



Peaceful Valley Property Owners' Association, Inc. Newsletter

Visit our website at www.peacefulvalleylake.com
May 2020

Welcome to May. As the Grateful Dead once sang, "Lately it occurs to me--what a long, strange trip it's been." So far that's an understatement and we may be on this long, strange trip of social distancing, working and learning from home, certain types of shortages, and parts of the country virtually shut down for an unknown length of time. Our May issue is normally an annual reminder of the Peaceful Valley rules, regulations, and practices that we follow in order to keep PVL a safe, clean and above-all neighborly place to live, camp, and visit. This year, however, we have the specter of the COVID-19 pandemic season

casting a shadow over what's been a cool, wet, spring and run-up to summer. The Board of Directors met on Friday, May 15th to decide on the Association's response to a cautious reopening of the amenities here at Peaceful Valley. Results are below. Also, since we were unable to have our Annual Membership Meeting in April, we're using this issue to provide the results of our board of directors' election, budget approval, and fiscal year change proposal. As part of the voting, we received a handful of comments that are addressed below.

May Events:

- Friday May 15th, 7:00PM to 9:30 PM, PV Property Owners' Association Board of Directors Meeting.**
This is the regular monthly meeting.
- Monday May 18th, 5:30PM to 7:00PM, Public Water Supply District #1 of Gasconade County Board of Directors Meeting.** This is the regular monthly meeting.
- Monday May 25th, Memorial Day.** PVPOA and PWSD#1 Offices are closed
- Tuesday, May 26th, 7:00 PM, PWSD #1 Revenue Bond Election Information Meeting** at the lodge. See story below.

Results of the Board of Directors Election, Budget, and Fiscal Year Change

We want to thank all of you that voted, and even with the COVID-19 lockdown, we ended up with the most members voting in recent history. The last two elections saw an average of 93 voters. This year, we had 168 ballots submitted, with 14 submitted on paper and the rest submitted online. Elected/Reelected to the board are Lorraine Andrysek and Julia Baker with 153 votes each, and Gary Hacker with 154 votes. There were 10 abstentions, 4 who voted for less than

3 directors, 2 votes for Randy Fuller and Charlie Kinworthy, Jr., and 1 vote each for Matt Jost, Greg Brenner, Dale Kramme, Tom Bush, and Dan Hoemeke. Just to clarify, Charlie Kinworthy, Jr. and Dan Hoemeke are already on the board and have 2 years left on their respective terms. Tom Bush was unable to run again as our bylaws limit board members to 2 consecutive terms.

The budget was approved with 150 votes for, 11 against, and 7 abstentions. For most of the no votes, we asked for and received comments, which will be addressed later in the newsletter. The Charter amendment to change the Fiscal Year start to July 1st also passed with 154 yes votes, 9 no votes, and 5 abstentions.

Revenue Bond Election for the Public Water Supply District #1 of Gasconade County Rescheduled for Tuesday, June 2, 2020

The revenue bond election for PWSD #1 of Gasconade County, previously scheduled for April 2020, has been rescheduled to June 2nd, 2020. Passage of the revenue bond only requires a simple majority and we are urging eligible Gasconade County voters to cast a YES vote to ensure it passes. This revenue bond is critical to allow PWSD #1 to obtain lower-cost, longer-duration loans. This, in turn, gives us the best chance to keep our rates lower.



For the election, Gasconade County polling place officials will be using masks and plexiglass protection, plus all will be required to follow social distancing guidelines. If you would like to submit an absentee ballot, you can fill out a form via this website (there are qualification guidelines listed):

<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/electiongovotemissouri/absenteerequest.pdf>

The revenue bond informational meeting, previously scheduled for March 2020, is now scheduled for **Tuesday, May 26th, at 7:00 pm** (at the lodge). All PVL members are welcome to attend to gather info/ask questions.

