

VILLAGE OF FONTANA ON GENEVA LAKE
Walworth County, WI

Lakefront and Harbor Committee
Wednesday, February 24, 2010
(Official Minutes)

The monthly meeting of the Lakefront and Harbor Committee was called to order at 4:30 pm on February 24, 2010 by Chairperson Micki O'Connell.

Roll Call: Trustee Micki O'Connell, Robert Chanson, Rick Pappas, Joel Bikowski, Lee Eakright

Absent: Steve Beers, Ed Snyder

Also Present: Village Clerk Dennis Martin, President Arvid Petersen, Steele Whowell

Visitors Heard

None

General Business

Approval of Minutes – January 20, 2010

Pappas/Eakright 2nd made a MOTION to approve the January 20, 2010 minutes as submitted, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Review 24-Hour Launch Time Limit for In and Out

O'Connell stated that when the item was discussed last month, the proposal was made to offer all Village residents one free launch per season. As directed, Martin contacted the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to inquire if the proposal would be contrary to state regulations. Jim Ritchie of the Wisconsin DNR's legal department stated in a telephone conversation with Martin that the proposal would be prohibited unless the Village offered everyone, both residents and nonresidents, one free launch per season. Ritchie stated that the proposal would be prohibited under Wisconsin Administrative Rule NR 1.91 – the administrative code section that governs boat launch fees and related matters. O'Connell stated that the proposal to give all residents one free launch per season stemmed from the committee's proposal to give mooring lease holders one free launch per season. Chanson stated that proposal to give residents one free launch was meant to provide them with a financial break. Eakright stated that the village could offer the one launch for lease holder if the cost was included with the rental fee. Pappas stated that the city of Lake Geneva has one launch built into to its mooring lease, but no one has requested it in the Village of Fontana. Following further discussion, the committee members reached a consensus that it would be too complicated to amend the leases for the current season, which already have been mailed out, and no change should be recommended this season.

Proposal for Village Boat Launch to Remain Open Until October 31

O'Connell stated that after reviewing the total revenue that the Village of Williams Bay took in at its launch last season during the month of October, she thinks the Village of Fontana should keep its launch open until October 31. O'Connell stated that that Village of Fontana could try it for one year and see how much revenue is earned. Bikowski stated that the Village launch gets very little business from September 15 to October 15 and it would not be a wise decision to extend the season until the end of October. Bikowski stated that the village launch has always been manned from April 15 to October 15 and the schedule should be left that same. Pappas stated that the Village of Fontana is losing revenue from October 16 to 31, and all the municipalities on the lake should have matching seasons. Pappas stated that boat owners will go to the ramp on the lake that is free, and if the Village of Fontana is not charging, everyone will start launching here

instead of in Williams Bay. O'Connell stated that that the Village of Fontana should try to extend the season for one year as a trial.

Bikowski/Chanson 2nd made a MOTION to keep the village boat launch season schedule from April 15 to October 15, and the MOTION carried on a 3-1 vote. Bikowski, Chanson and Eakright voted yes, and O'Connell voted no. Pappas abstained.

GLEA Proposal for Lake-wide Prohibition of Gas Cans on Private Piers

Ted Peters of the Geneva Lake Environmental Agency has not submitted anything to the Village. Martin stated that Peters informed him that the GLEA was going to make a presentation at a Geneva Lake Use Committee meeting to propose a lake-wide ordinance. Peters was then going to attend the Village of Fontana Lakefront and Harbor Committee to present the proposed ordinance. Fontana Fire Chief Wolfgang Nitsch provided a copy of the Williams Bay ordinance that prohibits portable gas cans or containers at the village owned lakefront or on municipal piers, and copies of the State of Wisconsin Department of Commerce regulations that govern watercraft fueling and gas tanks. O'Connell stated that last season at the pier used by Jerry's Marine, there were always three or four large, portable gas tanks stored at the end of the pier. Chanson asked if the Village has any jurisdiction over the commercial and private piers, or if the Village can just regulate the municipally owned piers. Pappas stated that the situation on the piers in front of Chuck's is not safe for the public. Bikowski stated that the state strictly monitors the gas tank operations at Gordy's Marine, and every gallon is accounted for. Bikowski stated that at the Abbey Harbor, there is a regulation that prohibits portable gas containers. President Petersen stated that the Village has received concerns regarding the 40-gallon gas containers that were being run off and on the Jerry's Marine pier last season. Petersen stated that after the Jerry's Marine watercrafts are filled with gas, the containers are kept at the end of the pier, where people are walking. Petersen stated that last season, there were people observed smoking cigars right next to the portable gas containers. Pappas stated that the Village can prohibit portable gas containers on the municipal piers, but the question is what authority the Village has over commercial and private piers. Pappas stated that he does not want to see the large portable gas containers stored at the end of the Jerry's Marine pier, but he does not know if the Village can regulate the situation. O'Connell stated that there are applicable sections in the Department of Commerce regulations. Petersen stated that maybe the situation can be addressed by simply talking about the fire hazard concerns to Jerry Oglesby or Jamie Whowell, the pier owner. Pappas stated that it would be a good idea to talk to them and simply try to address the situation. Chanson stated that Jerry's Marine should just fill the watercraft up with gas and then remove the portable containers from the pier, not store them there. Petersen stated that he will talk to Oglesby and Whowell to relay the Village's concerns. The committee directed Martin to check who enforces the Department of Commerce regulations regarding private and commercial piers.

Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is Wednesday, March 24, 2010 at 4:30 pm.

Adjournment

Bikowski/Chanson 2nd made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 pm, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Minutes prepared by: Dennis L. Martin, village clerk

Note: These minutes are subject to further editing. Once approved by the Lakefront and Harbor Committee, the official minutes will be kept on file at the Village Hall.

APPROVED: 3/24/2010