



# BIRCH BARK

Newsletter of **WHITE BIRCH LAKES RECREATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

4730 Lake Rd., Farwell, MI 48622-9618

ph.(989)588-2853, fax(989)588-4924, **SECURITY (989)588-7066**

Website: [www.whitebirch.org](http://www.whitebirch.org) Email: [manager@whitebirch.org](mailto:manager@whitebirch.org)

KOZLOWSKI VOLUME

OCTOBER 2007

No. 2

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

### "NOTHING PERSONAL, ITS JUST BUSINESS"

How many times have we heard that in a TV program or a movie? It may be over used, and misused by Hollywood, but it has meaning in the real world. When a company or corporation takes some action that may affect us, they are doing business. They are not doing it to get you angry. We can express our opinions to the company, all the while knowing we are responding to business. It is the same in WBL. When the Board makes a decision, it is conducting the business of the Association. It is not doing it as a personal affront to you. It is nothing personal, it's just doing business. If we disagree with the decisions of the Board, we must respond in a business like manner. If we do not, maybe we don't want an answer.

"Have you stopped beating your wife yet?" We all have heard this beginning of a comic's bit. It is the best example of asking a question with a presupposed premise, and is intended not to be answerable. Some of our members ask questions of the Board with this technique. Are we to assume that they do not want an answer?

In talking about our conduct at meetings, and the comments we make, I have been accused of wanting "warm fuzzies". What I and all of us want is civility, courtesy, and respect for our neighbors. Seeking answers through clarity of speech, and knowing that business is not personal, will help to bring us back to being a community. Who knows, maybe then warm fuzzies will break out.

Brian M. Kozlowski

### So you have decided to have a party.

There is a better answer than taping your gate code to the pedestal at the front gate. Not only do your friends and family see the code, but any other person does too and can use that code to enter at **any time**. When you decide to have the party, call the office for a special code which will be activated for **just the party** and then expire. You can include that code in your invitations and everyone comes in easily and safely.

Thank you, the office.

### Daylight Savings Time

Remember to turn your clocks back Sunday, Nov. 4. An extra hour of sleep- woo-hoo. It is also a good time to test your smoke alarms and turn that fire extinguisher upside down and right side up a few times to make sure the contents don't solidify and render the extinguisher useless.

**CAL'S PAINTING**  
**30 YEARS EXPERIENCE**  
**COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL**

- Interior & Exterior
- Power Washing & Deck Care
- Window Washing & Gutter Cleaning
- Drywall Repair • Cleaning & Refinishing Log Homes
- Cabinet, Woodwork, Door & Furniture Refinishing

**GO CALL CAL NOW**  
**989-258-9638**

• Free Estimates • Work Guaranteed • Insured  
**NO JOB TOO SMALL OR TOO BIG**



All Correspondence to the Board of Directors, a Director, a Committee Chairperson and all responses are on file at the office.

<b>Board of Directors and Staff</b>		<b>COMMITTEES AND CHAIRPERSONS</b>	
<b>President</b>	Brian Kozlowski	<b>Activities</b>	Joe Romine 588-3155 Mary Alice Harrington 588-2561
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres.</b>	Sharon Bridges	<b>By-laws</b>	Sal Scozzari 588-4415
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres.</b>	Marv Frayer	<b>Campground</b>	Fred Witchell 588-6797 Al Willoughby 588-0749
<b>Director</b>	Greg Hernden	<b>Birch Bark</b>	
<b>Director</b>	Al Isaac	<b>Election</b>	
<b>Director</b>	Brian Heiden	<b>EPC</b>	Chick Witchell 588-6797 Dennis Karlson 588-3346
<b>Director</b>	Pat Graham	<b>Garden Club</b>	
		<b>Hospitality</b>	
<b>Manager</b>	Gail White	<b>Just Community</b>	Kevin Dombrowski 810-225-9675
<b>Secretary</b>		<b>Maintenance</b>	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Priscilla Moore	<b>Planning</b>	
<b>Security</b>	Bob Pelfrey 588-7066	<b>Whitebirch.org</b>	Todd Graham 588-9192

**NOTICES FROM COMMITTEES:**

**Reminder from EPC Committee:**

To all lot owners, you must go through EPC (Environmental Protection Committee) for a permit for any lot improvements.

