

# Lake Orion Lake Association

November 19, 2009

## Town Hall Meeting to Address Marine Patrol for 2010

Members Present: 26 Households  
Non-Members Present: 10 Households  
Government Guests: Mike Gingell – Oakland County  
Paul Zelenak – Village Offices  
Jerry Narsh – Village Police  
Neal Porter – Township Offices  
Major Bill Smith – Oakland County Marine Division  
Sgt. Matt Snyder – Oakland County Marine Division

- Can we offset cost with public access dock fees?
- Comments from Mike Gingell
  - No one is happy about the cuts
  - County is cutting back, state issues
  - It's good we are talking now
  - Working together to put a solution in place
  - Problem is funding
  - Need to find out what is acceptable then figure it out
- Comments from Paul Zelenak from the Village
  - There are cuts in the budget
  - Trying to work together for a solution
  - Have some potential solutions but would like to hear from us
- Comments from Major Bob Smith
  - Cuts are real
  - All departments are affected
  - Marine divisions has been around for forty plus years
- General Comments
  - What will happen to the boats?
    - Don't know yet, could go to auction
    - There has been dialog with several communities
  - Could the marine patrol operate like the volunteer firemen?
    - Major Smith said no

- Cannot get into vigilante mode
- What about having something at the public access for donations?
- Do they check at the access for safety equipment?
- Has there been an analysis of violations given to lake residents versus non-residents?
  - No, only by type of violation
  - It's not the riparians doing the repeat violations
  - **Action Item: Sgt. Snyder said he could do the analysis (lake residents vs. non-resident)**
- Public launch is governed by DNR
  - What happens in over capacity situations?
    - Police can govern that and write tickets
  - Would have to get with DNR
  - Strong argument to better manage the site
  - There are many small things that can be done to make up solution
  - DNR site is poorly manned
  - Need to get their (DNR) buy-in and them to address
  - **Action Item: Major Smith will follow-up with DNR on possible solutions to better manage public access site**
- Cost to patrol Lake Orion is about \$22,000 per season
- Does a percentage of tickets issued go to Marine Division
  - No, all monies go to the State of Michigan
  - There is a formula on how it gets disbursed
  - State is not forthcoming with local fees
- Can we be kept informed on the marine patrol boats that are made available for communities to acquire?
- There is a history on the lake with boating accidents before the days of good patrol
- Safety is prime concern
- How can the Marine Division provide the service for so many years and then just take it away?
- Property values are going down and now without the patrol they will be further affected
- \$26 per resident would cover the cost to protect values and safety
- 15% of the properties on the lake have no boats
- Why not take \$100 off property taxes to cover the cost?
- Where are we going to get the money?
- Snowmobile trail fee went up to get more revenue

- Why not boaters permits to pay for patrols state wide
  - Would still need distribution from the State for this cause
- Looking now at short term solution (2010)
- Can a tax be tacked on ?
- Can Village do anything?
- Marine patrols are needed and essential
- Best option is the Marine Division to patrol
- One option is if there is no presence of the Marine Patrol
- Not a citizen soldier
- Could do like a reserve staff to work with part time officer
- Marine Division has equipment and personnel
- Can Village come up with \$12,000?
- The hourly rate for Marine Division officer is \$35 and is locked in for 3 years
- How can the Township help collect from residents?
- Could be done with a SAD
  - Would require a petition with 51% of owners agreeing
  - Township administers and City collects
- Suggestion: Major Smith suggested to shave down numbers (hours of patrol) and pledged to work with DNR
- Has there been a reduction in road patrols?
  - Not yet
- Would manpower be available?
  - There are 25 officers in reserve
- On SAD, can we keep the State out of it?
  - SAD comes back 100% to entity
- Public access is not manned
- Snug Harbor has excess parking most of the time with overflow parking on the road
- What about posting rules at access site with phone numbers to report violators?
- Needs to be cause and affect with consequences
- Narsh encourages everyone to call on violators
- Jump boats
  - Could not answer response time to drop in a jump boat, could be hours
  - Looking at 3 boats for Oakland County for weekends
- For 2010, it was suggested to keep a boat on Lake Orion
  - Physical boat will be gone and not available
  - What if we pay to keep boat?
  - There are 450 lakes in Oakland County

- Marine Division will lose boat resources if cannot find away to pay for them
  - Find a way to fund 2/3 of requirements
- What are other Communities doing?
  - Lake Orion is way ahead of others
- Can LOLA help build momentum with other Lake Associations?
  - Would appreciate the support
  - There is nothing stopping us (Lake Associations) from getting together
  - **Action Item: Mike Gingell offered to provide available contact information on other Lake Associations**
- There are issues with Officers on duty picking on people
  - Can a plain clothes officer come onto lake to observe behavior of patrol officers?
  - These are quality control issues
  - **Action Item: Major Smith committed to address these issues**
  - It was suggested to keep the same officers on the lake
- What about one-time safety inspections for the season?
  - Sticker is given today
  - Will address issues of inspections
- What about patrol schedules
  - Not locked into a set schedule
  - Based on weather conditions
  - Could do a survey on when is the right time based on complaints
  - Could sit at docks (on call) to save on gas and address specific issues that are called in by residents
- Mike Gingell asked what is consensus of this group
  - Municipalities are working jointly
- Final comments
  - It is not an option not to have patrol
  - Can't forget non-residents and they need to pay
  - Can we have DNR assessment similar to annual permit?
    - Yes, through legislation
  - How can we get non-lake and off-lake boat owners to pay?
  - What about a legislative committee
  - Should investigate what snowmobile permits are doing
    - Could be 2011 issue
  - If Township and Village believe we need it, then we can do it
- Next Steps
  - Board will meet and process then communicate to membership