

## **Big Sand Lake Association Annual Member Meeting**

July 26, 2025

**Location:** Siren Senior Center

**Board Members Attending:** Paul Hassing, Dennis Loots, Jane Jensen, Steve Farnham, Chip Applegath, Don Button, Karen Pavlicek

**Absent:** None

BSLA President, Paul Hassing, called the meeting to order at 10:07 am

- Approximately 30 members were in attendance

### **Approval of 07Jun2025 BSLA Board Meeting Minutes**

- Approval was done via board email vote, vote was unanimous.
- Minutes were published on the BSLA website & emailed to members using MailChimp tool June 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **2025 Annual Meeting Agenda with Notes:**

#### **1. Welcome/Board Intro – Paul Hassing**

- Paul introduced the board members and gave a short overview of The BSLA covering our mission, focus, dues, etc
- Our association is a nonprofit 501(c)(3). We are a Lake Association, not a Lake District (we don't tax, we don't enforce rules)

#### **2. Guest Speakers:**

- **Amy Thiex:** Burnett Co 911 Call Center:
  - 911 was implemented in Burnett County in 1992
  - Dispatch and jail separated space in 2024 with the new office space build
  - Dispatch is fully staffed (8 FT, 3 PT) 12hr shifts, 2 stations manned all times
  - New NextGen 911 rolling out. Web based, will eventually allow public to send txt msgs, images, videos and other data. Greatly advances response speed and information for responders.
  - They get automated crash notifications from phones; they get cell phone and home alarm 911 call notifications. Eventually more internet connected devices that can send data to 911 will be supported (like wearable alerts)
  - They dispatch to 4 police depts, 13 Fire districts, 5 ambulance districts, 5 first responder districts, 5 DNR fire districts.
  - Last year call volumes: 38,603 calls of which 6,000 were 911 calls. EMS/Fire is the largest share
  - 98.6% of calls are answered within 10 seconds. Most < 5 seconds
  - Top 3 misuses of 911 are complaints on: Animals, Noise, Power Outages
  - Top 5 most common responses: Medical Emergency, Traffic stops, Suspicious Activity, Civil/Court, 911 errant call/Hang ups

- They do not get many calls from Campgrounds/RV Parks. Only had 9 non-medical calls/complaints in 3 years from these.
- How to help 911: Know your location, don't hang up if accidentally call 911 - tell them it was an error. Use non-emergency numbers, teach kids how to use 911 correctly, register for emergency alerts (weather)
- **Travis Thiex:** Burnett Co Detective on Property Crimes and how to prevent:
  - He's been a detective for 5 years now, focusing on property crimes
  - Burglary: 50-60 per year. 8 YTD. Have done a good job catching perps
  - Thefts: about 125 per year. 28 YTD
  - Things you can do to prevent crimes: Lock doors/windows/vehicles. Don't leave keys in car. Put up security/trail cameras, leave outside lights on, document your valuables. Write down serial #'s! – they can't enter stolen goods in system without a serial#. Biggest thefts: Guns, Tools - put initials on tools to identify if recovered.
  - Usually when caught, the perp has done multiple burglaries which results in duplicate items, so documenting your goods help in recovery
  - Keep eye out for neighbors' properties, report suspicious activities
  - Scams: No legit business takes payment via gift cards, similar with crypto. If it seems too good to be true, or they threaten, pressure, or say don't tell anyone, etc its likely a scam
  - Off-season burglaries to cabins, burglars can often tell if seasonal, and no one around, especially if your place looks unused
  - Burglaries tend to be serial – they will do multiple over a period.
- **Paul Thompson - Invasive Hybrid Cattails**
  - Owns 90 acres on Yellow River. He's been on a 2.5 year mission on invasive cattails eradication
  - Invasive Cattails are changing the watershed shoreline which affects the lake/river health and fisheries.
  - Entire wetlands get taken over and disappear as cattails take over and produce sediment which eventually displaces all the water
  - Narrow Leaf came from Europe. Have cross bred with Broad Leaf and the hybrid is invasive and rapidly overtakes native cattails
  - 95% of WI cattails are now hybrid. Native will be extinct in ~5 years
  - Invasive Hybrids create 10-14X more sediment than native
  - You can do a 30 feet width clearing of shore by hand. Mechanical or chemical requires a permit. DNR has not been keen on mechanical or chemical.
  - WI DNR just approved arial spraying of cattails in Crex Meadows, and recently approved mechanical removal at a location in Superior; so the DNR is coming around slowly.

- Reference BSLA board meeting minutes from June 7<sup>th</sup> for more info.

3. **Financial Report** – Steve Farnham

- Revenue is down YTY, Expense are up due to planned spends. Please get your dues paid so we can replenish our balance.
- 32 families had paid dues before the meeting, 9 more paid at the meeting and picnic. Typical we get 50-60 paid dues by now

4. **Update on June 4<sup>th</sup> mtg on BSL Water Flow In/Out** – Chip Applegath

- Reference the BSLA board meeting minutes from June 7<sup>th</sup> for detailed info
- Chip explained the ongoing battle we have with beavers clogging up the culverts under Sand Lake Road, just days after the Town of Sand Lake clears them.
- 4 members signed up expressing interest in cattail clearing experiment at culverts on Sand Lake Road. The board may organize a small work crew in August for this.