All structures, no matter what size, must be approved.. Any accessory building brought in to your lot must be pre-approved by the committee. On some of the lot improvements, there must also be permits issued by Lincoln Township regarding Zoning and Building.

Thank you

**From Activities Committee**

White Birch Lakes Annual Halloween Party will be Sat., Oct. 27, 2007 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. at the clubhouse See you there, Joe Romine



**Red Hat News**

Our next meeting will be Monday, Nov. 5 at the clubhouse at 7:00 p.m. Come ready to decorate and bring a sack lunch and a handyman, if you have one.

Helen is getting tickets for the play, “Best Christmas Pageant Ever” at the Broadway Theater in Mt. Pleasant on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. She needs a count so give her a call if you want to attend. The plan is to have supper either before or after the play.

In December, we will have our annual Christmas party at Chick's house on Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, the time has not been set yet. Bring finger foods and a \$10.00 exchange gift.

We plan to give a present to at least two of our lady shut-ins who live alone. Perhaps we will sing Christmas Carols. We also plan to make up a box of Christmas goodies for a soldier son of a resident serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. If you know of any others with loved ones in the military, let us know and we will do the same for them. Be well and be safe my good friends, Georgia Romine

<p><b>Unique Holiday Gift For A Child</b> Looking for that special gift that can become a child's treasured keepsake from you? How about our... <b>Personalized Children's Books</b></p>
<p>Child's name is printed throughout the book Keeps reading fun . Child becomes the star Sesame Street© DC Comics© Best© and more Reading for children of all ages</p>
<p>Source Code: MIWBL . <b>Toll Free Phone: 800-461-2995</b></p>
<p><b>www.READINGISPERSONAL.COM</b></p>

CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
(Proposed)  
September 8, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

President Brian Kozlowski called the meeting to order at 9:03am. Board members present were President Brian Kozlowski, 1st Vice President Sharon Bridges, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Marvin Frayer, Director Patricia Graham, Director Brian Heiden and Director Al Isaac. Director Greg Hernden was excused. Also present were Manager Gail White, Treasurer Priscilla Moore and Secretary Todd Graham. The meeting was called to order with prayer by Director Al Isaac followed by President Brian Kozlowski leading The Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sharon Bridges moves to approve the minutes from the August 11, 2007 Board Meeting. Second by Director Al Isaac. All in favor, motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

For the month of August 2007 Treasurer Priscilla Moore reported income of \$21,622.65 and expenses of \$27,329.39. Cash on Hand on August 31, 2007 was \$203,299.38. Motion made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Marvin Frayer to approve the Treasurer's report. Second by Patricia Graham. All in favor, motion carried.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Jolene Compton, Weinlander-Fitzhugh, presents to the Board of Directors the fiscal audit from March 1, 2006 to February 28, 2007. Jolene explains that the audit receives an unqualified opinion, the highest you can receive. Further questions should be addressed to the Board of Directors.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Brian Kozlowski reported: There have been several requests by various members in regards to receiving a copy of those members who voted by absentee ballot. The Board of Directors voted not to do that. However, if any member voted by absentee ballot and wishes to have their information put on a list to be released, please forward it to him or the office. Also a members list was requested and this

exists for all members available in the office. Also all letters submitted to the Board of Directors are on file for review. Request for special meeting; there will be a special Board of Directors meeting scheduled to consider that petition, so please watch for this to be announced.

Todd Graham submitted his resignation due to work constrictions.

There has been a warrior in a war that has suffered some injuries-that warrior is common sense. There has been a raging debate over some issues in our association, some of which are highly outrageous and some even approaching inviting law enforcement in here due to constituting a criminal offense. Fortunately so far common sense has won out. When someone tells you something that cannot be supported by hard facts or documentation, please verify. I applaud you all for checking things out.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Gail White reported:

The cost of the front gate was \$32,500.00, software \$1,184.00 and backup unit, \$3,100.00 with shipping=\$36,784.00. Original cost of gate was \$38,500.00. We did receive an insurance payment for storm damage for \$6,868.00 Lincoln Township superintendent Gene Ringley spoke to Gail about placing a laundry facility out at the campground. He spoke to the Health Dept. and was told we would be considered commercial, so we would be required to have city water and sewer, right now it seems very cost prohibitive. She also talked about proposed changes to township ordinances regarding changes to lakes. Go to [www.lincoln-clare.mi-twp.org](http://www.lincoln-clare.mi-twp.org) website to view. If the new guidelines pass, we would need to apply for an exemption to continue to allow our aerators to run through the winter. New panels for the side of the gate have been delivered, cost \$400.00. Consumers is ready to come off Jefferson, down Pine to Hemlock and to White Birch Lane. Doug will be clearing brush for them next week. This installation will be underground. Consumers will also install a new transformer on Mannsiding and White Birch Lakes will be switched from Surrey transformer to the new one.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Amend C&R Article II Section B, tabled last meeting.

