

History of Lake Viking Safety Department

February 2016 - Present

In February 2016, I was hired as the Director of Safety for Viking Valley Association. Lake Manager Shad Mort made it clear he wanted Safety to get back to enforcing the handbook.

It did not take very long to realize the Safety Department needed more than a little encouragement from the top to enforce the handbook. The department needed a complete overhaul. The technology, facilities, personnel, equipment and enforcement policies were not sufficient and did not come close to my expectations for a Safety Department.

Over the past four years, the Safety Department has been transformed. While we are certainly in a better position today than we were in 2016, we still have a ways to go. Below is a list of major accomplishments since 2016 that would not have been possible without the support of Lake Manager Shad Mort:

- New safety app
- Creation of a policy and procedure manual
- Two new patrol vehicles
- New and updated office
- Three new full-time employees
- Better equipment, including a new office computer

Lake Viking Association members make significant investments into our community. Safety works tirelessly to protect those investments and to enhance everyone's experience at the lake. In an effort to maintain the viability of our community today and into the future, I have identified one, three and five year goals for the Safety Department. The one year goals are immediate needs and are considered essential to maintaining a safe environment. The three year goals are important as we look to the future. The five year goals are the best case scenario and would promote the safest environment possible.

On the following page, I have provided the Safety Department's vision and mission statement, along with our core values. The Safety Department is ready to move forward; however, we need your help to make that possible.

Lake Viking Safety

Vision Statement

By excelling in the delivery of quality services, Lake Viking Safety will ensure Lake Viking is a safe place to live or visit.

Mission Statement

Lake Viking Safety will serve the lake community by promoting a safe environment through the enforcement of the Viking Valley Association Handbook. Furthermore, Lake Viking Safety will strive to provide all services necessary to ensure the community is safe for property owners and guest alike.

Core Values

Lake Viking Safety believes the community's trust and respect must be earned and is essential to attain our vision and accomplishing our mission. To maintain the lake community's trust and respect, we embrace the following values:

Integrity - Uncompromising principle and honesty.

Responsibility - Accountability; trustworthiness; use of good judgement.

Professionalism - High standards; dedicated to our mission; unified in purpose.

Compassion - Concern with people; ability to appreciate feelings or emotions of others.

Resourcefulness - Creativity; the ability to be effective in difficult situations.

Character - We are committed to respecting individual dignity in all people and to provide services in a fair and consistent manner to the best of our ability.

One Year Goals

- **Upgrade our watercraft (Must be Completed by Start of 2021 Season)**

Lake Viking **MUST** upgrade our boats. Currently, safety has a 1979 Boston Whaler and a 1993 Sunbird for water patrol. The 1993 Sunbird is not operational and repairs would cost more than the boat is worth. The 1979 Boston Whaler is not in good shape but it does run and would be sufficient as a second boat for another year; however, capital will be needed to replace this boat after a year.

Lake Viking has never had a boat that was designed for the work that Safety is tasked with completing. The added weight from the required equipment and the choppiness of our lake destroys fiberglass boats and greatly fatigues our employees. Additionally, our current boats place our employees in unsafe working conditions, especially since they don't have any shade and they have to constantly work on the deficient boats.

The lake **NEEDS** a dependable, warrantied boat that is designed to withstand the rigors of enforcement work. We need an all welded aluminum boat with a built in T-top with standard emergency lights, siren and radio capabilities. The boat will also be approximately 3,000 pounds heavier than our current boats, which will reduce employee fatigue and provide them with shade. The aluminum hull will last 25+ years, which is more than 5 times longer than our current fiberglass boats lasted.

After receiving bids from three companies, I propose Lake Viking Association purchase a custom order 21 foot Coastal boat from Rouge Jet Boatworks located in White City, Oregon. The custom build boat will come with all equipment necessary to complete the tasks the handbook charges safety to complete. The boat will also have a 10 year warranty on the aluminum hull and a 10 year warranty on the trailer. The Mercury motor will have a 3 year warranty from Mercury and the rest of the boat's components will be covered under a 1 year bumper to bumper warranty. Rogue Jet Boatworks has also agreed to contract all warranty work locally for the lake's convenience.

Although the boat has a large purchase price of \$73,270 it will service our community for decades to come. This boat has the best return on investment as it will increase the total number of hours that the Safety Department can patrol the lake and promote safety. More hours on the lake with better capabilities, creates an avenue to make our vision and mission statements a reality.

