

ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

www.rocklake.org

Minutes for Annual Meeting

August 24, 2019 at 10:00 AM

Lower Rock Lake Park

1) **Call to Order** – 10:00 A.M.

2) **Introduction of Board Members** – Board members present: Jim Colegrove, Wes Dawson, Mike Nesemann, Bonnie Nolan, Nathan Pyles, Stan Smoniewski, Susan Trier, Ralph DePasquale. (about 25 members were present, compared to 30 – 35 last year).

3) **Approval of agenda** – Motion to accept the report, seconded, & passed unanimously.

4) **Secretary's Report** (Mike Nesemann) – The minutes of the 2018 Annual meeting were read and reviewed. Motion made to accept the minutes as presented, seconded & passed unanimously

5) **Treasure's Report** (Jim Colegrove) Last year's banking summary, including expenses from 1/1/2018 – 12/31/18, and RLIA account balances as of 12/31/18 (\$36,981.73) were passed out, followed by a discussion of revenues and expenditures. Jim reminded everyone that the fiscal year reviewed is actually the previous year, i.e., 2018 because our annual meeting is held in August. Additional points included:

- we closed the savings account and now have 4 laddered CDs
- the Lake grant account remains open should we obtain additional grants
- we use PayPal as an "in & Out" account
- the Board will again perform an unofficial internal audit of the accounts

Motion made to accept the report, seconded & passed unanimously.

6. Guest Speakers

a) Vince and Cody, Township Boat Patrol

Both speakers have significant law enforcement backgrounds and Cody has previous experience with aquatic patrols. They noted it is a part time job and greatly appreciate the RLIA's support. As of the meeting, they had logged 405 hours of patrolling and issued 50 citations (AKA tickets), mostly regarding violations of slow-no-wake rules, particularly near Sandy Beach. Their impression was it was mostly people from out of town. There were some questions about early season night fishing and some continuing problems with inadequately secured buoys. Although having an open alcohol container on board is legal, if the driver's behavior violates any rules, they can be cited for OWI as well as the rule infraction. They stressed that their goal is to ensure safety and were very happy to report that there had been no accidents or injuries on the lake this year! They try to work with the DNR wardens as much as possible as the DNR has access to many special resources. They are discussing with the DNR the possibility of offering a boating safety course and were asked to keep us in that loop. Interestingly, their funding flows from the US Coast Guard to the DNR and then to the township. They keep a daily log and submit it daily.

b) Joint Rock Lake Committee (Stan Smoniewski)

i) **Updating town pier ordinances.** Town or municipal ordinances cannot be less restrictive than the state's. The JRLC worked with the Town to synchronize theirs with the state's.

- ii) **Lake Patrol.** Met with personnel to provide feedback from lake survey.
- iii) **Common boating violations.** Updated this list.
- iv) **Sandy Beach Boat Launch project.** Worked with city with special attention to preventing any increased runoff from going into the lake and encouraging them to get more public input.
- v) **Boat Cleaning Stations.** Encouraged the formation of cleaning stations at every launch site and applauded the RLIA's offer of putting up to \$1,200 for two stations. Lamentably, thus far no response from either the City or Town.

c) **Patricia Cicero, Jefferson County Land and Water.**

- i) **Clean Water/Clean Boats:** She continues to work with the Town and City of Lake Mills on 2 annual grants. Thus far, the 4 boat inspectors worked over 500 hours inspecting 1,695 boats. They also tried to keep count of the number of people with boats (including passengers) who seemed to be actively listening and came up with 3,465. For the first time they also did a "group check" on a Friday, where the inspectors and DNR wardens gathered together at the launches to "show the flag."
- ii) **Healthy Lakes Program.** Discussed basics of the program and how she can help apply for grants.
- iii) **Rock Lake Cruise.** Patricia reviewed the activities at the fish station during the very successful Rock Lake Cruise. They found a banded Killifish during the event; a 1.5-2.5 inch fish listed as a "Special Concern" species which is sensitive to changes to water quality. It was previously reported in Rock Lake only in 1974 and 2013. Rock Lake also hosts the endangered and nocturnal slender madtom. The slender madtom was first found here in 2013 and then thought to be an anomaly as it was reportedly *only* found in gravel bottomed rivers. However, a subsequent survey found them to be established here, apparently the only lake in Wisconsin or North America to have them.

7. President's Report: (Wes Dawson). Wes thanked all the volunteers and reported that we had a very busy year, referring to the committee chairs' reports to follow. He also referred to the [Lake Management Plan](#) (link to website).

