LaGrange County Lakes Council
April 27, 2019
9:00 a.m.
Woods Too Restaurant

Present: Steven Scott-Welty-North Twin, Steve McElhoe-Lake of the Woods/McClish Lake, Sam Perkins-Blackman Lake, Bill Schmidt-Lake James, Sandy Ferrell-Admin.

Steve McElhoe called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. There were 17 in attendance.

Steve reminded attendees that we have changed the structure of the Lakes Council. We suspended our by-laws, and are keeping the organization going by email, texts, and phone calls. We are having only three meetings this year; today, July 27th and October 26th. The July meeting will be at the 5 & 20 Restaurant in Shipshewana: and the speaker will be Sabrina Miller from the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers and the October meeting will be at Pargill, 2335 N ST RD 9, LaGrange, Hosted by the LaGrange County Soil & Water Conservation District; Martin Franke, District Manager.

Water quality testing was explained by Bill Schmidt. Data for all LaGrange County lakes water testing is on our website; lagrangelakes.org. The largest problems are e-coli and blue-green algae.

Adam Sands from LaGrange Regional Utility District was our speaker. He stated that there is sewer at all but three of the major lakes. He stated the system is 23 years old. They intend to do upgrades pending hearings. Right now there are 7 different rate structures for the sewer system, but they are looking to blend rates where it is possible. There were three sewer projects from 1995 to 1998, and these are the oldest systems in the county. Currently there are 10 lift stations and 3,000 grinder pumps. He advised that if the red light is on, on the top of a grinder, give them a call. Adam stated that there is always e-coli, we just need to keep it under the acceptable amount. The Health Department will close a beach if the e-coli amount is over 235 parts per milliliter.

Adam stated that the sewer system goes from the lift stations to the grinders, and eventually to the treatment plants. They do pump it uphill. They can pump 1,000 gallons of water per minute. He advised that water from the treatment plant is cleaner than the creek water that it flows into. Everyone thanked Adam for his talk.

Bill stated there is a very close correlation with water quality and lake front property value. If we can minimize phosphates we can cut down on wees and algae blooms.

Steven Scott-Welty stated there was a study that says one pound of phosphate can create 3,000 pounds of weeds.

Steven Scott Welty will set up the water quality testing with Dave Arrington. He will also contact Martin Franke for confirmation about our meeting in October.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sandy Ferrell.