The completed forms should be sent to the county clerk at the address below (deadline is May 20, 2020):

**Gasconade County Clerk
119 East 1st Street
Hermann, MO 65041**

COVID-19 Operations at Peaceful Valley

May-June 2020

The Board of Directors met on Friday, May 15th and have made the following operational decisions based on State, Local, and Federal health and government guidelines, and with input from our insurance agent. Each of these decisions will be revisited often—our goal is to resume normal operations as soon as federal, state, local, and insurance guidelines will allow.

Campground:

We're going to adopt the Missouri State Parks campground reopening timelines and will adapt social distancing practices being put in place at commercial RV parks.

- Starting May 18th, we'll be taking reservations for camping. There will be no "drop in" camping (same as Missouri State Parks)
- Camping will be allowed in the campgrounds starting May 26, 2020
- Restrooms and Showers will remain closed until further notice, but there will be a portable toilet available on the parking lot at the dam.
- To maintain social distancing among campers, some campsites will be closed where pads are spaced too closely together.
- These rules will stay in effect pending further government and health department guidance.

Lodge:

- The lodge will remain closed until further notice. At this time, we're not taking reservations for the month of June. We will take reservations for July, but they may be subject to cancellation. The PVPOA office hours are 9-2 Monday through Friday by telephone only at 573-437-2605. If you need to visit the office, call to make an appointment.

Restrooms at the Marina and Beach:

- It is impossible for us to keep the restrooms adequately sanitized as frequently as is recommended by the CDC, so we're going to keep the restrooms closed at the Marina and Beach until further notice. The portable toilets will remain at the dam, near the lower entrance, and at the Woodson marina, and we will add an additional portable toilet at the Marina near the lodge. While there are still shortages of hand sanitizer, sanitizer wipes, and toilet paper, some "light-fingered" people tend to make these items disappear quickly. The portable toilet vendor will try their best to keep these items stocked, but we recommend you bring your own just in case.

Pool:

- The pool will remain closed until further notice. Many nearby cities have already stated they will not be opening their pools this summer, while others are taking a wait and see approach. The issue is not with the pool water, which is chemically treated to kill germs and viruses, but with hard surfaces such as the tables and chairs. In addition, with the lodge closed that means the restrooms will not be available for pool users. If/when we can reopen the pool, it will take roughly 2 weeks to get the pool filled and the pool chemistry stabilized.

Playground Equipment, Tennis Court:

- The playground equipment at the beach and near the pool will remain closed until further notice.

Gazebo near beach:

- Will be available for rent to small family units. Rental rates are \$25/day with a \$200 security deposit.

Pavilion near lower entrance

- Will be open.

Beach

- Open, but playground and restroom closed.
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Ballot Comments Received

We received comments from 13 voters, many who voted “no” on the budget submission. All the comments are listed below unedited. The comments are categorized into 1) members who oppose security gates, 2) members who may or may not support having gates, but believe we need membership discussion on the topic, 3) questions about how the gates will operate, 4) making sure we take care of the aquatic vegetation problem we experienced last season, and 5) miscellaneous comments.

Security Gates:

Late last year the monthly Board Meeting had a roomful of members in attendance. Most were upset about the rash of burglaries, drug deals, syringes found near the beach, and people spending the night in their cars in various locations within the Peaceful Valley compound. This uptick came about the same time as the Missouri Supreme Court issued new Bail Rules that went into effect July 1, 2019, instructing courts to no longer detain certain nonviolent offenders before a trial simply because of an inability to afford bail. The new rules basically state that if someone is arrested for a non-violent misdemeanor, they should be booked and released on their own recognizance. The Gasconade County Sheriff, Owensville Police Chief, and several county deputies, have all mentioned an unprecedented uptick in petty crime, drug use, and homelessness that they’re now virtually powerless to enforce since they’re back on the street shortly after they’re arrested.

Board President Charles Kinworthy did research on security gates and found that prices had dropped significantly on security gates since the last time they were proposed about 15 years ago. The gate system we’re looking at will cost approximately \$13,000 installed and we estimate about \$7,000 to do the site preparation work to get them installed. Based on the overwhelming support for installing security gates, and the much lower cost with today’s gate systems, the board decided unanimously to put gates in at Peaceful Valley and include it in the 2020-2021 budget.

