

# Friends of Silver Lake

## Friends of Silver Lake Annual Meeting - Minutes July 31st, 2021

Meeting Location: Golden Township Park at Silver Lake Sand Dunes Pavilion

Board Members Present: Ron Bell, Rita Vander Vliet, Mike Hanzie, Marty Hayden, Jim Potempa and Larry Simons.

Proposed Board Members Present: Larry Byl and Jason Dodge.

Board Members Absent: Dan Behm and Steve Dykstra.

Trustee Present: Bill DeJong.

### 1. Jody Johnston – Silver Lake State Park Manager (guest speaker)

Jody provided an update on the park, sharing that attendance was up across the parks. He reported that the State Park Boat Launch had been dredged providing deep water access out to the natural drop off. Jody took questions on several subjects and provided the following responses –

- Have there been any impact studies on the lake based on the recent new home, rental, and campground developments? None that he was aware of.
- Are there any new improvements planned at the state park? Nothing new at the moment, he's working hard to have appropriate staff for the remainder of the season.
- Could residents be allowed to launch boats even when the ramp parking is full? No, that's DNR policy that when the parking is full no further boat launches are allowed. Changing this policy is not a local decision but rather at the state level.
- Suggestion was made to add signage throughout the dunes, pedestrian, and ORV, urging users that if they 'packed-it-in' they must 'pack-it-out.'

Discussion also took place with Jody on alternative sites around the lake that might provide additional boat launch resources.

Jody finished his presentation by sharing the background on the recent 'drag-racing' changes on the ORV dune area. In essence the State Park and SLRA had a letter of agreement that allowed grooming the sand for smoother racing. That agreement expired and when EGLE was consulted to formalize the permit, they declined saying that speed contests (drag racing) were against MI law on public properties like the dunes. This prompted state legislators to pass a MI law to allow drag-racing specifically at Silver Lake Sand Dune, so the signage that concerned the ban on racing has been removed.

### 2. Chuck Persenaire – Silver Lake Improvement Board (guest speaker)

Chuck P. presented a lake water quality update with information provided by Dr. Jones of Restorative Lake Services (RLS) the firm the Silver Lake Improvement Board (SLIB) has engaged for testing and lake management efforts.

Highlights from Chuck's presentation included –

- The SLIB and RLS will present a workshop on August 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss lake water quality and related issues.
- Vegetation is still minimal in the lake. It's proposed to transplant native aquatic plants on the southern edge to try and establish useful vegetation and fish habitat. This effort requires permitting from DNR and EGLE, which SLIB has approved, and that process is underway, with possible approval by the end of the year, with the transplants happening in 2022.
- Carp remain the predominant fish in the lake and as bottom feeders, they cause significant damage to any vegetation and should be culled before any transplant program takes place.
- An e-coli study of Silver Lake was attempted this year via Ferris State University through a grant, however funds were expended for this year, the SLIB through RLS will attempt again next year.

Chuck took some questions as well –

Concerning the current nitrogen and phosphorus levels, he reported that nitrogen was within specs, but phosphorus was particularly high. Overall, the lake is not quite eutrophic.

Concerning the possible carp cull he mentioned two methods electric shock and bow-fishing.

### **3. Chuck Ruedi & Guy Reese – Silver Lake United Voice (guest speakers)**

Chuck R. and Guy shared the origins of the Silver Lake United Voice (SLUV) coming out of the most previous failed attempt at sewers with the single focus on updating the Golden Township Septic Ordinance. The problem that exists is that existing septic systems are polluting the lake. There is lack of state oversight because Michigan is the only state without a uniform statewide septic code. District #10 Health has some oversight, but actions here are not particularly local as ten Michigan counties are involved in this district and changes to policy need all ten counties' approval. In Golden Township, the existing ordinance has little impact because it only comes into play when a construction permit is sought, or a property is sold outright. Recently the township added septic pumping requirements (every three years) for properties that register as rentals (through the Short-Term Rental Ordinance), however this is only pumping, no inspection is required and only applies to those properties that seek Township permission as short-term rentals.

