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If lake goes down, so might dock numbers in bay

BY DEBRA NEUTKENS
REGIONAL EDITOR

WHITE BEAR LAKE — The day after the earliest ice-out ever, the lake measured 921.97 feet, almost 10 inches higher than last year.

In his monthly report on lake quality, White Bear Lake Conservation District (WBLCD) member Mike Parenteau said water levels are 3 feet higher than the lowest recorded in 2013. Average is 923.49 feet.

His report at the district meeting March 15 included a proposal from aquatics expert Steve McComas to survey Eurasian water-

milfoil. The cost this year is \$3,000, or \$200 more than last year, Parenteau told board members. The White Bear Lake director noted that McComas also offered to examine water quality as an independent third party on behalf of the conservation district due to the possibility of augmentation. Parenteau will check into the cost.

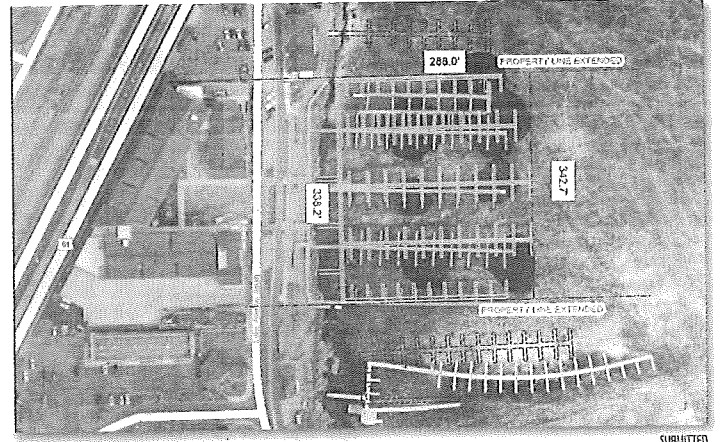
Board members also denied or tabled several dock permit requests.

Docks of White Bear manager Brian McGoldrick asked the board to grant a variance to put a 300-foot dock along his property line. Members denied the change, saying

it was too close to Tally's and would prevent boats from accessing their gas pump. There is a 10-foot setback required from any structure in the WBLCD ordinance.

McGoldrick feels the arrangement is not fair and that Tally's dock placement interferes with his ability to rent slips. "We're just trying to survive in Commercial Bay," he told the board, adding Tally's dock is in front of a public right of way, to which he objects, and boats coming in to get gas have created a mud berm in his dock use area. The Admiral D's owner contends that Tally's owners occupy his authorized dock use area to operate their business.

Mahtomedi director Mark Ganz, who chairs the lake utilization committee, said he wasn't so sure, adding that congestion in Commercial Bay will eventually require



The city marina would maintain the same footprint with the same number of slips but the White Bear Lake Conservation District wants to further review its modified configuration.

WHITE BEAR LAKE LEVEL BY THE NUMBERS:

- 921.97 ft.** Mid March
- 921.26 ft.** September 2015
- 918.84 ft.** Lowest recorded January 2013
- 924.89 ft.** Ordinary high water mark

every marina to be reconfigured. Members asked McGoldrick to provide an alternative proposal, but did approve two sections.

A request from the city of White Bear Lake to permit 160 slips was tabled. The city plans to buy new docks at a substantial cost from Minnesota Corrections in Stillwater. Prison inmates will build the structures, which City Engineer Mark Burch said will take about a year to manufacture. The city

wants to place the order in April.

The footprint for the new docks is the same as the current configuration, which the city has used for 30 years.

There is question about allowing the city to have that many slips under its own ordinance. Ganz said if the WBLCD follows the city's ordinance, the marinas would lose 97 boats, most of those from the city. The total slips available in the bay number 436.

Some members felt the city's marina configuration might not be fair to docks north (the VFW) and south (Pete Sampair) and asked the city to consider shrinking the width of the footprint. Since there were concerns, Burch said the city could wait a month and the decision was tabled until April.

"If the lake comes back up, we'll have a war," Parenteau observed.