(Condensed Board Meeting Minutes continued on page 4)

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sharon Bridges moves to place this back on the table for discussion, second by Director Brian Heiden. All in favor, motion carried. Original motion voted on, carried.

Amend C&R Article IV Section A. 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sharon Bridges moves to take off table, second by Brian Heiden. Original motion voted on, carried.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Isabella Bank and Trust acquired Farwell State Bank, new additional forms need to be completed, on top of the resolution passed at last month's meeting. These have been taken care of, documents on file for Board Members to review.

Director Al Isaac moves to approve for sale by Reiss Real Estate, the 39 lots listed, second by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sharon Bridges. All in favor, motion carried.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Comments from the floor were accepted and will be available at the office.

#### MOTION TO ADJOURN

Director Al Isaac moves to adjourn. Second 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sharon Bridges. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR**

by Brian Kozlowski

The following are responses to comments given by Members during the September Board meeting.

A Member asked what would be the cost of amending the C & R's. A fixed cost can not be attached, as there are many variables which may occur once the process is started. It can be stated that a simple mailing would constitute approximately \$610.00

A Member asked if there was a line item in our budget for attorney fees. Yes, line item #1040.20. If you compare the Income & Expense report from the September meeting to the one that will be available at the October meeting, you will see an increase in expenditures in this line item of over \$4,000.00 This is what was paid in attorney fees to get the money owed to our Association for past due assessments through the lawsuit WBLRA vs. Stephen Bryant, Louise Bryant, and Bryant Builders.

The reason for not brining the roads prior to the Labor Day weekend was asked by a Member. We should all remember the frequent and hard rains leading up to Friday that weekend, all of which caused the brine application to be postponed.

A suggestion was made by a Member on clearer posting of signs giving direction to the Emergency Exit. This bears further study of traffic patterns before action is taken.

A Member suggested that a WBL telephone directory be published. The feasibility of this is being studied.

It was suggested by a Member that a shuffleboard court be painted on the blacktop next to the tennis courts. The Member did not suggest WBLRA purchase the equipment to play shuffleboard. The Manager has been instructed to research the practicality and costs of this, and report to the Board.

Several Members made suggestions in various formats of how to sell the lots acquired by WBLRA. At this time all lots not designated for other purposes are listed for sale with Reiss Real Estate. Currently approximately 38 lots are listed.

On the same subject, a Member, a local Realtor, complained that WBLRA is selling lots too cheap. As long as WBLRA owns these lots, no assessments are being paid on the lots, and WBLRA has to pay the taxes. The value of real estate as a commodity is dictated by market conditions. We want to get these lots into the hands of members.

A Member asked what it has cost WBLRA in dollars to hire a collection agency. The answer is Zero.

A Member stated that the Board is hiding information from the Members because the annual audit report was not ready by the 2007 Annual Meeting. The 2003/04 audit and prior audits were delivered in September of those year. The 2004/05 Audit by Weinlander-Fitzhugh was delivered in July of 2005. The 2005/06 completed audit by McMahan, Thompson was delivered in December 2006. The 2006/07 completed audit by Weinlander-Fitzhugh was delivered September 2007. The noted exception to these delivery dates was the 2004/05 audit by McMahan, Thompson received in March of 2006 because it duplicated work already done by Weinlander-Fitzhugh.

Comments from the floor by B. Kozlowski  
(Continued from page 4)

An opinion of blight conditions and an improper fence were stated by a Member. The matter was referred to the EPC.

A Member complained of several members of Lincoln Township Fire Dept. violating WBLRA rules. The Member stated that no soliciting is permitted in WBL. The Member stated that the Firefighters were collecting money, which is soliciting, over the Labor Day weekend for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in conjunction with the Jerry Lewis Telethon. The Member is wrong. WBLRA welcomes and applauds the efforts of Firefighters all over our Nation for their efforts to combat this dreadful disease.