Whether there should be discussion or a membership vote about gates, the board felt that we had significant discussion at two previous meetings when more people showed up to discuss their security concerns than voted no on approving the budget because of gates. The previous vote about 15 years ago on security gates was not a vote on the gates *per se*, but a vote on a special assessment to fund the gates and installation. Members narrowly voted down the special assessment. The cost of today’s technology-enabled security systems has dropped significantly since the last time gates were proposed, so the board was able to add gates into the budget without needing a special assessment nor increasing annual dues.

We’re still working on the details for how the gates will work, but it will be like how most parking lots work. You’ll be able to enter using either a code or device (either a fob or key card) to enter. When leaving, the gates will open automatically. Guests must be authorized to enter by contacting the member and will either be given a code in advance or will contact the member upon arrival. Emergency equipment will chirp their siren and the gate will open for them. The letter carriers and UPS and FedEx delivery folks will have their own codes/devices to enter, and we can issue temporary codes/devices for frequent visitors such as home health care professionals.

One comment below mentions that their cell service is an issue here, so that's something for which we will need to develop a solution. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 lockdown, we missed our site survey appointment in late March where we had planned on discussing some of these operational questions with the field technicians. Our appointment is still on hold until we can reschedule.

Lake Vegetation:

Late last season we finally got ahead of the lake vegetation using a combination of chemical treatment and bringing our grass carp population up to about 300. We had the Department of Conservation out last spring to shock the lake and to advise on how to address the aquatic vegetation issue. One of the key findings was that shallower parts of the lake were nearly taken over by invasive milfoil. They also advised us that the copper sulphate that we had been using for years was ineffective against the milfoil and they advised using a different herbicide.

Unfortunately, there is no pre-emergent herbicide available. Last year we did find a good, affordable contact herbicide, and a fairly easy dispensing method. Only 25% of the lake can be treated at one time, as the decaying vegetation deprives the fish of oxygen. Currently there is no visible weed in the lake. We also have far fewer waterfowl (note that our feral swans flew off), because there is very little aquatic vegetation at present. Last year we budgeted \$7,000 for lake maintenance and ended up spending just over \$10,000, so this year we budgeted \$10,000 to ensure we keep the lake vegetation under control.

Voter Comments:

(Note: comments in black are as submitted by voters and are unedited. Board replies are in red to miscellaneous comments that were not addressed in the discussion above about security gates and lake vegetation)

- **Comment 1**

8K is too high for bridge repair of sides. *When the budget was created, we did not have bridge repair estimates from vendors. We chose \$8,000 to make sure it's covered.* Bridge approaches are being undermined and need engineering study. *We appreciate this observation and will have it inspected as soon as we can in the current semi-quarantine conditions.* Gates should be put to a vote. Members rejected gates years ago. *See comments above.*

- **Comment 2**

Doesn't the installation of security gates need membership approval? How are guests going to gain access with the gates in place? How will members gain access? This information was not in the document. *See comments above.*

- **Comment 3**

Because I don't want gates. *See comments above.*

- **Comment 4**

We don't want gates. Voted no twice. *See comments above.*
Sign should be paid for. *It is, we received an insurance reimbursement for the damage done.*

- **Comment 5**

The only 1 reason for raising the payroll would be to hire a life guards and if no life guard a swim at your own risk and every owner should have key code or key to enter the pool and not have the CRAZYNESS as we did last year... that was uncalled for. The pool should be open unless mechanical reason would occur.

We saw firsthand two seasons ago what happens when the pool is left unmonitored—people brought in coolers of beer (in bottles, no less) food, and all manner of prohibited items. Food attracts ants, and all it takes is one broken bottle or glass in or near the pool and we must close it down and completely drain the pool to ensure there are no glass shards that could injure swimmers. We have our security people serve as Pool Monitors to ensure only members and their guests only allowed in the pool and to enforce the rules (no food, glass bottles, etc.). They are not trained lifeguards.