- **Obtain a jet ski for safety**

Safety strives to sticker as many watercraft as early in the season as possible. Once members begin to pay and all necessary paperwork is collect, we routinely go dock to dock via the water and sticker watercraft. A jet ski would make that process faster. We could also utilized the jet ski for enforcement work with minor modifications.

- **Upgrade watercraft storage**

With the purchase of the new safety boat and a jet ski, storage on the lake is essential. The location of the current safety dock is not ideal. The dock takes heavy and frequent damage from the constant waves on the main channel. The current dock already needed replaced and it will not handle the new boat so an alternate dock and location will have to be determined.

- **Medical bag for watercraft to include an AED**

With the purchase of a new watercraft dry storage on the boat would be a reality. In the summer months, when the lake is the most active, safety personal on the water can often respond faster to emergencies via water than officers on the land can respond. The AED increases cardiac survival rates over traditional CPR.

- **Build additional modules in the safety app**

The app has fundamentally changed how efficiently and effectively the safety department functions. Still, the app has tremendous potential moving forward. Additional module builds are relatively inexpensive and would continue to promulgate the community's digital enhancement movement. Modules would include, building permits and barcodes for membership and guest cards where members could electronically control their cards.

- **Integrate the safety app with the office**

The continuity of the lake running off of one system further creates efficiencies and better serves the community.

- **Produce a standardized training manual**

To mitigate liability concerns, a standardized training manual needs to be developed and training should be accomplished yearly.

- **Comprehensive Review of the Handbook**

The handbook needs to be constantly evaluated as the needs of the lake evolve. Several rules need clarification and wording could be made clearer.

Three Year Goals

- **Require boater safety cards to be on file with safety before using the lake**

The state of Missouri and our association handbook requires anyone born after January 1, 1984 to possess a boater's safety card. As the years go by, more and more people are required to have the card. Safety spends a significant amount of time enforcing the requirement. If each member and their guest were required to file the information with safety before they utilized the lake, we could be more efficient with enforcement and members would not need to have the card on their person as is required currently.

- **Place capital assets on a review timetable**

Placing all of safety's capital assets on a regular review timetable will allow the association to understand exactly what they own, the condition of the asset and it will force an evaluation of the asset to determine if it still is capable of meeting the purpose for which it was intended. It would also aid in planning for replacing assets when they are at the end of their lifespan.

- **Base radios in patrol vehicles**

Base radio stations are more powerful and are much more likely to work anywhere around the lake than the current handheld radios. In the event of an emergency, it is imperative for safety to have the ability to communicate with Daviess County Central and other responding agencies.

- **Car port for safety vehicles**

The Association spends significant capital resources to provide patrol vehicles. In order to protect the association's investment we should consider some type of structure to get the vehicles out of the elements, even if it is a car port.

- **Upgrade safety office printer to one do-it-all machine**

Safety currently has two printers. One is utilized for color photos and one for black & white. One machine that could product color and black & white prints, as well as scanning would reduce the cost of maintaining two printers.

Five Year Goals

- **Provide each member with a unique user name and password for secure access a private lake portal**

With a revamped website, the lake could provide a place for members to sign into a secure portal and have access to their information. This would allow the member to make changes to their personal information, such as updating contact address or phone numbers. Member could see any outstanding debts and make a payment. This application could have numerous applications to make the office and safety's jobs more efficient.

- **Obtain a secure video delivery system**

Within the secure system, videos could be made and uploaded to each member's account. Automated tracking to ensure members watched the videos could also be tied to lake privileges. A welcome video could be made to highlighting lake amenities and services. Safety could make videos to remind everyone of rules that are unique to our lake. We could also highlight rules that are new or have changed.

- **Paperless recordkeeping**

Backup electronic copies of records in the cloud for better access and to protect against computer failures.

- **Implement a dedicated assessment for safety**

Sometimes, the work that safety performs is not tangible; however, it is essential to maintaining a safe environment for everyone. Quite frankly put, safety cost money, lots of money. Safety cost will continue to rise because of wages and the need for expensive equipment. As time goes on, it will be difficult for the association to maintain the expected level of safety to protect the member's investments if there isn't some type of automatic funding mechanism.