All Board of Directors Regular meeting minutes in their entirety will be available at [www.whitebirch.org/birchbark.asp](http://www.whitebirch.org/birchbark.asp) after approval by the Board of Directors. Any attachments mentioned will also be available at the office

Copy of Letter Sent to Lincoln Township

September 11, 2007  
Gene Ringley  
Lincoln Township Supervisor  
175 Lake George Ave.  
P.O. Box 239  
Lake George, MI 48633

Dear Sir:

It was disappointing to have learned of the action of our Township Board at their last meeting. I refer to their choosing a design for the roadside signs intended to represent White Birch Lakes. We feel that the Township Board intended to make a decision that was rooted in democratic principles. Unfortunately, they were misled. Their action was precipitative and not representative of the WBLRA community. The White Birch Lakes Recreation Association requests that the Township Board withdraw their action.

The WBLRA is a not-for-profit Michigan corporation that represents all the property owners in our community. The property owners elect a Board of Directors to govern the community. That Board of Directors are the only members of the community with the authority to make decisions for the entire community. This is granted by our Articles of Incorporation and our Bylaws. The Board of Directors represents approximately 890 Voting Members and

approximately an additional 1200 non-voting Associate Members. In matters put before the Membership by the Board of Directors, only the Voting Members may cast a ballot. Historically, we have approximately 380 to 395 active voters, with some issues garnering approximately 470 voters. At each Annual Meeting of the WBLRA, held on the third Saturday of July every year, the Voting Members elect several Directors to the Board. All the uncompleted business of the previous Board "falls to the floor". The newly comprised Board, if it chooses to, must take up anew any business that was not completed by the previous Board. In effect, old, or unfinished, business becomes new business. This is the fate of any decision by WBLRA on the design of the signs. The Board elected this past July has taken up the matter, and has intended to make a decision soon.

It is true that the previously seated Board had chosen to solicit the opinion of the membership as to their preference of the three designs submitted to that Board. This was not a binding vote, but an attempt to survey the opinions of the membership. In the resulting voting of this survey, Mrs. Obrecht's design did receive the plurality of the votes, but not a majority. Many of the votes expressed the desire to take elements of each design to create a new design. Further input from members was given via voice, email, and letter stating their desire to incorporate design elements of each of those submitted, resulting in a majority of those members responding expressing a desire for a unique design.

Mrs. Obrecht's design received a positive response from less than 4% of the Voting Members, and less than 2 % of the entire membership. This was an insufficient number of positive responses for the then sitting Board to make it the selection for WBLRA.

It is our understanding that at the Township Board meeting where the decision on the proposed signs for our community was made, that approximately 20 persons were there supporting a position to choose Mrs. Obrecht's design, and that they tendered a petition signed by 100 or more persons. We, as well as you and the Township Board, have no way to determine the status of those persons who signed this petition. In any case, it is an insufficient number of persons to be

(Continued on Page 6—see Lincoln Twp. letter)

Lincoln Twp. Letter (Continued from Page 5)

a fair and proper reflection of the opinion of our community. The WBLRA Board of Directors may take such information into consideration in any deliberations on any issue.

It has been the stated intent of the current WBLRA Board of Directors to submit to the Township a design unique and true to our community, instead of some generic design. We had hoped to use a design submitted by a young girl in our community as the base for a combination of the three designs. When this became known, Mrs. Obrecht refused to allow any portion of her design to be used, or any change or addition to her design. This tied the Board of Directors' hands if it wished to compile a design out of the three. It did not restrict the Board of Directors from fulfilling its duty to make the decision for our community.

As you can clearly see, the actions of the Township Board has subverted the will of hundreds of WBLRA members who have chosen to have their Board of Directors select a design to represent our community. We do not believe that this was the intent of the Township Board. If we and the Township Board are to fairly and democratically represent the WBLRA community, then the decision as to the design of the sign must be that that is submitted to the Township by the WBLRA Board of Directors.

We request the Lincoln Township Board to rescind its action. If the Township Board will not do this, then WBLRA does not wish to participate in the sign program. We trust that you will communicate all herein to the Township Board, and reply with their decision.

Sincerely,  
Brian M. Kozlowski  
President, Board of Directors  
White Birch Lakes Recreation Association

September 10, 2007

Makers of the Petition and  
Signers of the Petition  
WBLRA

Dear Members,

The petition submitted to the Board of Directors via unknown persons on August 11, 2007 can not go forward.