Our insurance policy is explicit about swimmers under 14 being accompanied by an adult, 18 or older inside the pool fence with the underage swimmer. We're anticipating an increase in payroll as the voters approved a gradual minimum wage increase for the State of Missouri, raising the minimum wage to \$9.45/hour for 2020 \$10.60 for 2021. Prior to that increase, we had been paying \$8/hour to start. As an organization, our numbers of employees are small enough that we don't legally have to pay the state minimum wage, but to be competitive we believe following the minimum wage law is good business.

As for closures, last year we had a pipe break, then two pump failures--the first in the big pool that took the better part of a week to fix, and then later in the kiddie pool. With two new pump motors and a replacement of several pipes, we anticipate a season with little or no mechanical issues.

Lastly, the pool is open when the weather is cooperative. On cool and/or rainy days, we generally make a "game day decision" on whether to open or not. When it rains later in the afternoon and it looks like we won't get much traffic after it clears up, we will also close the pool. Check the website for updates on "iffy" weather days.

- **Comment 6**

We do not want security gates. [See comments above.](#)

- **Comment 7**

The amount of the assessment and the budget total is fine. One issue I have is with the gates and I do understand the security issue. We need to be presented with the proposed gate solution and then have a verbal discussion on it. [See comments above.](#) On our lot, cell access is at times poor and other times adequate and it is this way regardless of the cell service provider, so basing any solution on timely communications via cell service is not realistic. Let's talk about it and come to a consensus. [See comments above—we do need to find out from the security company some solutions for inadequate cell service and will provide that information when it becomes known.](#) The other issue I have is that in the provided narrative it appears that we are outsourcing work and eliminating employees. That's OK if it is cost effective. In the budget, funds seem to be allocated to line items that I would think would go away with outsourcing. In the grand scheme, these are small expenditures. Probably a short presentation at the annual meeting could provide an explanation. [We are still in the process of switching from employees to outside vendors. The line items in question carry a balance in anticipation of that switchover. So far, outsourcing the grass cutting has been very cost-effective. We eliminated several thousand dollars in wages, our equipment repair expenditures were half of what they had been in the past, and our gas/oil tab is significantly down. However, we still have our two 20+ year old trucks that are becoming more needful as the years wear on. We recently traded in our tractor, which has been somewhat of a lemon the last few years, for a new tractor that's easier to use and more suited for our needs. We had a](#)

miscommunication with the groundskeeping vendor last season with cleaning out the ditches of leaves, but we've since fixed that issue and anticipate much smoother action this year. We also contracted out our snow removal and salting work, which was very timely this past winter as both our tractor and dump truck were down for repairs at the same time during the first two significant snowfalls, meaning that we would not have had any way to clear and treat the roads. The vendor we contracted with has several vehicles and drivers, so we've eliminated the multiple points of failure we had with our truck, tractor, and salt spreader.

- **Comment 8**

I think Randy said it best, we need to wait till we can have a QA session. **Voting was anonymous— we don't know which Randy said what.**

- **Comment 9**

First, can not select those items that I would approve of. This is not a form fallible pdf. **We have never had a "line item veto" with the Peaceful Valley Budget. Keep in mind, our board of directors consists of fellow PVPOA members, all volunteers, elected by the membership to act on behalf of all members of the Association. The board spends a significant amount of time helping run what is in effect a small town. Board members also understand that we can't please everyone, which unfortunately is the nature of public service. With more than 93% of members voting to approve the budget we believe we've made the right decisions on behalf of the majority of members.**

Secondly and so on, why is there a budget for equipment repair and Maint if we are contracting all of that out. **See response to comment 7 above.**

