

ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

www.rocklake.org

Minutes for May 18, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.,

This meeting was a virtual one held on Microsoft Teams platform

1) **Call to Order** – 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Jim Colegrove, Wes Dawson, Mike Neesemann, Stan Smoniewski, Nathan Pyles, John Crump, John Thode, Ralph DePasquale
Guests: Patricia Cicero, Charlotte Webster
Absent: Bonnie Nolan

2) **Good News Minute** – Meeting participants shared recent good news.

3) **Motion to accept the agenda** Made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

4) **Secretary's Report** – Motion to approve April 2020 meeting minutes made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

5) **Treasure's Report.** (Jim)

- renewed our PO Box (\$112/year).
- Wes was able to add money to the third CD bringing it up to the planned \$5,000. We now have 3 laddered CDs, one maturing every 4 months. Their term is only 10 mos, the bank did not offer a 1 year CD.
- he is starting to receive membership dues thanks to Bonnie's membership letter.

6) **Public Comment(s)/Correspondence** –
none

7) **Committee Reports**

a) Water Quality

i) Agricultural Nathan. Michelle Scarpace confirmed with Dean Weichman, the contact person in the Jefferson County Producer led group, that RLIA will assist with funding, per our April meeting. The CoVid situation plus spring planting has slowed the group down. Nathan also advised people at DayBreak of the current status.

ii) Public Streets.

1) City and Town runoff discussions. John C. and John T.

CoVid has put a damper on their activities but they are going to meet with Hope from the Town and ask her for City contacts re this. In a discussion most of the Board felt that if anything, we are losing ground on shoreline development and clearing.

Patricia advised that both the City and the Town have part-time building inspectors for inspection and enforcement and she will provide those contacts. She also met the new City Neighborhood Services man who may be a resource as well.

2) Storm drain stewardship. Jim. The Eagle Scout candidate picked up material from Jim. We discussed how to integrate that with the drain stewardship program and it was decided to provide the Scout with talking points re being stewards he can share with residents living near a drain.

iii) Residential.

1) As RLIA receives complaints about polluted runoff from construction sites, Stan posted a webpage (<https://rocklake.org/construction-sites/>) with contact information and showing examples of proper and improper construction sites.

2) Letter with do's and don'ts to be sent to realtors and sellers. Pending

3) Discussion with City and Town on zoning practices. Susan will draft an email which she, Stan, and John T. will send to the City and Town. They will also check to see if permits were correctly issued.

iv) Water Sampling. Patricia said they are still following the DNR guidelines, so no sampling activities unless with members of same household.

b) Public Outreach.

i) Update on actions taken on educational programs/projects. Pending

ii) Update on article and book recommendations. Susan reminded reviewers not to spend too much time writing a summary, as interested people can get that online. Instead she recommends a short note re why you found this book/article of interest. It is not yet "live" on our website.

iii) Advisory Committee. Pending

c) Habitat. Committee Chair pending

d) Membership and Lake Recreation.

1) Update on renewal letter. The letter went out and Jim is receiving membership dues. The membership database was discussed and Jim said his, an old Excel product, is set up for a 10 year cycle. We will need to discuss whether to continue with this or set up something different. This will be on the agenda sometime in the October/December timeframe.

2) Update on possible boat/trailer survey. Pending

8) Other Reports.

a) County. Patricia. The recent rains have helped and the water level is up 4 inches to 827.87, but still 3.72 inches below the normal summer level, and 1.92 below the “minimum” summer level. The old dam had boards for gates while the new one is likely more accurate. We are following the DNR guidelines on water levels. It seemed reasonable to await full summer levels before taking any action including perhaps doing a survey of riparian owners.

Clean Boats/Clean Water program is on hold due to CoVid but we have 2 returning Inspectors.

Shoreline cutting. There was general agreement that there is increasing destruction of shoreline habitat, worse in the City than the more strictly regulated Town. Patricia suggested contacting the City Building Inspector, as well as trying to meet with Council member Vicky Schmidt. Patricia has photos of the entire lake shoreline from a 2016 survey which would help in evaluating the effects of new construction. She said that particular building situations can be complex and suggested we advise people whom to report their concerns to. If the citizen wishes to remain anonymous, they can contact Patricia, but the responsible offices are the [Building Inspector](#) in the City and the [County Zoning Office](#) for the Town.

b) JRLC. Stan. There was no meeting last month. The Town has contracted out to have the Korth Bay buoys put out.

9) Old Business

a) Website Dashboard. We discussed the graphics to be used and how to present a snapshot with easily understood graphics re the state of progress, e.g., stoplight fashion or something else. Susan, Stan, and Nathan will present the Board with options at the June meeting.

b) Turtle crossing issues. Susan raised the issue of threats to turtles and especially to the endangered spiny softshell turtle which anecdotally used to nest along the gravel shoulder of Co. B. Apparently the recent construction on that road has made that problematic. Susan and Mike have been in touch with a DNR expert and they have several people who volunteered to observe and report turtle crossings on a limited but regular schedule. She will also write an article for the Leader and LM FB site. Susan has also been in touch with the Jefferson County Highway Department and they are willing to construct and post “turtle crossing signs, but not like deer crossing signs which are always “up” and thus drivers become inured to them. Instead they would put up signs with a cover mechanism, somewhat like fire hazard ones, that only display the caution during the appropriate season. They will make, deploy, and maintain 4 signs (for the known high frequency crossing areas on Co. A and B for a total of \$650. Susan made a motion to reimburse the County for \$650 for 4 of these signs, John C. seconded it and it passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Mike then advised that we would not be able to get those signs up in time for this year’s season and said Slewfoot signs of Jefferson would make 10 plastic lawn signs for \$150,

bearing a picture of a turtle below large font “Caution,” with RLIA and DNR contact information in smaller font below. They would be similar to the political signs seen during elections, with a plastic banner stretched between two metal legs. In a discussion, the pros were that they would be available soon and could be moved if new areas were found to need them. Cons included concerns re the aesthetics and efficacy. A roll call vote was held and the motion passed with 6 yeas (John C., Mike, Ralph, Nathan, Stan, and Susan) and 2 nays (John T and Jim).

10) New Business

a) Groundwater awareness – the Awesome Aquifer kit. Susan said they would be very a effective educational tool, one which the local schools or student clubs could use. They might be of particular use given the pandemic’s effects on schools, though getting them into the summer school curriculum would also be good. Contacts with the pertinent groups will be made.

b) Tyranena Bike Trail update. Mike had emailed his report of a tour he took with Tony Cooke, one of the prime movers behind the trails, and Rob Goetz of the Lake Mills Parks and Forestry Department. Opinions varied but in general it was felt that they increased utilization of the park and that there was no indication for the Board to make a formal statement on the matter.

c) Reminder of the Annual Meeting to be held 15 August. We have reservations at Korth but the pandemic situation will determine if it can be held or if we try to organize a virtual meeting.

11) Next Meeting: Monday, June 15, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Location: TBD.

12) Adjourn – A motion was made to adjourn, seconded, and unanimously passed at 8:30 p.m.