

Lac du Flambeau Town Lakes Committee

Starting a Lake Association
Wednesday, July 16, 2008

Welcome & Introductions

Purpose

Brief History of Lake Associations in Wisconsin

- **1898 – Lake Geneva Association**
- 1902 – Lauderdale Lakes Association
- 1930's – Sanitary Districts
- 1959 – Wisconsin Federation of Lakes
- 1974 – Wisconsin Law, Lake Districts
- 1981 – Wisconsin Association of Lake Districts
- 1992 – Wisconsin Association of Lakes (WAL)
- **Today – Wisconsin Lakes Partnership (WAL + University of Wisconsin Extension + Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources)**

Types of Lake Associations

- **Unincorporated Lake Associations**
- **Incorporated Lake Associations**
- **Qualified Lake Associations**
 - Lake Districts
 - Sanitary Districts
 - Intergovernmental Organizations
 - Nonprofit Conservations Organizations

What is an Unincorporated Lake Association?

- Informal & flexible
- No special rules governing structure or design
- Some have a charter: name, purpose, structure
- Some have bylaws: rules of procedure, dues, election of Board

Unincorporated Lake Association Liabilities

- Exposure of members and officers to risk from actions of the association
- Exposure of members and officers to risk of financial and tax liabilities

What can an Unincorporated Lake Association do?

- Require dues/raise funds
- Borrow money, secured by assets
- Make contracts
- Acquire & sell property
- Sue & be sued
- Have educational programs
- Communicate with units of government and others
- Participate on the TLC
- Conduct lake management activities such as:
 - > Monitor water quality
 - > Inventory/monitor aquatic plants
 - > Manage invasives
 - > Buy land to protect sensitive areas
 - > Restore wetlands
 - > Develop erosion control programs
 - > Develop long-range management plans

What is an Incorporated Lake Association?

- To avoid the liabilities of unincorporated associations, many associations incorporate under Chapter 181 of the Wisconsin statutes, the Wisconsin non-stock corporation law
- File a form and submit \$35 fee
- Reduces liability, typically only the assets of the association are at risk
- Usually has bylaws, structure, Board,...

What can an Incorporated Lake Association do?

- Require dues/raise funds
- Borrow money, secured by assets
- Make contracts
- Acquire & sell property
- Sue & be sued
- Have educational programs
- Communicate with units of government and others
- Participate on the TLC
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What is a Qualified Lake Association?

A "qualified" lake association is an incorporated lake association that is eligible for state lake grants, providing the association meets several qualifications.

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What can a Qualified Lake Association do?

- **Apply for State grants**
- Require dues/raise funds
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- Sue & be sued
- Have educational programs
- Communicate with units of government and others
- Conduct lake management activities such as:
 - > Monitor water quality
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What next?

Starting a lake association – five steps:

1. Informal discussion session
2. Exploratory meeting
3. Bylaws committee meeting
4. Charter meeting
5. Celebrate!

How may the TLC help?

The Town Lakes Committee will:

1. Serve as initial liaison with WAL
2. Provide names & addresses of property owners*
3. Provide mailing labels, envelopes, stamps*
4. Provide sample completed forms, by-laws, etc.
5. Provide basic supplies to get started*
6. Provide copies of People of the Lakes*
7. Host first meeting with prospective members
8. Offer standing invitation to participate with TLC

*Funds available through October, 2008

Contact

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