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Subject: Lakes District
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May 15, 2025

Dear Members of the Common Council

Thank you for your discussion on May 6 about the Lakes District question and especially for voting to have a Council member on the Advisory Committee. Whether or not you support the District, that tells me all of you care about the lakes and want to do right by them.

To clear up any misunderstanding about the Advisory Committee's role, we are a volunteer group with no statutory authority. We were asked by you to get up to speed on lakes issues and recommend action to you. The Lakes District Statute gives authority to the Common Council to serve as the Commission until an open election is held. At no time will a budget be written by a non-elected body and no time will a budget pass without a majority vote of those present at the Annual Meeting.

Let me share my vision of what a Lake District could be once it is up and running. The Commissioners will be elected at the Annual Meeting and have as their only focus of attention, the health and preservation of Cravath and Trippe Lakes. Four meetings a year are required one of which is the Annual Meeting in the summer. This allows the Commission to monitor the lakes every season of the year, compare progress of goals and budget from previous Annual Meeting and discuss what the goals and budget should be next year. In today's environment of climate and political change, none of us can predict what conditions we will be dealing with in the future. Invasive aquatic plants are waiting in the wings. It is essential that a group of dedicated, elected citizens step forward to do the necessary work of watching and taking action.

The issue of the budget is getting a lot of attention. While important, the goals are more important. The Commission can only ask for money for projects that are well-thought-out, cost-effective and have a high probability of success. That is where the real work happens.

I don't assume my vision will be easy to achieve. If you approve the resolution, you the Common Council of Whitewater, will be the Commission, in addition to all your other responsibilities, until 20% of the voters petition for an open election. The sooner we get an elected board with only one focus the better. I would hope you would facilitate the petition process any way you can. Some districts have made use of City mailings, events, meetings, press releases, and the like to promote the collecting of signatures.

Thank you again for your attention and consideration.

Respectfully,

Ginny Coburn

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