5. **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Projects Update** – Chip Applegath

- **Boat Cleaning Station (Sign) at DNR landing**
  - Install got delayed due to mismatched left and right sign panels received from county. Will re-address this in September.
- **Lake Water AIS Survey -**
  - Recommendation is that AIS surveys be done every 5 years. Last water survey was done in 2019 and the only key finding was Chinese Mystery Snails. These are an invasive species, they are large snails, common in many WI lakes. The concern with these snails is they compete with native snails.
  - Burnett County Land Management/Water Resources staff completed the 2025 BSLA funded point intercept survey in late May.
  - They created a grid map of the lake with about 780 points. They used a hummingbird GPS system and sampled bottom vegetation at each point looking for AIS. Full day of work, 2 guys in boat with rake on a rope.
  - They also carefully examined the area around the DNR pier landing looking for AIS on the poles etc.
  - ***The great news is the only AIS found was same as 2019 – only Chinese Mystery snails! No invasive water plants, no zebra mussels, etc.***
- **Shoreline Plan AIS Survey -**
  - Burnett County Land Management/Water Resources staff (Emily Moore & staff) completed this BSLA funded survey on July 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - This was a visual tour along the whole lake shore looking for invasive plants growing on the shore.
  - ***They found Purple Loosestrife in 10 locations on the lake, all on the North or West side of the lake. 7 of these were on properties that they mapped to specific address for us. 3 of the locations were in the cattails on the west side of the lake***

- Emily said the 7 locations on the north side were all only 1-2 new plants. She said landowners could (and should) easily dig these out by hand now, before they go to seed. The BSLA board will contact each of the seven property owners.
- Emily said the 3 locations on the west side, in the cattails area, have been there a few years
- **Above two AIS Surveys** – As part of our contacted work, a full report on both surveys will be provided to BSLA in late fall. We will publish this report to the members when it's received.

**6. Discussion on Wake Boat Ordinances** – Paul

- Our Board has had various discussions on this. Ideally the WI DNR should take the lead on this topic.
- Paul discussed the Town of Scott and lawsuits going on around their recently adopted ordinance.
- This is an ongoing key issue we will monitor since the size and depth of Big Sand Lake is not suited for wake-enhancing boat use due to the environmental damage they cause.

**7. BSLA expiring board Positions** – nominations, vote

- **Secretary** (currently: Chip, re-elected Aug 2023)
  - Chip had volunteered for an additional term
  - Chip Applegath was nominated by Paul Hassing. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dennis Loots
  - Discussion: None
  - *Vote: Approved Unanimously*
- **Treasure** (currently: Steve, elected Aug 2023)
  - Steve had volunteered for an additional term
  - Steve Farnham was nominated by Chip Applegath. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jack Goetze
  - Discussion: None
  - *Vote: Approved Unanimously*
- **Director At Large #3** (Currently: Karen, elected Aug 2023)
  - Karen had volunteered for an additional term
  - Karen Pavlicek was nominated by Chip Applegath. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dennis Loots
  - Discussion: None
  - *Vote: Approved Unanimously*

**8. Open/Q&A Session**

- BSLA VP Jane Jensen reported that we will know in the next 2 months if the DNR gets their \$300K request approved to repair the DNR landing in the next 2 years.
- Water level – various members reported losing 10+ feet lakeshore due to this past winter's excessive ice shore heave / push up. Discussion was there is not much

BSLA can do to prevent this as it's a natural cycle that's been going on for years based on water tables up/down on seepage lakes like ours. It was noted that the heaved shore can be flattened back down if addressed with a year of it happening.

- Inflow into lake – What is the risk of drawing AIS into BSL if stream under highway 70 is restored? This is part of the investigation / assessment that would be done if this moved forward.
- Someone asked what was being constructed on property north of Hwy 70, just west of Dongola road. A member said there is a Solar Farm going in.
- A question was asked about any new information on Campgrounds. No one had any new info.
- Adam Pavlicek suggested we look into dredging at the Sand Lake culvert to deepen it which would discourage cattail growth. This will be discussed further at a board meeting later this year

9. **Closing** – Paul

- Motion to Adjourn via consensus. Meeting Adjourned at Noon

10. **Annual Picnic:** A huge **Thank You** to Jane Jensen & Don Culbertson for hosting our 2025 picnic. Also thanks for all that attended and brought items to share. We had approximately 56 people who attended the picnic.

**Reminder \$25 yearly BSLA dues can be paid by:**

- Mail check Payable to: Big Sand Lake Association and mail to:  
Big Sand Lake Association  
PO Box 145 Siren WI 54872
- Or give check, or cash, to any board member
- Or pay via Venmo: [https://account.venmo.com/u/Big\\_Sand\\_Lake\\_WI\\_Association](https://account.venmo.com/u/Big_Sand_Lake_WI_Association)

Respectfully submitted,

Chip Applegath, BSLA Secretary