

**Leland Dam Authority**  
**Regular Session – Wednesday, May 22, 2024**  
Approved 7/17/2024

*Proceedings of the meeting are being recorded (audio and video). The video of the meeting can be found at the following link: <https://leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2740>*

Call to Order:

Meeting called to Order by Chairman Steve Christensen at 10:05 a.m. Today's meeting is being held at the Government Center, 8527 E. Government Center Drive, Suttons Bay, Michigan.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited, followed by a moment of silence.

<u>Roll Call:</u>	Chairman, Steve Christensen (Drain Commissioner)	PRESENT
	Vice-Chairman, Garth Greenan (Road Commissioner)	PRESENT
	Member, Kama Ross (District #5 Commissioner)	PRESENT
	Member, Richard Thompson (Engineer Category)	PRESENT
	Member, Drew Warner (Riparian Category)	PRESENT

Guests present.

Approval of Agenda / Late Additions or Deletions:

**MOTION BY GREENAN TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY ROSS.**

Discussion – none.

**AYES – 5 (Greenan, Ross, Thompson, Warner, Christensen)**

**NO – 0**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

Approval of Minutes – Wednesday, April 17, 2024:

**MOTION BY ROSS TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024, AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY THOMPSON.**

Discussion – none.

**AYES – 5 (Ross, Thompson, Warner, Christensen, Greenan)**

**NO – 0**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

Public Comment: (3 minutes)

The following individuals spoke in person:

John Popa, Bingham Township

Action Items –

Lake Leelanau Lake Association (Discussion):

[http://leelanau.gov/downloads/j\\_popa\\_05222024.pdf](http://leelanau.gov/downloads/j_popa_05222024.pdf)

Chairman Christensen spoke and stated that John Popa is present and asked if Popa would like to speak to the topic. Popa stated he would, but that he (Popa) wasn't here today necessarily to represent the Lake Association.

Mr. Popa stated that the Lake Association had a big concern at one point about getting the necessary Dam procedures in writing by the Dam Authority, but said they believe the Dam Authority is certainly on the right path now. Popa has nothing new to bring today, but can pass anything on to the Association at their meeting tomorrow if needed.

Thompson said that he and Lake Association President Nancy Popa had discussed putting an article in their annual report that indicates who is responsible for controlling the lake level. Many people around the lake access the Lake Leelanau Lake Association's website for historic information regarding the lake levels. Thompson wrote part of it and put it into the written document which satisfied many of the people in the Association. They get calls about the lake level and it is not their responsibility.

Interim Administrator Richard I. Lewis arrived at 10:21 a.m.

Warner added that he feels that adding that information to the County's website would be beneficial and would maybe alleviate some of those lake level questions going to the Lake Association.

Chairman Christensen said he also doesn't want 1,000 riparians tying up County employees, so the Lake Association could maybe appoint several people to interface with the Dam Authority.

Thompson questioned if the other Dam Authority members wanted to add the historical lake level data on the County website. Brief discussion ensued.

Interim Administrator Lewis will follow up with Christensen on what they would like to have added to the County's website in the future.

Hydraulic System Update:

Interim Administrator Lewis updated the Authority and said that as of last evening the Board of Commissioners has given permission to go with the vendor Michigan Fluid Power (MFP) for Dam repairs/modifications, in an amount not to exceed \$17k, which is much higher than the estimate. Labor cost and contingency are included in there and Machin Engineering is working to get a formal quote within that range so we can sign the document.

Walkway:

Lewis took a look at the walkway and will be working with Machin Engineering to put together a RFP for that project. He mentioned to the Board of Commissioners last night that Machin is the engineering firm they will continue to use as they have the expertise for our Dam.

Discussion continued between Lewis and Authority members about construction, budget, and building materials.

Falling Waters Land Deal:

[http://leelanau.gov/downloads/falling\\_waters\\_property\\_05222024.pdf](http://leelanau.gov/downloads/falling_waters_property_05222024.pdf)

Chairman Christensen explained that this item was presented to himself and former Administrator Chet Janik back in 2020 during the start of the pandemic, and the pandemic time swallowed/buried it at that time. There is now a letter (see above link) dated March 28, 2024, from Falling Waters Lodge owners, Emily and Cooper Heston. Christensen explained that the letter and survey show a little tip piece of a tiny little peninsula that sticks out from the lodge. There is a concrete piece that has the staff gauge on it for the Dam, and another smaller piece with survey shows the land that we own that is underneath the Dam. The piece of concrete is also in that survey and gives you reference that is a little ways away from what we own, according to Vicki Brown (surveyor), and we realized we didn't own it. They had gotten a quit claim deed from both The Cove restaurant and Falling Waters Lodge, so we would own that property and fix the Dam.

