

ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

www.rocklake.org

Minutes for May 17, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Via ZOOM

1) Call to Order – 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Mike Nesemann, Nathan Pyles, John Crump, Stan Smoniewski, John Thode, Jim Colegrove, Susan Trier, Sharron Webster
Absent: Ralph DePasquale, Bruce Ward
Guests: Marisa Ulman, Anita Martin

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 19, 2020 minutes made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

5) **Treasurer's Report.** Jim had previously mailed out the current monthly report as well as some very interesting graphic representations of membership composition. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. Jim reported that the influx of new members was slowing down. John C. alluded to a very generous gift of \$1,000 and that he had sent a handwritten thank you. Jim reported that our annual Rock River Coalition membership fee (\$50) was due and that we usually also donate \$50. Mike made a motion to pay our dues and make a \$50 donation, Stan seconded it and it was unanimously approved.

6) Public Comment(s)/Correspondence –

A. Guests. Anita Martin.

B. Mail. Jim said mail was limited to some mass mailings and the bank statement.

C. Email. Stan. Nothing to report.

D. Facebook. Susan has continued to publish a series of articles drawn from the work of [Doug Tallamy](#). They have been very well received and often reposted – the articles on lawns and bee got almost 4,000 views! She addressed John C's question about a boat with exceptionally bright lights that is occasionally seen along the shore. Apparently the lights are for carp hunting with bows. The activity is not run by the DNR, but is authorized and the town is aware. She heard nothing back from the person interested in a summer internship with us and Mike reported that the response time from the Whitewater student based marketing group, [Creative Marketing Unlimited](#), was quite slow – all agreed summer is likely not the best time for working with student run organizations.

7) Committee Reports

A. Water Quality Agriculture. Nathan reported that Keith Kulow, the GM of Daybreak Foods facility here, is a proponent of sustained farming practices and it is hoped he will be involved with the Jefferson County Soil Builders. Nathan had also shared an article on subsidized crop insurance to help farmers defray the costs of using cover crops – possibly \$5/acre. Illinois and Iowa already do it with good success and a bill to start a similar program in Wisconsin passed 96-0 in the Assembly last year but never got to the floor in the Senate. A motion was made and seconded to send a letter of support (drafted by Nathan) to the Wisconsin Assembly and

Senate and post on our website. There was some discussion re whether all the Board members' names should be noted at authors, but the feeling was it should be signed as "the RLIA Board. The motion was passed unanimously.

B. Water Quality Residential. Susan reported that the riparian owners' pamphlet is basically ready to go, they are now getting the RLIA website (which the brochure refers to extensively) ready for a simultaneous rollout. It had been decided to order an extra 50 copies in addition to the those for the 276 riparian owners and 55 shared riparian owners, to address future needs as well as sending to various interested parties, e.g., the Town Board and City Council. Jim reported that providing the very extensive data required by the USPS to qualify for special postal route based rates would take a considerable amount of time so the Board felt it wiser to go with the traditional bulk rate mailing. John Thode will make a presentation on it to the City Council while Susan will do so to the Town Board.

C. Water Quality Streets. Nothing to report.

D. Water Quality Sampling. Marisa said she went out with the Volencs on Rock Lake to do the first phosphorous sampling, which will be done monthly through October. She also plans on testing Mud Lake as well. Rock Lake chlorophyl testing will be done in fall with samples from the Mill Pond and a deep spot on the lake. She will send an email asking for volunteers to help out.

E. Water Quality Miljala Channel. Susan reported she, Larry Clark, Wes Dawson, and John C have formed a group to work on this.

F. Public Outreach Nothing to report.

G. Habitat – Fisheries. Nothing to report.

H. Habitat – other. Shar reported that the frog count had been performed at 10 sites with disappointing results, likely due to the cold weather. It will be repeated at the end of May. Mike reported that the turtle nest cages have been distributed, including to some landowners who are not members. This seems like an activity that, in the future along with events like the cancelled riparian owners' breakfast, could boost interest in membership amongst that group.

I. Membership. Nothing to report beyond what was in the Treasurer's report (5 above).

J. Lake Recreation. Nothing to report.

8) Other Reports.