Please be advised that the petition can not go forward for the following reasons:

1. The first object of the petition does not conform to statute.
2. The second object is in violation of the Bylaws.
3. The third object violates the Covenants and Restrictions.

Please perfect the objects on a new petition and submit it to the Board.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Kozlowski  
President  
Board of Directors  
WBLRA

Michael Oleniacz



**PRIMARY PEST CONTROL**  
SERVICING MID-MICHIGAN AREA

2652 West Battle Road  
Farwell, MI 48622

Phone - (989) 644-5885  
Toll Free - (866) 571-5885

---

HIGHWAY CLEANUP

Anyone available to help clean up along U.S. Highway 10 where White Birch Lakes adopt-a-highway, please let Joe Romine (ph. 588-3155) know or call the office ph. 588-2853. Thank you

---



From the Mailbox

- ❖ Our condolences to Sal and Phyllis Scozzari on the loss of their son.
- ❖ Our condolences to Brian Kozlowski on the loss of his father.
- ❖ Whitey Lesperance, a devoted husband, father and previous longterm resident of WBLRA, passed away Friday, August 24, 2007 after succumbing to illness.
- ❖ Congratulations to Greg and Linda Hernden on the birth of another grandchild!
- ❖ Best Wishes for Priscilla Moore as she recovers from surgery.

	<p>Contracted REALTORS for White Birch Lakes Recreational Association owned properties</p> <p><b>Alan H. Reiss and Charles R. Gaskill</b></p> <p>Associate Brokers 989-588-9621 800-642-3708 Fax: 989-588-4949 www.reissrealestate.com 575 East Main St. Farwell, MI 48622</p>
---	--

Rates for  
 Advertising in The Birch Bark - \$15.00  
 (Business Card Size)  
 Rental of facilities – Call 588-2853  
 Articles for The Birch Bark  
 Addressed to 4730 Lake Rd.  
 Farwell, MI 48622-9618

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – AUG 2007

INCOME	
Membership	\$18,758.54
Delinquent	818.50
Interest	391.54
Misc.	9.28
Advertising	0
Sales	492.68
Campground	1,060.00
Boat Storage	0
EPC Fees	92.01
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$21,622.55</b>
EXPENSES	
Administration	\$11,269.48
Office Expense	1,160.17
Road Maintenance	66.72
Clubhouse Maintenance	7,158.58
Campground Maintenance	1,741.20
Entrance Costs	176.96
Capital Improvements	0
General Assoc. Maintenance	2,462.01
Maintenance Building	32.09
Goods for Resale	247.33
Spec. Events/Activities	40.58
Professional Costs	346.00
Boards & Committees	39.25
Security	1,638.68
Lakes	733.41
Taxes and Insurance	216.93
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$27,329.39</b>

COMPLETE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CAN BE OBTAINED AT THE WHITE BIRCH LAKES OFFICE

Advertise in the Birch Bark  
 Call (989) 588-2853, White Birch Lakes office.  
 Payment must be made prior to listing. Fees and ads must be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for publication in the following month's issue. Business cards must be clear enough for clean scanning. Make checks payable to White Birch Lakes Recreational Association to the attention of **The Birch Bark** for accounting purposes.

White Birch Lakes Recreational Association does not endorse and is not responsible for products and/or services advertised in the newsletter.

White Birch Lakes Recreational Assoc.  
4730 Lake Road  
Farwell, MI 48622-9618

#### **Clubhouse Hours**

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri  
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Sat  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Sun  
**Closed Wednesday**

#### **Office Hours**

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Mon, Tues, Wed,  
Thurs., Fri  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Sat  
**Closed Sunday**

#### **Pool Hours (Beginning Nov. 1)**

4:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Mon, Thurs  
10:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m., Sat  
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Sun  
**Closed Tues., Wed., Fri..**

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

*[www.whitebirch.org](http://www.whitebirch.org)*



#### Community Calendar

Oct. 27, 2007- Board of Directors Meeting rescheduled  
9:00 A.M. At the Clubhouse

Oct. 27, 2007 - Halloween Party  
6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M. At the Clubhouse

Nov. 10, 2007 - Board of Directors Regular Meeting  
9:00 A.M. At the Clubhouse