

# ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

[www.rocklake.org](http://www.rocklake.org)

Minutes for April 15, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.,

City of Lake Mills City Hall, 200 Water Street, Lake Mills, WI 53551

- 1) **Call to Order** – 6:30 p.m.  
Members present: Jim Colegrove, Wes Dawson, Nathan Pyles, Mike Neemann, Stan Smoniewski, Susan Trier, Bonnie Nolan, Candace Diaz,  
Absent: Ralph DePasquale Lianna Spencer, Guests Mary Schmoger, Jen Geertz, Lance Johnson, John Thode, John Crump  
:
- 2) **Motion to accept the agenda** made by Wes, seconded, and unanimously approved.
- 3) **Good News Minute** – meeting participants shared recent good news
- 4) **Secretary's Report** – Motion to approve March 2019 minutes made by Jim, seconded, and unanimously approved.
- 5) **Treasure's Report** –
  - a) February financial statements had been electronically distributed by Jim.
  - b) Jim presented a check for \$735.00 to Leader Printing for the spring mailing - .29 per letter bulk rate – \$459.00 for donation envelopes
- 6) **Public Comment(s)/Correspondence** –  
The guests had several questions and generally each committee report was expanded upon to include some history relevant to the discussion or specifics re RLIA organizational issues.
- 7) **Committee Reports**
  - Water Quality**
    - i) Agricultural
      - a) Nathan had a meeting where they discussed the increasing phosphorous levels, now 18 ug/L (micrograms per liter) in contrast to 40 years ago when it was 11- 12 ug/L an increase of about 50%. We would like to see a 20% reduction by 2028, returning to an average level of 14 ug/L and his committee looked at 4 strategies:
        - 1) work with DayBreak to require their suppliers meet certain standards.
        - 2) help support establishing a producer led council
        - 3) work with the Jefferson County Soil Group and Michelle Scarpace from UW/Ext.
        - 4) Look at mechanisms to offset farmers' costs to use cover crops. These are soil protecting crops planted between the rows of primary crops, cutting down on need for fertilizer, promoting healthier soils, and preventing run off. Although uncommon here, about ½ the acreage of the Chesapeake Bay watershed is now planted with cover crops. Attempts have been made to quantify fiscal savings through less watering and

fertilizer, but the general feeling is that it costs farmers around \$20-30/acre all in for seed and labor.

At only 3,200 acres, our watershed is quite small and, with the bulk of it farmed by 3 or 4 farmers, our situation would seem amenable to the institution of a system to help defray the costs of implementing cover crops. Nathan mentioned, in a very preliminary and exploratory manner, the possibility of exploring whether the city voters would approve a nominal tax on the sewer system as a source of funding. The city sewer bill in 2017 was 1.5 million dollars so a 2% tax, which would cost the average taxpayer \$10 annually, would fund 1,000 acres of cover crops. He noted that this would be a recurring annual expense. Obviously this program would require a lot of discussion and exploration before proceeding. Another option is the Adaptive Management Plan, whereby if a city's sewage exceeds certain limits, they can work with farmers to limit phosphorous pollution "upstream" to avoid penalties. A question was raised re using boat launch fees for such funding, but apparently there are regulatory restrictions, at least for the township, that require the funds be used for purposes directly related to launch issues.

ii) **Water Quality.** Ralph was absent but a discussion was held regarding the desire to expand the current lake testing to include additional lake sites, incoming water sources, and Mud Lake.

iii) **Public Streets.** Jim said there is another Eagle Scout candidate considering taking on refreshing the labeling on storm sewers. There are over 700 such sewers and about 66 along the lake. Labels last 3-5 years.

iv) **Residential.** Susan discussed their current efforts and advised she has volunteered to be an advocate for the Healthy Lakes Initiative.

**b) Public Outreach. Susan and Stan**

i) The Sunshine Brewery social event and Lake Management Plan roll-out, is set for 5/5/19 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. In addition, she would like to send out thank-you's to people who have made significant contribution to the health of the lake.

ii) Brew with a View events. No change in plans.

iii) Boat Tour event. The DNR has committed to demonstrating water testing but it doesn't look as promising for fish shocking.

iv) Update on new website. Stan says it is up and running and requested members to send in their favorite lake images – preferably in the highest resolution and in a landscape format, not portrait.

c) **Habitat** – No chairman but we had a good response to the call for frog count volunteers.

**d) Membership and Lake Recreation** – Bonnie

Her membership letter went out and generated a positive response, one indication of which is the number of guests at today's meeting.

8) **Other Reports.**

a) County. Patricia was unable to attend.

b) JRLC. Stan.

i) Stan said the Clean Boat Clean Water grant request was approved.

ii) Wes said he met with the Town Board and Police Department and they will publish a list of the most common violations over the past years along with tips on how to avoid committing such violations in order to avoid fines. Fines which may be more commonly levied from now on. They will also publish Wisconsin DNR Boating Safety Tips.

iii) Wisconsin Lakes Convention Report.

Susan and Stan reviewed their experiences at the event, which they felt was very valuable.

In general, the mood was upbeat as Governor Evers' budget contains increased funding for many conservation-related initiatives including CAFO regulations, county agents, and more DNR scientists. Climate change was a big issue on the agenda, especially as with the new administration, DNR personnel are allowed to discuss it and the likely deleterious effects including damage to cold water fisheries, reduced water quality, and increased invasive aquatic species. Wake boats were a hot topic not only because operating them near shorelines has been shown to cause significant harm to shorelines, but also because apparently their ballast systems are filled with lake water and the tanks cannot be totally emptied when they are finished – setting up a perfect system for transporting aquatic invasive species between lakes. Susan also pointed out it is the Year of Clean Drinking Water and felt we should send letter to our state legislators.

9) Old Business

a) Environmental Cleanup. Date chosen was 5/11. Area captains include:

Tyrannena – Jim

North end of Lake – Nathan

Bartels/Mill Pond – Vicki and Stan

Korth – Patricia.

Pick up of bags, dumpster, soda, and pizza will have to be arranged.

b) Town and Country Days Discussion. Pending.

c) Storm Drain Protection program. Pending receiving more info.

d) Susan's letter to riparian owners. Pending.

e) In-lake cleanup, pending identifying pontoon boat owner willing to participate.

10) New Business

a) Lost Lake Development. Stan briefed the Board on plans to develop the 21 acre Lost Lake west of the lake. There are some zoning issues, and apparently only two plots would qualify for development. A request for authorization to put in a septic tank rather than hooking up to a sewer line, which would be expensive, was approved by the town planning committee, but it still faces hurdles at both the Town and County levels.

b) Presentation of Lake Management Plan to Jefferson County Land & Water Conservancy Committee will be given during the day on 5/15.

c) It was decided not to do a fund raiser at Culvers this year.

d) We will apply for inclusion in the Lake Mill's City Market fund raising efforts.

11) **Adjourn** – Mike made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded and unanimously passed at 8:20 p.m.

13) **Next Meeting:** Monday, May 20, 2019 at 6:30 p.m., Lake Mills City Hall