

Guardians of the Lake: Highlights & New Leadership from the 17th Lake George Improvement District Annual Meeting

Oak Grove Residents Approve 2027 Budget, Elect Officers, and Honor Long-Term Ecology Milestone

OAK GROVE, Minn. — The Lake George Improvement District (LGID) officially held its 17th Annual Meeting on August 18 at Oak Grove City Hall. With 15 voting members in attendance, the meeting successfully brought together local residents alongside distinguished guests, including Oak Grove Mayor Weston Rolf, Anoka County Parks Planner Karen Blaska, and City Council Candidate Taylor Morse, to ratify essential community measures.

Guardians of the Lake: Celebrating Our History

Outgoing Board Chair Juanita Reed-Boniface presented an inspiring annual report tracing the district's evolution from a volunteer community group to a formal improvement district. She highlighted how early club leaders—inspired by the philosophy of cultural historians and the vision of Will Ridge—stepped up in 1998 when Eurasian Watermilfoil began rapidly spreading. To sustainably manage rising treatment costs and specialized ecological needs, leaders successfully petitioned the City of Oak Grove to officially establish the LGID.

Today, the district firmly upholds its core mission: *"To preserve and protect Lake George and its abutting wetlands, and to increase and enhance the use and enjoyment of the lake for all."*

Critical Voting & Business Actions Approved

During the formal business segment, community members evaluated and voted on critical financial and operational items. The following measures all passed unanimously:

- **2027 Operational Budget:** Officially approved as presented to ensure robust, uninterrupted water management.
- **Property Assessment:** Ratified at \$200 per property for the 2027 fiscal year.
- **Spending Authorization:** Granted explicit board authority for necessary line items exceeding \$5,000.

New Board of Directors & Officers Elected

"Our annual meeting underscores how effectively our community functions as true guardians of this shared natural resource," stated outgoing Board Chair Juanita Reed-Boniface, who was formally recognized at the meeting for completing 17 years of service on the LGID Board of Directors, including five years as chair. "With a newly approved budget and focused local leadership, we remain dedicated to fighting invasive threats, optimizing water clarity, and preserving Lake George for sustainable recreation."

The community cast ballots for key leadership roles, followed by an immediate board assembly to elect the executive officers who will guide our lake's preservation over the coming term:

- **Board Chair:** Pat Graiziger
- **1st Vice President:** Don Nast (Re-elected to a full 3-year term)
- **2nd Vice President:** Jay Edwardson
- **Treasurer:** Perry Prestholdt (Elected to complete a 2-year unexpired term)
- **Secretary:** Open (To be filled via board appointment)

Note: Pat Brey withdrew his name from consideration for the final open 3-year term. This vacant board seat will be formally filled by board appointment at the upcoming September session.

Special Recognition: Outstanding Service Award

The district extended its deepest gratitude to **Jaiden Edwardson**, Lake Ecology Management Coordinator, for four years of exemplary service since her appointment in July 2022. Jaiden was highly commended for her prompt, professional management of grant applications and her strong collaborative relationships with the Minnesota DNR, Anoka Conservation District, Anoka County Parks, and aquatic treatment contractors. Her proactive work has secured vital funding, directly protecting lake health and benefiting every local resident.

Looking Ahead: Climate & Ecology Focus

The LGID's active operational committees—including By-laws (led by Jay Edwardson), Communication (led by Don Nast), Financial Administration (led by Pat Graiziger), and Administration (led by John Vilandre)—remain hard at work. In addition to continuing invasive species management, the teams are launching target initiatives to handle cattail growth and monitor accelerated vegetation challenges caused by low seasonal moisture, dropping water levels, and excessive summer heat.

Get Involved: Oak Grove residents and property owners are highly encouraged to stay connected. To review complete copies of the approved 2027 budget, comprehensive meeting minutes, or the latest DNR aquatic tracking reports, please monitor the online portal at <https://www.lakegeorgemn.org/> or contact the board directly Pat Graiziger, Chair, 612-889-3163 or pgraiziger@icloud.com

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