

BTLIA Directors Meeting

3/14/2026 @ 9am

Stroh Fire Station

Roll Call for Meeting – Marc

Attendance –

Scott Harris	Mike Henry	Tricia Phillips
Marcus Tholen	Shane & April Perry	Wanietta Stuckey
Jeff Stevens	Deb Clark – Absent	Fred Burkhalter - Absent
Alice Synder – Absent	Mike Bible	Al Sivers
Amy Donley	Wally Walworth	Jeff Walborn
Pete Gabet	Velda Book	Ken Lauer

Meeting Minutes from 10/24/25 Directors Meeting – Scott

- Motion to accept the meeting minutes – Jeff Walborn
 - 2nd motion by April Perry
 - Meeting minutes APPROVED unanimously by the Board of Directors and Officers

Old Business:

- LARE Grant Update – Marc
 - \$11,400 fully executed grand agreement from the state of Indiana – thanks to Shelby and everyone that helped make that happen.
 - It covers all invasive species of weeds.
 - Permits for aquatic control are completed and fully executed.
 - Per Scott – The Steuben County Lake County meeting reported out that Crooked Lake was denied on their request because of the lack of funds for the state.
 - Marc = **Action item** – Check with the State of Indiana to determine what the criteria on how the state determines who gets the grant.

- Buoy Installation and Removal – Marc
 - Buoy permit is fully approved
 - Bid package has been completed and is ready to be sent out
 - Need multiple bids if possible
 - If know of anyone that would be interested in installing and removal of buoys, please contact Marc Tholen @ Tholenmb@gmail.com or 574-333-4428
 - No bid packages have been sent or received as of meeting date.
 - Fall Membership meeting we discussed up to \$3000 for the installation and removal of the buoys.
 - Contract for the entire year (Spring and Fall) is the expectation.
 - Payments would happen after the work is completed at each season
 - Earliest installation of the buoys: March 15, 2026
 - Latest removal date of the buoys: November 15, 2026
 - This does NOT include the flags
 - Associations that are taking buoys in and out on their own, the associations will need to communicate that to the board.

- o Not to exceed amount discussed
 - If bids come in above the discussed amount, we would come back to the Directors for additional approval.
 - Motion to approve \$4000 as a total bid for installation and removal of all buoys for 1 year by Marc Tholen
Jeff Walborn seconded the motion to approve \$4000 as a total bid for installation and removal for 1 year.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to pass the motion to not to exceed \$4000 for installation and removal of buoys for 1 year
 - Open questions about buoys –
 - Amy brought up that replace the flags by Penny’s Point should be replaced with Danger buoys
 - o To make this happen in 2027, we would have to amend the permit to put Danger buoys in
 - Discussion is to move buoys around, so we don’t add buoys
 - o Re-evaluate buoys for 2027
 - Amy – Flag location to be added – shoreline in-between some island, over by Bowsermen’s.
 - Marc = **Action Item** – Find the specific location from Amy Conley about the NEW location requested before putting out the flags in 2026.
- Buoy Sticker Modifications – Scott
 - o Change No Wake buoys to Danger stickers
 - Where you could potentially run a ground.
 - Scott to discuss with Rick Bianski (sp?) about making some stickers
 - Box that had stickers and reflective tape
 - Joe doesn’t know where the box is located.
 - April and Shane Perry said that the box had more reflective tape. Rick usually just gives the ok but they have contact at Rick’s location to get the stickers done. April has the contact for Todd.
 - Jeff Walborn has the trailer full of buoys in his back lot.
 - Amazon has a set of Danger stickers for \$54 a set = 1 buoy change out would be \$54 each to change out if we went to Amazon.
 - Need to confirm how many actual buoys need the change out.
- Nuisance Wildlife Animal Control Permit – Scott
 - o Permit is submitted and has a current permit.
 - o Have submitted amendments and emailed DNR
 - Have not received the latest amended permit
 - Scott = **Action Item** – Scott to email follow up with DNR for the amended updated permit.
 - o Any removal of the mute swans, eggs or beaver anyone listed on the permit must have the permit with them. Scott is requesting that any removal of the approved nuisance animals must be reported back to him within a week of completion. Scott will be keeping a tally and report to the DNR and the State of Indiana.
 - o Open question – Swan that comes on property that is injured and cannot get back to the lake? How is that handled? Response, contact the DNR for directions or contact a person that is currently on the permit to dispatch the animal. Goose are NOT on our permits.
 - o Open statement – Funding for DNR officers are limited and we might only have 1 DNR officer covering the county.

