

## Questions Submitted for Lakes Advisory Committee

Questions categorized by where I think they may fall.

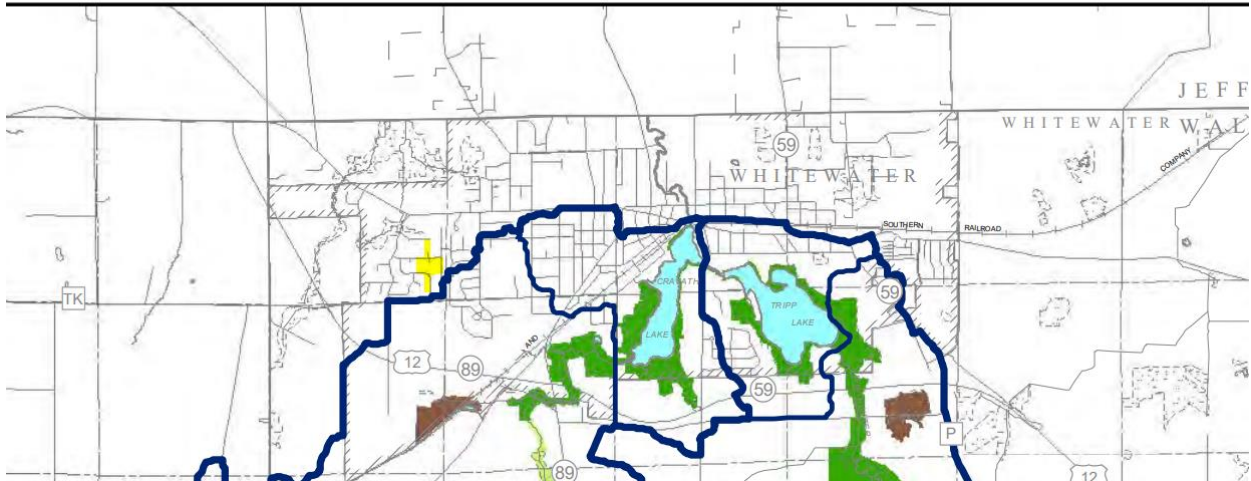
- **LEGAL**

- How are property owners counted? For example the city has a substantial number of LLC owners of (assumed) rental properties, does this mean that each LLC gets a vote?
  - What about the impact of property owners who do not reside personally in the proposed lake district? Because of the unusually high percentage of rental properties in the city, we need to be clear on property ownership counts, and specific numbers of how many signatures. Not just 51% but is that 400 signatures or 7000?
- How much “Home Rule” latitude does the city have in establishing such a district.
  - Could the city set a higher threshold than 20 percent to change governance structure?
  - Could the city set a more specific and directive representative make-up of the district
    - (I am most interested in if there could be a requirement that there is a voting representative from each of the Whitewater City Council Districts)?
  - Can elections of board members, if it is not the city council, occur concurrently with spring elections, or must it be an in-person synchronous special meeting?
  - Can the city set a lower max levy than what is provided by state law?
- How has the Wisconsin Supreme Court viewed entire cities that do this?
  - What legal challenges could Whitewater open itself to if implemented? It sounds like we are a bit unique in terms of an entire city doing it vs. a town or more tightly drawn district around a lake?
- How does a citizen petition to be removed from the district (*Rock-Koshkonong Lake Dist., Rock River-Koshkonong Ass'n, Inc. v. State*)?
  - If the council is in charge of the district, does it go to BZA, or is that a full council hearing?
  - How will the city (or special body) manage an assumed influx of such cases with the establishment of such a district?
  - How are the metrics laid out in Rock-Koshkonong be established in regards to Cravath and Tripp Lakes? Or will they be different? How will said metrics be measured?
- Instead of creating the district could there be a referendum for a levy increase of [for example 250K per year], similar to the (proposed) increase to police and fire that allows council to maintain oversight of the “purse strings,” without creating a new authority?

- **FISCAL/ECONOMIC**

- What are the levy limit(s) that can be placed on such a district?
  - Can the city set them lower?
- More data on benefits to residents who do not live on or near the lake.
  - For example the west side of the city does not look to reside in any specific environmental corridors according to SWERPC.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS AND ISOLATED NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS  
WITHIN THE CRAVATH AND TRIPPE LAKES TOTAL TRIBUTARY AREA: 2005**



- Whole cities that have become lake districts, have they seen their property values rise significantly? Especially as opposed to communities without a district?
  - Is there any research (and I may be way off) that might suggest that with such a district, the rise in property value and lowered mill rate as a result might lead to a decrease in property taxes, thus helping offset the cost of the district?
  - How much more NEW grant money would be we eligible for?
    - Is a lake district the requirement?
    - What are our honest chances to receive funding via these grants?
- **DNR CONSIDERATIONS**
    - Does the DNR consider this a wetland or a lake?
      - Does a Lake District help with or guarantee a change in that classification?
    - How does such a district help with the bureaucracy of dredging, spraying etc. permits from the DNR?
      - Who do those permits cover (city plus property owners, or just the city).

- Who oversees dredging projects with a Lakes District, city or district?
- **OF THE LAKES COMMISSION**
  - What other options were considered, such as lake association? Why were they passed over?
  - Why use the council resolution method, instead of collecting 51% of landowner signatures?
  - What community polling has been done?
    - Explain more specifics about how citizens reacted to the idea of a district. There is a difference between “we want our lakes back,” and “we will pay extra tax dollars for it?”
    - [There were over 80 citizens at a meeting in August 2023.](#)
    - I would like to see specific numbers.
  - *If* given 250,000 as was in the memo to council, what would be the suggested course of action with that money?
    - Are we getting more dredging? A harvester for the lake? Etc. In other words, what should be priorities of a budget/grant requests? How much do they cost?
    - Without a plan then it feels like council would be voting on something to “see what is inside.”
  - What is the five- and ten-year strategic plan?

#### Additional Questions:

- What percentage of lake properties surrounding Trippe and Cravath are privately owned?
- What is the value of that privately owned real estate in aggregate?
- What does the value of a "typical" rate from other communities amass? (For instance when considering a downtown BID we looked at the total potential district, and the value, and had a range of scenarios to gauge low/average/high potential income. Please note that I am interested in the shoreline adjacent properties only first, with and without the approximate value of the privately owned, and if possible with the publicly owned as well.
- I am curious if anyone who lives along Whitewater Creek attended the meeting that was held at 841 Brewhouse, particularly in light of the very vocal resident who attended a public meeting for lake updates.
- I am interested in more information to be clearly presented as to who could sign a potential petition for a lake district, who could theoretically vote at their annual meetings, and what constraints exist/are imposed by the state for how much they can levy the district. Particularly I am interested in whether tenants of rental properties are also part of the body of individuals who could do either. There's a very nebulous construct of who could or couldn't that needs to be fleshed out.