

Highland Lake Property Owner's Association Meeting Regarding Boat Launches, April 4, 2016

This meeting was opened by Executive Vice President Larry Leafblad at 7:00 PM. Community members present were Lorna Denig, Marilyn Henry, Kate Johnson, Joe Bigalke, Dennis Grube, Maggie Keefe, Darren Rubach, Bill Henry, Enid Tanton, Andy Drummond, and Cindy Mittlestaedt.

The meeting was requested for several reasons, the first being that Highland Lake is not set up to launch bigger boats. There are 6 parks and only one of them lends itself to this purpose, and this particular spot is a fire lane. More importantly, if the proper care is not taken there is a definite risk of introducing zebra mussels to the water. If this happens there is little hope of getting rid of them, and the ecosystem of the lake will be irreparably damaged. Half to two thirds of the area lakes are infected. Their presence takes away game fish by eliminating their food source and vegetation. They are transferred from one body of water to another by boats, boat trailers, and bait buckets being dumped. Kate asked how we could get the word out regarding the gravity of this problem. Signs are posted in the parks, there is information on the website but still people don't seem to be aware. It was pointed out that there needed to be a door to door campaign to educate the community, and to offer boat and trailer inspection assistance. Darren noted that a flyer went out in the dues notices and 2 people out of 230 contacted him requesting more information.

The situation right now is urgent. There will be those wanting to get their boats in the water in the next few weeks. We would like to ensure if at all possible that care is taken by the launchers to avoid contaminating the our water with equipment that has not been inspected and cleaned when coming from an infected lake. Andy said that he had discussed with Mike Kalstrup the idea of working with a company who will understand our concerns and be willing to work with us. Mike cleaned a trailer himself and the company was not happy about the time this took to do. Munson may work with us but they need to have a signed contract first. Discussion ensued about getting a pontoon trailer that will fit all the boats, procedures for cleaning trailers between lakes, and keeping the boat ramp locked at the fire lane.

In summary, whatever the policy becomes, all the pontoon owners need to collaborate. It was decided that Andy would host a meeting of the pontoon owners this coming Saturday, 4/9. The second piece is to educate all the neighbors. Kate and Marilyn will work on this. We should also reach out to other organizations to find out how they are handling this problem. More updates will follow as these pieces occur.