- Fish Stocking – Scott
 - Matt Horsley from the DNR Fisheries Biologist would not approve Large Mouth bass and Yellow Perch because they have a “robust population” in Big Turkey Lake.
 - Walley and Smallmouth bass would probably get easier approval.
 - Smallmouth bass need to be sustained for a few years to establish a population. Stocking 1 year will NOT sustain the population.
 - If we do Walleye’s, it would be 1 and done with the funds.
 - Currently have \$3081 in the Fish Stocking
 - Big Turkey Lake Association Tournaments provide a donation to the BTLIA and the money is placed into the Fish Stocking Fund.
 - Marc = **Action item** – talk to the lead of the Big Turkey Lake Association Tournament director to determine if they would like to continue to donate or use that money towards something else.

- Short-Term CD Investment – Jeff
 - Last 4 years we have a large abundance of funds – decision was made to get short-term CD’s
 - \$75,000 on 3 different CD’s
 - \$40,000 – Shortest term at 3 months @ 3.9%
 - \$25,000 – 6 month note @ 3.75%
 - \$10,000 – 12 months @ 3.55%
 - \$40,000 note is renewed and 2nd term – we are only earning 3.6%
 - Since October we have earned approximately \$720 on the 3 short-term CD’s
 - Negotiating rates must be done at renewals or the bank will default to the lowest rate.
 - When purchased, Jeff was told that there was no penalty for early withdrawals on the Short-term CD’s.

- Big Turkey Lake Projects – Scott
 - Ideas from the directors:
 - Walking Path / Biking trails to connect some of the associations
 - Need to check with LaGrange County Community Foundation to see if there are funds, more information needed
 - Roads – access road off 350. Eastside Estate need of stone. Lane 136a needs stone but no funds from Wildwood 3.
 - Island shore up – wake mitigation – save the islands from washout and erosion. Putting up stone and mesh fencing to control washout. Maple Island in front of Dennison is a prime example of the issues. Might be a project for the Conservancy as an environmental lake improvement.
 - Depth lake (see notes below)
 - Henry Lake channel – trees removed – probably just need some volunteers
 - Dredging projects – we need to start setting funds back for future project.
 - Silt traps cleaned in 2024
 - 2032 – 2036 will need to be cleaned again and maintained
 - Silt traps are determined by a surveying team that would benefit multiple counties
 - Picnic tables, benches or Pavilion for Turkey Lake Tavern property
 - April to talk to BTL Tavern to see if this is something they would like to be donated to them

- o Potentially 2 picnic tables and benches
 - Osprey nesting poles on some islands
 - Association access points throughout the lake / public areas within the different associations
 - Cleaning up –
 - o Note: Big Turkey Lake Conservancy will need to apply for the grants as a C3
- Ditch Taxes – Scott
 - o Crooked Lake was notified that there is no money and is a slow process to collect the funds they need to do their dredging project.
 - o Ditch taxes from the county will be spread so thin that there will probably be no funds available.
- P.A. System – Scott
 - o Update – Alice will purchase will be done prior to the membership meeting. Wants to ensure that it works for us.
- Lake Levels – Scott/Marc
 - o Barry is currently working on this project
 - o Engineering project needs funding for the ball to be rolling and to continue to move forward.
 - o Motion to pursue the engineering for the lake level project up to \$12,000 was made by Amy Conley.
Marc Tholen to second that motion.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to pass the motion to pursue the engineering for the lake level project up to \$12,000.
- 50/50 Raffles – Scott
 - o Permits are required
 - o Open questions: Is there a potential for winnings to be used for BTL clothing? Can we be creative to ensure that we are following the law?
 - o Marc = **Action Item** – Discuss with Shelby about the golf outing.
 - o Need to ensure that we are legal for Fall Crawl and if 50/50 is permitted.
 - o Alice = **Action Item** - Need to know what the cost of the permits are for 50/50 raffles

New Business:

- Tree falling into the lake and it obstructs boat travel who is responsible for removal?
 - o Example: Land owned by the DNR and a tree falls what is the correct process
 - o Marc = **Action Item** – Talk with the DNR and see what is the process and responsibility to remove the tree(s)?
- Steuben County - Dumpsters – Scott
 - o Roll off dumpsters for cleanup projects around Steuben County is available for our use.
 - No more than 3 days
 - 4 budgeted for BTL
 - Can do 2 and 2
 - Can do all 4 at 1x
 - The dumpsters must be placed in Steuben County locations only but residents from other counties can utilize these dumpsters.
 - Potential locations:
 - Near Alice's house
 - Jeff Walborn stated that Wildwood by the clubhouse would benefit to have one or 2 dumpsters.

