

**MINUTES FOR THE BEAVER LAKE COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 27, 2004
TASK FORCE MEETING #4**

Cabin Owners Present:

Vince Kahnke
Julie Meyer
Sharon Sowers
Ken Howe
Carole Howe
Peg Shelton
Daniel Misgen
Kris Johnson
Jim Srsen
Marilyn Srsen
Kevin Johnson
Chris Johnson
Cindy Vavra
Paul Groth
Mary Groth
R. P. Swenson
Blanche Derby
Merle Derby
John Gildner
Claire Jensen
Charlene Jensen
Carl Anderson
Janet Hartwig
Andy Lurberg
Louis Johnson
Bill Newell
David Broskoff
Bill Kottke
Gene Michaelson
Rita Michaelson
Ric Aaseth
Nijole Aaseth
Dean VanHal
Dave Christensen
Judy Christensen
Ray Wistrill
Don Wistrill
Paul Hanson
Doris Evans

Steele County Representative:

None (Laurie Johnson ill)

Southern Minnesota Water Resources Board:

Nick Haig
Doug Malchow

Task Force Committee Members Present:

Bruce Riemer
Bruce Paulson
Carroll Evans
Max Pecht
Rick Firme
Larry Flugum
Michelle Flugum
Pete Plunkett

Task Force Committee Members Absent:

Tom Buckingham

Nick Haig called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Minutes of the prior Beaver Lake meeting from March 30, 2004 were waived. Nick provided the members present with a brief history of the sewer district and the reasons for not proceeding with the Bonestroo proposal. Essentially, the Bonestroo proposal would cost approximately \$20,000.00 per parcel which made their solution cost prohibitive. After the Bonestroo proposal was rejected, we formed a task force for consideration of the formation of a subordinate service district under Minn. Stat. §365A.01 - §365A.10. The purpose of a subordinate service district would be to encourage cabin owners to comply with the septic regulations and to help maintain that compliance. All of this, of course, has been explained in prior minutes of these meetings and will not be repeated here. Please refer to the materials that have been mailed to you in the past or visit our website at www.beaverlk.org if you have a question about the subordinate service district.

Nick next explained that Gary Hansen of Hansen Excavating, Laurie Johnson, Carroll Evans, and himself walked around the lake on April 7 and 8 to identify potential options for wastewater treatment. This group attempted to identify possible treatment locations that were 75 feet from Beaver Lake, 100 feet from shallow sand point wells and 50 feet from cased wells. The proposed treatment locations cannot lie over existing dry wells, cesspools, or drain fields. About 20 of the properties were not evaluated because they are either currently in compliance, need to get a formal inspection or have submitted a septic system design plan to Steele County. The remaining properties around the lake are known to need upgrades and were evaluated for their ability to handle a standard treatment system and “other” system, a multiple home (cluster) system, or a holding tank. It was determined through the evaluation that only three cabins did

not have enough room for placement of at least a holding tank. All of the other cabins were determined to have some sort of individual or cluster options that were broken into eight categories with the option code next to it. A hand out was provided to everyone which explained these different options and the coding of the options. A color-coded map was also distributed with the same basic information along with an excel spreadsheet which provided this information specific to each parcel. It was suggested that these documents be mailed out to all of the owners to make sure that everyone has a copy. Nick warned everyone that these results should not be interpreted as the only options available or as a recommendation from Steele County. Only after a licensed contractor conducts a thorough site evaluation and completes a system design can the viability of any option be approved. These are simply suggestions for people to consider.

Doug Malchow was our next speaker. Doug explained the various treatment options that are currently available essentially in the “other” category. Doug referred everyone to the website <http://septic.umn.edu> and directed everyone to click on the “system options” link which will reveal approximately 15-20 options. All of these options were explained in great detail through a power point demonstration. Doug emphasized that proper maintenance of these systems is key to their viability and longevity. He also suggested that we all get a copy of the septic system owners guide from the extension office.

Pete Plunkett next explained to the members present that we now have enough signatures to go forward with the petition for a subordinate service district. This will be discussed at the next task force meeting which will be held at the Ellendale Community Center on May 27 at 7:00 p.m. We are tentatively planning to present the petition for the subordinate service district to the Berlin Township board at one of their meetings in June. Berlin Township next sets a date for a hearing within 30 days of verification of the signatures and will provide notice of the hearing to all of the parcel owners in the proposed subordinate service district. Within 30 days after the hearing, the town board shall either approve or disapprove the requested district. Within 20 days after passage of the resolution establishing the district, the resolution must be published in a qualified newspaper and written notice must be mailed to each parcel owner in the proposed district. The district shall begin 60 days after publication or at a later date specified in the resolution unless before expiration of the 60-day period, 25% of the property owners present the board with a petition for reverse referendum. Establishment of the district will be put in abeyance during this time until a referendum vote. If a majority of the parcel owners vote in favor of the reverse referendum, the district will fail. Once the petition and hearing process is successfully completed without reverse referendum, we will then need to draft the articles and by-laws for the subordinate service district. Again, the purpose of the subordinate service district will be to make sure that non-complying properties are brought into compliance and then maintain this compliance. **One very important benefit of establishing the district is that the charges for upgrades can be assessed on property taxes over a period of years. Many districts in the past have bonded for a specific amount of capital from a bank or lending agency with which homeowners use to upgrade their systems. The district is the borrower and makes its payments from the revenue it receives through tax payments. Loan dollars are also available through the government and some non-profit organizations, which usually offer lower interest rates, but often have strings attached (such as public ownership, the installation of sustainable management plans, etc). While neither Steele County nor the Wastewater initiative will discourage cabin owners from upgrading their**

systems on their own, it may be in their interest to wait until the District is established so that they can take advantage of this payment structure.

Several questions were raised about the leased properties on the south side of the lake. It was suggested that the lessees meet with Dick Davies (attorney for owners) and the owners to come up with a plan of action for resolving the septic issue on the south side of the lake. Pete Plunkett explained that the subordinate service district would be a good way to resolve the issue since it would be possible to have the cost of the systems funneled through the real estate tax as an additional assessment. This would relieve the lessees of the entire liability in the event that the owner decides to sell the leased properties.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously. The next meeting will be May 27, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the Ellendale Community Center.