

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners  
Request for County Board Action/Agenda Item Cover Sheet



To: Chairperson, Aitkin County Board of Commissioners      Date: June 4, 2013  
Via: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator  
From: Kirk Peysar, County Auditor

Title of Item:  
Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District election

Requested Meeting Date: June 11th Estimated Presentation Time: 15mins

Presenter: Kirk Peysar

**Type of Action Requested** (check all that apply)

- For info only, no action requested       Approve under Consent Agenda
- For discussion only with possible future action       Adopt Ordinance Revision
- Let/Award Bid or Quote (attach copy of basic bid/quote specs or summary of complex specs, each bid/quote received & bid/quote comparison)
- Approve/adopt proposal by motion       Approve/adopt proposal by resolution (attach draft resolution)
- Authorize filling vacant staff position
- Request to schedule public hearing or sale       Other (please list) set special election dates for LMLID
- Request by member of the public to be heard
- Item should be addressed in closed session under MN Statute \_\_\_\_\_

**Fiscal Impact** (check all that apply)

- Is this item in the current approved budget?  Yes  No (attach explanation)
- What type of expenditure is this?  Operating  Other (attach explanation)
- Revenue line account # that funds this item is: \_\_\_\_\_
- Expenditure line account # for this item is: \_\_\_\_\_

**Staffing Impact** (Any yes answer requires a review by Human Resources Manager before going to the board)

- Duties of a department employee(s) may be materially affected.  Yes  No
- Applicable job description(s) may require revision.  Yes  No
- Item may impact a bargaining unit agreement or county work policy.  Yes  No
- Item may change the department's authorized staffing level.  Yes  No



**Supporting Attachment(s)**

- Memorandum Summary of Item
- Copy of applicable county policy and/or ordinance (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable state/federal statute/regulation (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable contract and/or agreement
- Original bid spec or quote request (excluding complex construction projects)
- Bids/quotes received (excluding complex construction projects, provide comparison worksheet)
- Bid/quote comparison worksheet
- Draft County Board resolution
- Plat approval check-list and supporting documents
- Copy of previous minutes related to this issue
- Other supporting document(s) (please list) draft notice and draft ballot

**Provide eleven (11) copies of supporting documentation NO LATER THAN Wednesday at 8:00am to make the Board's agenda for the following Tuesday. Items WILL NOT be placed on the Board agenda unless complete documentation is provided for mailing in the Board packets. (see reverse side for details)**

**Kirk Peysar**  
**Aitkin County Auditor**  
209 Second Street Northwest Room 202  
Aitkin, Minnesota 56431  
218.927.7354

June 4, 2013

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Kirk Peysar, County Auditor

Re: Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District election

I have prepared the attached draft election notice and draft ballot for the referendum election for the proposed LMLID pursuant to Minnesota Statute 103B.545 and Minnesota Rule 6115.0970.

The proposed timelines for the election process are:

<b>June 24-25, 2013</b>	Mail notice of election to qualified voters and property owners of record
<b>July 10, 2013</b>	Mail election materials (ballot) to qualified voters and property owners of record
<b>July 31, 2013</b>	Return by date for ballots
<b>August 1, 2013</b>	Tabulation/results/certification

**Notice of Special Election**  
**Proposed Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District**  
**Referendum on Establishment**  
**(Day), (Month Date, Year)**

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 103B.545 and Minnesota Rule 6115.0970, the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners has called a special election for (Day), (Month Date, Year) from (time) am/pm until (time) am/pm at (insert location) for a referendum vote on the establishment of the proposed Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District. The question submitted and to be voted upon by the qualified voters and property owners within the proposed lake improvement district is the following:

**“Should a lake improvement district be established to provide *the programs and be financed as outlined in the July 9, 2012 Petition document?*”**

The purpose of the LMLID is to provide a reliable and equitable source of funding to Lake Minnewawa Association (LMA), in order to continue their water quality management and control of excessive weed growth as directed by the DNR Lake Management Plan. The LMLID and a successful LMA will promote public health and welfare through improved water quality. Water quality will be improved for swimming, navigation, boating, fishing and other lake recreation.

LMA was started by a group of concerned citizens in 1961. The founding name was Save Minnewawa Association (SMA). Initially they used pontoons to hand-cut and pull weeds in an effort to save the lake. At that time, most lakeshore owners pulled their docks and boats from the lake in early July due to excessive weed growth. In 1981 a weed harvester was purchased. As time went by, the need for a larger harvester became apparent. The harvester used today is a 1982 model which was purchased in 1994.