- o Jeff = Action Item – He is going to talk to Jerry @ Wildwood to get his ok.
 - Potentially Shuler’s Landing
 - o Waynetta = Action Item – check to see if this location works with their Association
 - 40-yard dumpsters are requested
 - Items that cannot go into the dumpsters
 - NO Brush
 - NO Tires
 - NO Electronics
 - NO Hazardous Waste
 - Good to leave any scrap metal outside the dumpsters for recycling
 - Need to be advertised
 - Coordination will be done by Scott with Steuben County for dates
 - Looking around at the June 12th date.
 - Scott = **Action Item** – will follow up with Julie to get this completed.
- o Electronic Waste Day – potentially April 11th
 - NOT confirmed, more information to come from Scott
 - Items accepted: Computers, TV’s, Batteries, etc.
- 101 Lakes Trust “Reflections” – fund raising event for them – Scott
 - o Fund raising for the 101 Lakes Trust
 - o If move forward, we need 10 pontoons with drivers and speakers to explain the history of the lake
 - o Approximately 100 people driven around the lake
 - o Would need someone to put together the history of the lake prior to the event in August
 - o Question – Liability for those boat owners
 - o More information to come on this potential idea
 - o Board of directors would like this to be moved to 2027
- BTLIA By-Laws – Marc
 - o Question was raised about the membership – classification of the ownership. Section 2 article 1 purpose – BTL Ownership defined: Any person who pays the dues established by the Board of Directors, and who agrees to abide by the Bylaws of the Corporation, and who is classified under the Big Turkey Lake Ownership description shall be entitled to vote.
 - o Members only vote for Budgets and Directors
Shane Perry motioned to approve the revised bylaws.
Tricia Phillips to second that motion.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to approve the revised bylaws
- 2026 Budget – Jeff
 - o Budgets are good for forecasting expenses, projects, etc.
 - o Membership dues collection is about 62-65%
 - o Jeff went over the budget for the group.
 - o Amy Conley motioned to approve the 2026 budget.
April Perry seconded that motion.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to approve the 2026 budget with the changes of the interests on the CD’s.
 - o Budget will be proposed and voted on at the Spring Budget meeting.
 - o Alice = **Action Item** – email the members the final updated copy of the bylaws and the 2026 budget to the BTILA members prior to the spring meeting for review.

- 3rd Party Financial Audit – Jeff
 - Internal vs. external audit
 - Reason is the “changing of the guards” from Jeff to future treasurer
 - Looking at a 3rd party financial review
 - Big Long Lake is doing an internal audit
 - Could team up with the Big Turkey Lake Conservancy as they also have to do one.

- Guest Speaker for Spring Meeting – Marc
 - Matt Horsley with the DNR DFW Fisheries Biologist
 - DNR Officer to be on site for any questions after the meeting
 - Marc Tholen = **Action Item** – Marc to reach out to both contacts and get commitment for Matt and a DNR officer to be at the meeting.

- September membership meeting will include 2 open officers (Treasurer & President)

Additional Items outside the Agenda from the Directors and Officers:

- Amy Conley and Wanetta Stucky threw their names in for Co-Treasurers
- Wildwood 1 – new Director – Brian Evans – Jeff Walborn to get his contact information to the Board.
 - Amy Conley motioned to approve Brian Evans as the Director of Wildwood 1. Marc Tholen seconded that motion.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to approve Brian Evans as the Director of Wildwood 1.
- Old Wildwood – Brian Evans has a contact that he wants to confirm

- April Perry Updates:
 - Fundraising – 3 new logos for the BTL Clothing
 - Night of the fireworks – June 27th
 - Band in the afternoon at the Hanson’s for people to listen while on the lake – Double Shot is the band.
 - No set up, no tickets, just music provided
 - Request comes from April Perry for BTLIA to fund \$400 for the event.
 - April Perry motioned to use \$400 to book the band
Jeff Walborn seconded that motion.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to approve \$400 payment for the band on June 27th @ the Hanson’s.
 - Casino Night
 - Private event and no participation by the BTLIA
 - Stroh Days – Clothing will be present, need crews for set up and tear down. Set up starts at 8am and goes to about 2:30-3pm.
 - Fire Department and the Clothing Fundraising are teaming up during the sausage patty/tenderloin Fire Department fundraising event in August
 - Fall Crawl
 - 2 stops secured
 - Need 3 more and 1 needs to be the final stop
 - Looking for a theme for 2026 Fall Crawl
 - All stops must be finalized by May for the permit
 - NOTE: At the stops must consider boat traffic

Next Directors Meeting:

- Date and Time – secure Fire Station Meeting Room
 - No date and time was determined for the next meeting will probably be after the Fall Membership meeting.

- Membership Meetings are May 2 and September 5, 2026
- Jeff Walborn motioned to end the Directors meeting.
Marc Tholen seconded that motion.
Unanimous decision by the Board of Directors and Officers to end this meeting at approximately 11:30am.