A) County. Marisa explained that the unusually persistent low lake levels, they were to have started rising 5/2, are due to a combination of mechanical obstruction in the dam, a faulty sensor, early snow melt, and a lack of precipitation. A discussion ensued re how the lake levels are set, and apparently the DNR has determined that prior to the dam, the stream was a year round waterway and thus levels must take into account downstream ecosystem water levels and possibly include a minimum amount needed to ensure adequate for wastewater flushing.

B) JRLC. Stan reported that Wes Dawson did not seek reappointment and is no longer on the Committee. Larry Clark is also resigning. Two people have been appointed in their places by the Town Board, Wendy Catalani-Davies (2 year term) and Susan Trier (1 year term). Stan also said they have a \$700 annual budget which JRLC

will probably vote to partially reimburse RLIA for the riparian owners' brochures (see 7.B), jointly developed by the two organizations.

9) Old Business.

A) Bylaws Update Committee. Mike had sent an updated draft of the proposed bylaws and noted that the changes from the previous edition (reviewed by the Board at the April meeting) had largely been accomplished during the April meeting, with the Board seeing the editing done real time, through the magic of Zoom. The only significant change was the addition of a generic conflict of interest (COI) policy and COI form to be signed by Board members once per term. The inclusion of the COI policy was made at the very strong recommendation of the presenters at a recent Wisconsin Lakes webinar – they cited IRS regulations as the driving force. Susan suggested removing any reference to “employees” of the RLIA, since we have none, and references to the “executive committee” were removed for the same reason. A discussion then ensued over distribution and timing of the COI with the decision being to provide the COI statements to all continuing Directors and newly Directors at the annual meeting, the organizational Board meeting (see Article VI, Section 5a. of proposed bylaws) or failing that, electronically. All statements must be returned by the regular September Board meeting. A motion was made to accept the most recent draft of the bylaws (save for the COI section to be voted on at the June meeting), seconded, and passed unanimously.

The complete Bylaws will be officially voted on by the Board at the June meeting and distributed to the general membership for their comments and suggested edits. These edits and comments must be received before the July meeting to enable the Board to vote on their inclusion and allow the “final” edition of the Bylaws to be distributed to the general membership and voted on at the August annual meeting.

Discussion then returned to the issue referred in the bylaw's Article VIII. 1, Indemnification of Officers and Directors (see discussion in 4/19/21 minutes, section 9.A). Specifically, Directors and Officers Insurance (D&O) to cover Board members against any legal action taken because of a Board decision and general liability insurance were discussed. Re D&O insurance, the Webinar speakers had all acknowledged that D&O suits were very rare and seemed to most frequently involve internal Board issues, e.g., a Board member being asked to resign for whatever reason. General liability would be to cover Board members against suits arising from an RLIA sponsored event, e.g., if someone were injured during the Spring Cleanup or during an RLIA sponsored Fun Run.

Questions raised included:

- Why either was needed, especially since no Board had had them in the past;
- Whether Directors personal liability insurance would protect them;
- What the deductibles and coverage limits were;
- If requiring pre-event signed waivers would protect against general liability suits;
- If taking out either or both of the policies would likely set a precedent difficult to reverse, i.e., for a future Board to then terminate such coverage;
- What other organizations, e.g., the Rock River Coalition were doing about this issue.

Mike encouraged Directors to think about this issue and discuss it, especially their personal liability coverage (if they have it) with their insurance agents. He will try and get additional information to address some of the questions.

Mission Statement. John C asked for volunteers to help draft a Mission Statement.

B) Spring Clean Up. It seemed to have gone well, with some great foto's on the website. Mike noted that the dumpster at Bartels is absolutely full and will contact Bruce and Cory.

10) New Business

A) RLIA 50th Anniversary Plans. John asked for volunteers to help write an article about the RLIA's history highlighting some of our more notable contributions, e.g., the County's acquisition of Korth Park, in time for the Leader free edition (distributed during Town and Country Days). There was also discussion of getting an outside vendor like Doyle's Dogs to provide food to encourage a more celebratory atmosphere.

B) Missing cleaning station tools. An inventory will be made at each boat landing to determine how many and what types of tools are missing. Marking the tools was also discussed.

11) Adjourn – A motion was made to adjourn, which was seconded and unanimously passed at 8:50 p.m.

Next Meeting (via Zoom): Monday, June 21, 2021, 6:30 PM.