

Update

After this year's Town of Barnes Annual Meeting the board of The Friends of The Eau Claire Lakes Area (FECLA) has retained the services of the legal firm Dorsey to aid in navigating the complexities related to maintaining Ordinance Section 8-4 which reads as follows:

"No person shall water ski, operate a motorboat or other power propelled device pulling an object and/or a person, or use a jet ski on the waters herein described after the hour of 5:00 PM and before the hour of 10:00 AM."

A letter was sent to the Town of Barnes from Dorsey which addressed statements made at the Annual Meeting and recommended that the Town Board conduct a professional survey of the views of area property owners before taking any steps to revise or repeal the Ordinance. It requested that such a survey would be developed by a professional polling organization in conjunction with the Town Board and various stakeholder groups, including the FECLA, and conducted by the professional polling organization, with the results being made public.

In addition FECLA recommend that the Town Board commission a study of environmental ramifications of increased water-skiing and jet skiing on the lakes and the subsequent impact on the quality of the water and the wildlife in and around the lakes.

Such a survey and study would provide valuable input to the Town Boards with reference to the views and perspectives of the taxpayers and thus aid them in their decision making process.

The FECLA Board has conveyed it's willingness to fund such a survey and study and also stands ready to financially support needed educational and enforcement efforts surrounding this ordinance.

A copy of this letter and a letter issued on August 29, 2016 by the Wisconsin DNR stating that the Ordinance was valid and not subject to DNR review will be posted in the near future on our organizations website.

On Wednesday, August 16th at 6:00 pm a meeting is to be held at the Town Hall of Barnes with the DNR with the board of the Town of Barnes and representatives of the boards of Gordon and Highland. It is our understanding that this meeting is an informational meeting not an action taking meeting. Your board will have representatives present to listen and gain further understanding the process. We understand that there is to be no public comment session at this meeting, but it is always of help to listen We ask that you follow your town's websites closely and be attentive to the posted agendas of Town Board meetings so that we can be active participants in such meetings.

This ordinance has been in effect since the early 1970s and has served as an effective instrument in maintaining the environmental, aesthetic quality of our surroundings and our property values. We believe, and this belief is supported by a survey of the membership last year, that this Ordinance serves the best interest of the Towns of Barnes, Gordon and Highland and of its residents, property owners and visitors.