Silver Lake United Voice began with the idea of creating a separate septic district at Silver Lake and prepared a very comprehensive ordinance that when presented to the township in January 2020 and the feedback was that the proposal was too involved and too expensive to manage. SLUV then simplified their approach and streamlined the changes to three primary points –

- a. Inspections – Require every Golden Township property septic system be inspected (holding tank(s) and drain field) every five-years. (A licensed sanitarian would perform the inspection and be required to file specific reporting to the Township. A sample report is on the SLUV website.)
- b. ATUs within 200' of water – Advanced Treatment Units (ATUs) are already required through existing District #10 Health Department policy for septic systems within 100' of a body of water (lake/stream/pond/etc.) and this proposal would expand that limit to 200'.
- c. Penalties – The SLUV ordinance proposal includes penalties for properties both timeframes and fines.

Complete information on the proposal can be found at [www.silverlakeunitedvoice.org](http://www.silverlakeunitedvoice.org) where there is also a survey for property owners to complete providing their opinions of the different elements of the proposal.

Chuck and Guy also took questions, providing the following responses –

- Who is affected by this proposal? All Golden Township residential properties (commercial properties are already covered through separate policy).
- What does an ATU cost? Currently a SludgeHammer system installed by Swihart Septic Services is about \$3,500, with maintenance of about \$150 annually. Pump outs vary depending on size of the tank but \$300 is a reasonable estimate currently.
- Who will perform the inspections every 5 years? The township will need to administer the ordinance, but specifics have not been confirmed.

All FoSL who are Golden Township property owners were encouraged to complete the survey as soon as possible. Only one survey result per address.

### **4. Marty Hayden (Board President) - Friends of Silver Lake Update**

Marty gave a quick overview of several efforts of interest with FoSL, including –

- Bike Path Expansion – Determining interest in expanding the Bike Path near Silver Lake both east of the state park along Silver Lake Road and north on Shore Drive from the traffic circle toward the ORV dunes. We also need to keep on top of path maintenance.
- Hiking Paths – Improvements through better marking and maintenance on the trails from Termite Bridge area through state land to Silver Lake dam and the lighthouse.
- Movies in the Park – Consider fundraising to purchase equipment for outdoor video presentations at the Golden Township Park at the Silver Lake Sand Dunes like movies for residents, guests, and visitors.

**5. Rita Vander Vliet (Board Treasurer) – Treasurer’s Report**

Rita presented the FoSL treasurer’s report. The balance as of June 20, 2021, was \$11,343.49. Motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the Treasurer’s Report. There have been no changes.

**6. Approval of the minutes for the August 1, 2020 Annual Meeting**

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the Minutes from last year’s FoSL Annual Meeting (8/1/20).

**7. Public Comments –**

- Discussion occurred concerning revisiting how to best address fire coverage at Silver Lake through a local fire house.
- Do higher taxes for lakefront properties go to the Township? No, most all the collected taxes go to the county, not directly to township.
- Comments were made concerning how we best address the need for more Silver Lake area representation at the Golden Township level.

**8. Recognition of Outgoing Board Members**

Outgoing Board Members Rita Vander Vliet, Ron Bell, and Mike Hanzie were recognized and thanked for their years of service to the Silver Lake community through Friends of Silver Lake Board leadership.

**9. 2021 Board Elections**

A total of four positions were open on the Board starting in 2021: three (3) 3-year regular terms and one (1) 1-year position completing McKee’s term. Two prospective members were recruited and present at the meeting: Larry Byl and Jason Dodge, a meeting attendee Dave Elrod self-nominated from the floor for the remaining three-year term. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to elect the three prospective Board Members for 2021-2024.

Note – Guy Reece volunteered to fill the remaining open (1-year) Board position and was elected by the Board Members present (quorum was met) at the close of the Annual Meeting.

**10. Adjournment**

**Board Roster and Board Position voting**

At the close of the Annual Meeting the new Board met and elected the officers for 2021-2022. The current Friends of Silver Lake Board is as follows:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Position</u>
Steve Dykstra	2019-2022	President
Marty Hayden	2019-2022	
Guy Reece	2019-2022	
Dan Behm	2020-2023	Vice President
Jim Potempa	2020-2023	
Larry Simons	2020-2023	
Larry Byl	2021-2024	Secretary
Jason Dodge	2021-2024	
Dave Elrod t	2021-2024	