This little piece is in the survey that O'Non Land Surveying has researched, and you can see that tiny piece is labeled 119.6 sq/ft., and is also surrounded by old wooden seawall. The Hestons would like us to quit claim deed that piece to them so they can fix that seawall. They are working with a contractor that is willing to help them get a grant that will allow them to do that. Christensen said as far as he is concerned going forward with this would be a win-win for both parties.

Brief discussion.

**MOTION BY GREENAN THAT THE LELAND DAM AUTHORITY RECOMMEND THE LEELANAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO ALLOW THE INVESTIGATION AND TRANSFER OF THIS PIECE OF PROPERTY TO A WILLING BUYER. SECONDED BY ROSS.**

Discussion – brief

**AYES – 5 (Greenan, Ross, Thompson, Warner, Christensen)**

**NO – 0**

**RECOMMENDATION CARRIED.**

Sensors and Staff Gauges:

[http://leelanau.gov/downloads/lake\\_level\\_graph\\_05222024.pdf](http://leelanau.gov/downloads/lake_level_graph_05222024.pdf)

Thompson updated members that they are waiting for the delivery on the new sensor from HydroNet. He didn't realize they design and make it after they get an order. He anticipates that about within two weeks they should have the gauge, and Cal Killen will help to install and calibrate. This is for the electronic sensor at the Dam.

Brief discussion by Authority members regarding daily data and possibly wanting to work on averaging for elevations so people reading it don't get thrown off by wind or rainfall.

Thompson said that is a good suggestion and Killen talked about that before. Thompson stated that he believes Dave Fisher has the calculations to come up with a three-hour or six-hour an eight-hour average, and to put this on the website for the County is not difficult.

Procedures / Manual Update:

Chairman Christensen said that he feels John Popa gets his information and ear pulled by a lot of people as a prior Dam Authority Member and as a member of the Lake Leelanau Lake Association. Christensen noted the comments brought forward by Popa earlier today (Lake Leelanau Lake Association) are appreciated and can be included as part of this Procedures topic.

Commissioner Ross asked is it possible to come up with a working draft sooner rather than later, it feels like they have been talking about this since she has been part of the Dam Authority and is this close enough yet to get something more formal out there for the public.

Thompson said the real question for him is who does what by when, to control the lake level.

Interim Administrator Lewis said the procedure is already in Maintenance Director Jerry Culman's head, and now we just have to work on getting that out and onto paper.

Chairman Christensen commented that as a committee (Christensen, Greenan, and Culman) they have gotten together several times and have been putting a lot of these items on paper. Concerns of dam failures and risk management have also put a whole new layer on dam procedures. Christensen said the process was taken off track a bit when they began getting into the hydraulic system update, but now they are ready to pick this back up. Christensen said when Patrick Machin listed the redundancies of the Dam, it can be run eight different ways, and once this is done the procedures of what to do to run the Dam in any combination will be provided. Christensen said he is willing to listen to any ideas that will get us closer to the finish point.

Lewis said that he thinks the lake level procedure is the big item, and what conditions would affect those steps.

Committee members planned to meet and will continue work on documenting procedures on June 3, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

Authority Members determined the next Dam Authority meeting will be tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 10 a.m.

Chairman Christensen briefly reviewed a Lake Leelanau Watershed map and said it shows the lake acreage totals, but it does not break out the acreage of watershed of North vs South. Christensen explained the watershed for South Lake is more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the watershed for Lake Leelanau. The map can be viewed at the following link:  
[http://leelanau.gov/downloads/ll\\_watershed\\_05222024.pdf](http://leelanau.gov/downloads/ll_watershed_05222024.pdf)

Public Comment (5 minutes):

The following individuals spoke: John Popa

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Ross commented that after the last Leland Dam Authority meeting, there was an article published in the Leelanau Enterprise and it seems like journalist, Zach Marano, is interested and wants to get the information right.

Ross also added that the Conservancy is doing a paddle down the Cedar River on Friday, May 31, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

- Chairman Christensen said that he has a folder put together by Rusty Friedle that has a procedure for dewatering (underwater procedure), and he will bring that back to add it to the other procedure information.

- Interim Administrator Lewis asked for all to please pass any other information to him so he can get it to Machin Engineering to review.

Adjournment:

Move to adjourn by Greenan and Ross.

Chairman Christensen adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

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Steve Christensen, Drain Commissioner  
Chairman, Leland Dam Authority

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Alison Middleton, Administrative Deputy Clerk for  
Michelle L. Crocker, Leelanau County Clerk