Bella Vista POA Lakes JAC
Meeting Minutes-January 10, 2024
2:00 pm-Country Club Board Room

Chairman: Matt Champagne
Vice Chairman: Michael Coughlin
Secretary: Carol Phillips

Committee Members: Michael Coughlin, Scott Sborov, Carol Phillips, Ross Gerner, Kelly Austin, Scott Hawes, Rob Montgomery, Kevin Attleson, and Matt Champagne.

POA Board Liaisons: Jerre Barron, Jr., Sandy Fosdick, Jeff Hendren.

Chairman Champagne called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Previous meeting minutes were approved.

Bella Vista POA CEO Tom Judson stated that the Lakes Committee recommendation concerning the e-foil issue had been forwarded to the POA Board of Directors for consideration. The Board work session will be Thursday, January 18th at 9:00 am in the POA Board Room. The regular session board meeting will be held Thursday, January 25th at 6:00 pm at the POA board Room. Mr Judson also advised that both of these meetings are open to POA members and the membership is encouraged to attend and share their comments with the Board of Directors.

Rick Echols, POA Lakes and Fisheries Superintendent, shared that the Lake Windsor drawdown lake level has varied from 46 inches to 56 inches down due to weather variances. Concrete was added to the Lake Windsor dam ramp area. Gravel and silt was removed from the culvert that was removed and replaced. The drawdown will cease on February 19th. POA Lake patrol personnel made over 1,000 contacts for the month of December. Grounds Maintenance has approval for the replacement of three pavilion roofs, which will take place in the spring of 2024. The Lake Avalon heated dock repair project is underway. All deck boards are being replaced. Normal maintenance continues with replacement of dock bumpers and sealing of wooden docks. A burn plan has been formulated for the Loch Lomond dam. This should take place within the next two months in cooperation with the Bella Vista Fire Department. Lake cleanup continues. Between Christmas and New Years 1,400 rainbow trout were stocked in Lake Brittany. All lakes were stocked with channel catfish this fall.

Lakes Committee member Scott Hawes shared information concerning a device called the Arkansas Cube, which encourages aquatic vegetation growth in lakes and reservoirs, seeking to reverse degradation of appropriate vegetation. The State of Arkansas Department of Game and Fish has provided a public video on YouTube concerning the construction and implementation of Arkansas Cube devices. Mr Hawes also shared that the “cubes” are easy to construct and that the Bella Vista Fly Tyers Club are interested in helping. Chairman Champagne added that some POA lakes are lacking in aquatic vegetation, which leads to smaller fish. Lakes and Fisheries Superintendent Echols advised the numbers of grass carp fish would need to be reduced in order for aquatic vegetation to increase in our lakes.
Echols also stated that viable aquatic seed beds exist in our lakes, but again, that grass carp population must be reduced in order to restore pre-existing aquatic vegetation. Aquatic vegetation brought to our lakes from other sources may contain invasive aquatic plant species and Echols advised using sources from our POA lakes for Arkansas Cube application by fencing and netting selected lake shoreline cove seed bed areas, allowing aquatic vegetation to grow and then seeding the “cubes”. Electrofishing can be utilized to reduce the grass carp population, as well as the fact that triploid grass carp are sterile and cannot reproduce, therefore natural attrition will help. Southern and brittle naiads were the most populous submerged vegetation in our lakes.

Chris Fuller, POA Lakes Ecology and Water Quality Manager, provided a presentation on 2023 Secchi disk readings for all our lakes entitled “Nutrients and the Environment”. Secchi disk readings indicate water clarity and thereby estimate plankton productivity. If the Secchi disk provides a reading that is too deep then the water is too clear to be biologically favorable to aquatic life. If the Secchi reading is too shallow there can be negative impacts and indicates murky water.
Ideally, Secchi disk readings are in between too clear and too murky. If the water is too clear fertilizer will be added to the applicable lake to increase plankton. POA volunteers take Secchi disk readings each Monday of the week, on each lake, from the end of April to the beginning of September. These readings are submitted to Chris who interprets the readings and determines if any fertilization should take place.

Next meeting is February 14th,

Meeting adjourned at 2:56pm.