8. Committee Reports

a) Water Quality

- i) **Agriculture.** Nathan noted the bad news that the phosphorus level, which is inversely related to water quality, has increased 50% over the past 40 years; from 11 mcg/l to 15 to 16 and that Mud Lake was declared "impaired" by the DNR last year. The good news is that Rock Lake has a relatively small watershed of 3,200 acres and thus should be manageable with programs like cover crops. We need to look to farmers to take the lead in a "producer led group." If 5 farmers in our watershed would form such a group, state grants of up to \$40,000/yr are available. We are also talking to the city and town about possibly subsidizing these efforts and talked to a similar organization on Beaver Dam Lake re what has worked for them.
- ii) **Water Sampling.** Ralph outlined their goals and discussed ongoing efforts to coordinate training of volunteers. He would like to have these teams in place by next spring to produce consistent, widespread monitoring.
- iii) **Public Streets.** Jim discussed the 60 or so storm drains in the city he would like to have marked and is considering hanging tags on the doors of homes the drains front. He has an Eagle Scout candidate who may be interested in this project. He also said the city was supportive and helpful with the leaf free/grass free street mailing efforts.

iv) **Residential.** Susan reminded the membership that "we are the shoreline" and that we are falling behind in meeting our goal of shoreline restoration. Our biggest tool is the [Healthy Lakes Initiative](#) for which we had 2 projects last year, this year we had 0 new requests and had fewer inquiries. She is planning on sending out postcards with info on Healthy Lakes to all riparian owners and continuing to send out packets to new

homeowners quarterly. She related her personal experience of seeing a real jump in butterflies, birds, and bees with her installation of native plants as part of her Healthy Lakes grant.

b) Public Outreach. Susan felt we should perhaps emphasize less science and more emotional awareness in the future as a way of getting people involved, e.g., the Sunshine Brewery gathering. She recounted some of the year's highlights including the environmental cleanup, the Rock Lake Cruise (43 people), and up to 455 Face Book followers from 150 last year. She is also hoping the Leader will allow her to write more educational pieces.

c) Habitat. In lieu of a chairman, Wes thanked Bob and Sue Volenec for their work on bat and frog counts as well as water quality monitoring. He noted the fish sticks are a success and that the cable will need to be removed next year after needing slight repairs this year. He too referred to the RLIA offer to fund two cleaning stations, thus far without a response from either the city or the town.

d) Membership and Lake Recreation. Bonnie reported we have 134 total members (6 affiliate, 107 families, and 21 individual members). and are getting good exposure on Face Book.

9. Update on New Website. Stan noted it was updated in March and has received positive feedback. He also noted there have been some issues with emails and asked all present to be sure we had their correct email addresses. Apparently there had been an issue with our emails to membership that originated with Google's handling of it. It seems to be working now and Susan urged people NOT to unsubscribe because getting them back on the list is complicated. She also commented that electronic media seems ever more important and noted that posts on Face Book are free compared to about \$150 to put something in the paper. Stan emphasized that we do NOT share members' personal info online. There was a discussion re the desired frequency of email contact but most people felt more frequent emails were unnecessary given that the info is on the website and Face Book.

10. Thank you to volunteers. Susan led a shout out to all our volunteers, including Tom Cianciolo (Rock Lake Cruise), Elaine Thousand, Barb Smith, Nancy Lange, and Carol Prothero (for frog monitoring). She also noted the "super volunteers" (more than one project) were Bob & Sue Volenec; Cynthia Chmell; Meghan Gauger; Cecilia Smoniewski; and Susan Nesemann.

11. Public Comments. Someone asked when the last DNR fish survey was done and Patricia informed the group that a fish shocking survey is performed every fall and a comprehensive one done every 5 years, with the last one done in 2014. She also noted that stocking is done on a regular basis and in the last few years has included extended growth walleyes. Another question was raised about lake levels and she said the DNR guidance involves: the highest water level from 5/2 to 9/15, then lowering the level a bit from 9/16 to 10/31, with the lowest water level from 11/1 to ice break up, raising it a bit from ice break up to 5/1. In response to another query, she said all beaches are monitored for E. coli and that she has a handout that explains the sampling, where to find data, and the meaning of the results.

12. Nominating Committee presentation of candidates put forward by the Board. The Board put forward the incumbents Nathan Pyles and Stan Smoniewski along with new candidate John Thode.

13. Candidate presentations. Nathan and Stan spoke to their interest in the lake, Stan read an email from John Thode on his qualifications for a board seat, and Mike read a communication from John Crump outlining why he wished to be considered for the board. A motion to accept the candidates was made, seconded, and

passed unanimously. A vote was then held by a show of hands and all four candidates were elected. The newly elected board members are:

Stan Smoniewski - 3 years
Nathan Pyles - 3 years
John Crump - 3 years
John Thode - 2 years

14. Presentation of the 2018 Stewardship Award. Susan presented the 2019 Stewardship Award to Bob and Sue Volenec citing their numerous contributions including conducting the frog count and training others to do so, bat monitoring, water quality monitoring, building houses for bats, kestrels, and wood ducks, and their involvement in many different bird counting activities.

15. Next annual meeting 8/15/2020.

16. Next Board meeting 9/16/19.

17. Motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and passed at 11:50.