You say that the Lake is an increase for weed control yet the sheet shows 2019-2020 as being \$10,420 and 2020-2021 being \$10,000. That's a reduction, not an increase. **The budgeted amount for 2019-20 was \$7,000, but we spent \$10,420 to get the lake weeds under control. The budget for 2020-21 increases the \$7,000 budget from last year to \$10,000 this year for us to stay on top of it. Totally opposed to security gates. This issue has been propose and investigated several times over the years. Things change— an uptick in crime as mentioned above and a significant reduction in the cost of security gates make it important that we take this action on behalf of all the members of the Association.** If the board wants to install gates, this item should be withheld until such time as a face-to-face meeting is possible and the situation can be explained and the many questions answered. I would rather spend money to have guards at the gates more and not driving around. Guards driving around only leaves the possibility of unauthorized persons entering while the guard is not at the gate. **We heard from several members that want better security because of the increase in burglaries, vandalism, and homelessness. The principal way to improve security is to restrict access to the facility. The way most businesses do that is to funnel traffic to a handful of entryways to their complex and have a method to allow entry to authorized people.**

To verify authorized entry, we have basically two choices--having a security guard present to verify membership/guest status or use automated gates. By far the cheapest way over time is security gates. For example, if we spend the \$20,000 on wages instead of the gates as you suggest, that money would last just one summer season. The rest of the year would be open as it is now, and we'd still be subject to the crime and vandalism that our members do not want. Installing gates is the most cost-effective solution for our complex. Also, you have budgeted \$2000 for gas and oil. If we are not doing our own grass cutting and maintenance, what do we need the gas and oil budget for? **We still have our trucks and tractor and plan to have a part-time maintenance person to do odd jobs.** Also, in Supplies and Security (\$21,000) yet earlier in the budget you indicate that we have received \$9875 from the insurance company for the sign/repair/replacement. **For bookkeeping purposes, the \$9875 is considered miscellaneous income which we will use to repair the sign at the same time we will do the site preparation for the gate installation.**

- **Comment 10**

We need a fish cleaning station on the lake. The board will discuss this at the upcoming board of directors meeting. However, this proposal has been rejected many times in the past for the following reasons: Someone would need to sanitize it daily, and then there becomes the disposal of the waste parts (guts and heads). Some people throw them into the lake, which is gross if they drift to your shore, and they encourage rough fish (drum, etc.). If disposed in the trash, they draw raccoons and other wildlife. And nothing smells worse than dead fish!! When people go fishing with a professional guide, he gives you the cleaned fish, but takes the waste home for disposal.

- **Comment 11**

I have been a lot owner since 1980. My main use of my lot is for fishing and swimming. Please keep the lake clean of algae so we can fish the banks and crappie holes. Thanks. That's our plan with the increased budget for lake maintenance.

- **Comment 12**

We feel the board is doing a good job on keeping up on the various things that has to be addressed. We appreciate the vote of confidence.

- **Comment 13**

I agree with the annual dues only if there is money to fight the grass problems. If not you should raise the dues. The Lake was unacceptable last summer and that is the whole reason everyone is here. See comments above.

- **Comment 14**

Can you update us on when the lower entrance repair will be done? Is there a need to include this repair or portion of this repair in the budget? We will repair the sign at the lower entrance when we do the site preparation for the gate installation. Unfortunately, we do not have a date yet as we wait out the COVID-19 situation.

No Wake Zone Update

Visitors to the lake may have noticed the addition of two new no wake zones to the lake. The first is in the beach cove, and the second is near the boat launch ramp and along the seawall at the dam. The one in the beach cove is in partial response to a change in Missouri law that specifies a 100' slow/no-wake speed zone from docks, piers, buoys. The buoy is placed at a position where a wake-producing boat can stay 100' away from docks and have enough room to turn and stay 100' away from the opposite shore. The buoys near the boat launch area and along the seawall are to calm the water for members that are launching or retrieving boats and to help prevent damage to any boats docked along the seawall. Lastly, we moved the buoys that define the no wake zone at the upper end of the lake towards the lower entrance, getting them closer to their original location in line with the lift station.



Lines added to Boat Ramp to assist boat launching & retrieval. Buoys are circled