen member of each municipality that touches the lake (with the exception of the Town of Walworth). The Committee makes recommendations to the communities and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources but has no direct authority over laws or activities. For example, the GLUC has considered fly-boards as dangerous and recommended that a law be enacted by the communities to ban their use inside

any slow-no-wake buoy or beyond 200ft from shore. He requested that at the next meeting discussions should take place as to how this recommendation can be moved forward through the DNR or the municipalities as safety is an issue on Geneva Lake as it has the highest use of any lake in the State.

#### Pier Canopy Side Curtains

Chairman Lundberg then raised the issue of side curtains being cited in what appeared to be at random by the DNR for being longer than 18 inches. He gave examples of approved piers of 15,800 sq. ft. at Vista del Lago, for example, and how that could be okay vs. longer side curtains on two canopy piers?

Colman indicated that the GLUC Committee could try and influence and questioned why only a few random piers had been cited. Couldn't the DNR be requested to clarify the law with respect to side curtains? The DNR representative, Jeff Prey, indicated that Chapter NR 326.055 allowing roofs on piers with vertical depth of 2½ ft. was the basis for the side-curtain length maximum of 18". Jack Goggin indicated that the only piers cited were those that the DNR had received public complaints about and that new permits for canopies stated that side curtains were limited to 18". He felt their view of side curtains and the selective approach was arbitrary and capricious as their original purpose was really navigation with no understanding of the needs of the wooden boat community on Geneva Lake. Tom Leith indicated he thought permanent boathouses could be used to get around the issue.

The Committee listened to the discussion but took no action. The topic will be placed on the next GLUC Committee meeting agenda.

#### Big Foot Beach State Park Improvement Plan

President Lundberg briefly outlined the plan proposed for improving the BFBSB by moving the road behind the lagoon, adding parking lots and a launch ramp into the lagoon that would be connected to the lake. This would allow the beach to be improved, also the shore of the lake. He argued that moving the road away from the shore and putting a bike and walking path on one side only could obtain the same result. Concrete cones with cable could be used to protect pedestrians and beach goers. He noted there has always been erosion of the sand on the beach and maintenance would be required but 24' of beach sand could be maintained at the south end if a rock bar was in place to keep it from moving north.

He showed a picture of the proposal noting where wetlands and pine forests had been planted that would be negatively impacted by the road and parking lots. He noted that the pond has approximately 100 years of silt and dead vegetation in it and would require dredging, as the water level is 7 inches higher than the lake. All this would be open to the lake with the proposed launching ramp into the lagoon/lake.

Comments from the audience were as follows:

Penny Rohr indicated she was not in favor of the plan for the road relocation. The inlet is a bad idea as the top seems clean but there is gook below. She was in favor of redeveloping the beach. It is needed for the triathlon that they have at the park. Buoys would be needed to protect the swimmers. The Friends group would be willing to raise money for it.

Dick Malmin was happy to see the GLUC re-formed and working. It can help the residents of Geneva Lake. He didn't understand why the City of Lake Geneva wanted to move their boat launch to the Park when it was in the 1996 master plan and they did nothing and was negative on the City's new plan. He summarized the GLEA's (Ted Peters) write-up on phosphorous deposits in the lagoon that should never be allowed into the lake. The report also cautioned that the lagoon was dug out of wetland soils and is susceptible to erosion and sediment dissolution leading further to maintenance and environmental problems indicating it would be better to fill in the lagoon than use it for a launching area. Malmin continued comparing the boat use at that end of the lake as a danger for swimmers. It would be worse with boats coming in and out of a launch area through the beach area.

Tom Leith noted that 30 parking places for launching boats would not limit boats being launched though the lagoon. Trailers could be parked nearby or at houses. There would essentially be "no limit". He referenced his years working in the park and how beautiful it had become.

Mayor Connors of the City of Lake Geneva indicated the plans for the park were developed by the DNR not the City. They are preliminary only for discussion purposes and referenced the Geneva Lake Conservancy's response to the plan as reasonable. He proposed to get all parties together build an acceptable plan.

Jeff Prey, DNR Planner indicated the park has 271 acres and visitors to the park are increasing. The DNR feels the park needs to be improved and there should be greater public access to the lake for visitors to the park. They want to increase day use (at the beach), a new public boat launch and greater trail opportunities. The current beach is basically gone. A new one would bring the public back in. There are other concepts for the improvements. How do we make it world class? Questions for Jeff related to the cost to the natural beauty and thoughts that there are other places in the City of Lake Geneva for a new launching area.

Jim Strauss argued that many in the room have a stake in what happens. The lake has lots of access. The beach can be improved by bringing sand in (lots of sand in WI). The biggest problem with moving the road is taking away the vista as you drive by. It brings a smile to everyone every day as they drive by.

Tom Leith commented that he wants the same opportunity for kids to enjoy the park as is – do nothing. He hoped Lake Geneva would have a real public meeting on the launch lamp issue.

Ross Adams indicated that the beach can be done. Specific access to the lake has to be addressed for both pros and cons. The road is eroding and needs to be fixed. The chain link fence between the road and the lagoon is bad for access to the lake. We need to decide what can be accomplished and eliminate what we don't want. A solution for upgrading the park can be accomplished. Without the launch ramp, the plan can be figured out.

Jim Smith of the GLA felt the water levels in Geneva Lake were much more stable than other lakes. Given this, why is it that the road cannot be protected from erosion?

The Committee took no action.

#### Fishing Tournament Early in the Springtime

Chairman Lundberg outlined the problem with fishing tournaments early in the year when the fish are spawning could undo the great efforts of the DNR to restock the lake.

NO action was taken by the committee.

There was some discussion from the Committee about the topics discussed and the need for it to take more action. It was recommended that all the topics discussed be on the agenda for the next meeting. Specifically Rick Pappas said that the Committee should discuss what could be acceptable in regard to improving the Big Foot Beach State Park.

Peg Pollitt indicated that the Committee overlooked agenda item #4-Approval of the minutes of the last meeting. The Committee then unanimously approved the minutes from October 29, 2014.

Next meeting was set for May 20, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.