

# Geneva Lake Use Committee

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Wednesday, May 20, 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 7:02 PM.

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

Absent: David Jameson – Williams Bay  
Rick Pappas – Fontana  
Sarah Hill – Lake Geneva

Also in Attendance: Mayor Jim Connors of the City of Lake Geneva  
Warden Gomez of the DNR  
Merilee Holst – Geneva Lake Conservancy  
Dick Malmin of Linn Township  
Jim Strauss of Linn Township  
Dan Winkler of Lake Geneva  
Chuck Schultz of Williams Bay  
Mary Jo Fesenmaier of Lake Geneva.

Chairman Lundberg inquired if there were any public comments:

Dick Malmin indicated the CARE group wanted to be part of the solution for the issues associated with the Big Foot Beach State Park Road and would be willing to help fund the solution. He noted that the responsibility for road repairs needed to be clarified between the City of Lake Geneva and the DNR.

Jim Strauss also indicated the need to clarify ownership of the road and thought the GLUC might be able to help sort that out.

Dan Winkler agreed that help was needed to identify the real responsibility for the road.

## Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the April 22 Meeting Minutes approved unanimously – motion by Holst/White.

## Fly Boards

The Chairman asked committee members their community views regarding establishing a fly board ordinance as previously discussed. White indicated that Linn had no ordinance but supports one. Holst commented that Fontana supported the committee's thoughts and felt it could be attached to the jet ski ordinance and that Fontana Village Administrator Dennis Martin could construct a document. Binn indicated that the Geneva attorney didn't draft an ordinance and suggested that Warden Gomez take it to Madison.

The safety issues associated with operating Fly Boards within Slow-No-Wake buoys were discussed and included hitting swimmers, piers, anchored boats and fishing boats that could cause damage and loss of life. Operating outside Slow-No-Wake buoys or 200 yards from shore continued to be recommended.

Warden Gomez indicated that Fly Boards are considered personal watercraft and the DNR has responsibility for watercraft navigation issues and that there are always learning curves regarding new watercraft. Waiting for feedback on Fly Boards from Coast Guard. People to Contact:

- Roy Zellmer – Voting Law Administration (262-5742169)
- Jayson Roberts – Walworth County Safety Ordinances. (262-574-2169)

Committee Action: (Colman/White): A proposed ordinance would be drafted by Dennis Martin (Fontana) and forwarded to the appropriate DNR personnel for review and consideration.

## Canopy Side Curtains

The committee discussed the conflict over side curtains over the DNR ruling requiring 18 inches in length on canopied piers. The administrative ordinance was based on a old law before canvas coverings were used, does not take into consideration the large wooden boat community on Geneva Lake that needs protection and the fact that many have had their side curtains for more than 15 years. There also was concern about what appears to be arbitrary enforcement of the law.

Holst/Colman/White urged a letter to state legislators in support of a uniform ordinance that would be more reasonable to lake residents.

Warden Gomez outlined the accomplishments of the DNR over the past 4 ½ years in documenting and improving safety and ordinance enforcement on Geneva Lake. The specific ordinance regarding side curtains is NR326055. Action has not been arbitrary. Letters went out to 110 property owners requesting voluntary acceptance of the ruling. The DNR has only cited individual property owners of piers that the DNR had received complaints by the public.

Committee Action (Colman/Holst): Colman to draft a letter to DNR and State representatives that the Administrative Order be made to allow side curtains down to the top of the pier posts for individual private property owners for one pier only.

### Fishing Tournaments

Lundberg outlined the issue of early fishing tournaments taking fish off nests during spawning. Care is often not taken even when the fish are eventually released back into the water. This is hurting efforts to expand fish populations in the lake by the DNR and Walleyes Forever. Silver Bass and Cisco have been lost to the lake through the impact of humans.

Warden Gomez indicated that licenses are not required for catch and release tournaments of fewer than 20 boats. Events with prizes over \$10k, more than 20 boats and those that cull fish do require permits. In the most recent data there were 5 tournaments with licenses in the last year.

Chuck Schultz, a fishing guide in Williams Bay, confirmed that there are many more fishing tournaments on Geneva Lake than is generally understood. Many like the tournaments at this time of year because the fish are easier to catch. Their catch hold and release methods (culling) disrupts eggs and there is zero reproduction as a result. He felt that there should be catch and immediate release only until July 1 when all the spawning is over.

Committee Action (Colman/Binn - Holst Abstained): Sparky Lundberg to write to the DNR recommending Catch-and-Release only until the first week of July for Geneva Lake to aid in building fish populations.

### Big Foot Beach State Park

The question was raised about what could or could not be supported with respect to the BFBS. The road responsibility issue came up again.

Mayor Connors of Lake Geneva stated that Lake Geneva has no position on the park improvement plan now that the TIF option for supporting the road move is off the table. The city is attempting to resolve how to do the road repairs but needs to understand how to fix the roadbed. Malmin indicated CARE could provide funding for emergency road repairs. He felt the GLUC could play a role in identifying who should take responsibility for the road.

Colman indicated that the GLUC was not in a position to resolve the issue of jurisdiction over the road, as that is not the committee's role. Rather it is a group to allow everyone involved with the lake to understand the issues and have a voice in maintaining safety and the health of the lake.

No action by the committee was taken.

#### Administrative Matters

This topic of administrative support for the GLUC was not addressed at the meeting. It was just missed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.