The classification of Lake Minnewawa is a low-depth eutrophic lake. As such, the weed problem will never go away. Without the LMA weed harvesting operation and work with the DNR, Lake Minnewawa would become a dried up weed bed. In 1982 the first DNR sponsored Lake Management Plan was prepared. The established relationship between LMA and DNR continues with amendments and updates to the Plan made as needed and required. Volunteer Citizen Water quality monitoring with secchi disk reading has been done since 1979. (in association with the Minnesota PCA)

The LMA has managed to meet the increasing costs of operation (fuel; equip repairs; parts; payroll; insurance; taxes), but the future looks tentative. In researching used harvesters, 2 separate used harvesters have been for sale during the last 2 years at an approximate average cost of \$100,000. The cost of even a used harvester, let alone a new machine is currently out of reach with the yearly budget of the association. As the LMA board looks into the future; with current source of funds unreliable and the need for replacement equipment, it becomes obvious that a consistent, substantial source of funding is required.

A lake improvement district will establish a reliable and equitable source of funds to ensure the continued success of the LMA. The LMLID will expand the current 126 donating property owners to 522. All 522 property owners will benefit from access to a clear and navigable lake, with increased property values.

All lakeshore properties of Lake Minnewawa – Aitkin County Minnesota (01003300) will be included in the LID. The LID will also include those back-lot properties with deeded access to lakeshore property on the lake and those properties abutting state owned lakeshore property. All of these properties have direct access to the lake with the ability to place a personal dock. As such they all benefit from the increased values which the LID will provide. Those properties which are part of a larger development such as Savanna Ridge, will receive the assessment in the year after they are sold from the developer. Details of the full watershed area of Lake Minnewawa is included as part of the DNR Lake Management Plan.

We do not expect than there will be any lands or waters which will be adversely affected by the LID.

The programs to maintain and improve the health of Lake Minnewawa will be financed with an annual special assessment of \$65 per property. This LMLID assessment amount is based on the need to provide 75% of the average current LMA expenses, provide for additional harvesting equipment and a small amount for LID reporting expenses. In order to keep the costs as low as reasonably possible, the LMA Board of Directors is committed to achieving their mission through a mix of this special assessment, with continued volunteer and community donations.

There are 2 public accesses on Lake Minnewawa and a number of sites “dedicated to the public”.

Total valuation of properties included in the MNLID is \$ 102,326,500.

The purpose of Lake Minnewawa Association (LMA) is to promote lake stewardship by providing education and services about controlling pollution, beautification, water safety and clear passage. In general it is dedicated to maintaining and improving the natural resources of Lake Minnewawa by educating, creating, promoting, and implementing methods of improving and preserving the overall condition of the lake. Funding provided through the MNLID will help support continued community benefits. Community service activities include: collection for McGregor area Food Shelf; highway cleanup; Township Spring Clean-up; Kids fishing. Promotion of good lake stewardship and providing of information is done through an annual packet distribution; numerous email mailing and a regularly maintained web page.

For the purpose of this special election -

a qualified voter is a person 18 years of age or older, a United States Citizen and who has maintained their residence within the boundaries of the proposed lake improvement district for at least 20 days immediately preceding the special election.

a property owner is a Minnesota or Non Minnesota resident with legally recorded ownership interest in the real property located within the boundaries of the proposed lake improvement district.

Qualified voters and property owners who will be absent on Election Day can submit an absentee ballot at the Aitkin County Auditor’s office located at 209 Second Street, Aitkin, MN 56431 during normal business hours beginning *(Day)*, *(Month Date, Year)*. The County Auditor’s office can be contacted by calling 218-927-7354 by email at [kpeysar@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:kpeysar@co.aitkin.mn.us).

To facilitate the administration of this special election, qualified voters and property owners are encouraged to bring documentation that they either reside in and/or own property within the boundaries of the proposed lake improvement district, for example, a current property tax statement, Minnesota Driver’s License, Minnesota Identification Card etc.

Note – This Notice of Special Election is being mailed to the primary and alternate taxpayers currently identified in the County’s property tax system as owning property within the boundaries of the proposed lake improvement district. It is the responsibility of the primary and alternate taxpayers to notify any other individuals with a legally recorded ownership interest in their property.

Please direct questions to Kirk Peysar, Aitkin County Auditor by phone at 218- 927-7354 or by email at [kpeysar@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:kpeysar@co.aitkin.mn.us).


OFFICIAL BALLOT

*(Month Date, Year)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Judge

\_\_\_\_\_ Judge

COUNTY QUESTION BALLOT  
AITKIN COUNTY  
SPECIAL ELECTION  
(Month Date, Year)

	To vote for a question, put an (X) in the square next to the word "YES" on that question. To vote against a question, put an (X) in the square next to the word "NO" on that question.
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County Question

REFERENDUM ON ESTALBISH OF THE LAKE MINNEWAWA IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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**To vote for the establishment of the proposed lake improvement district, mark an “X” next to the word “YES” on that question. To vote against the establishment of the proposed lake improvement district, mark an “X” next to the word “NO” on that question**

	YES
	NO