

ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

www.rocklake.org

Minutes for Annual Meeting

August 21, 2021 at 10:00 AM

Upper Korth Park Shelter

1) **Call to Order** – 10:10 A.M.

2) **President’s Welcome and Introduction of Board Members** – John Crump gave a heartfelt and well-received tribute to the lake and the importance of RLIA’s work. He then introduced the Board members who were present: Jim Colegrove, Mike Nesemann, Stan Smoniewski, Susan Trier, Ralph DePasquale, Bruce Ward. (43 members were present). There was a round of applause thanking Ralph, as he is resigning.

3) **Secretary’s Report** (Mike Nesemann) – The minutes of the [2020 annual meeting](#) were reviewed. Motion made to accept the minutes as presented, seconded & passed unanimously

4) **Treasure’s Report** Jim Colegrove reported last year’s banking summaries, including expenses from 1/1/2020 – 12/31/20, and RLIA account balances as of 12/31/20 (\$39,043.61). These data were available on the website and paper copies 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., 2020 because our annual meeting is held in August. Additional points included:

- we have 4 laddered CDs
 - the lake grant account remains open should we obtain additional grants
 - we use PayPal as an “In & Out” account with a \$1 balance
 - the Board will again perform an unofficial internal audit of the accounts
- Motion to accept the report was made, seconded, & passed unanimously.

5) **Discussion and vote on new bylaws**. Mike, Jim, and John C were the committee to update the bylaws, which hadn’t been done for 9 years. After edits and discussion, the Board approved it in July and it was posted on the [website](#) along with an IRS-required [conflict of interest policy](#). Mike reviewed the significant changes. He also discussed Board’s decision to obtain a general liability insurance policy to protect the Association’s assets. After some questions and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the updated bylaws. The motion was passed unanimously.

6) **Nominating Committee presentation of candidates put forward by the Board.**

- a. The Board put forward its recommended slate including the incumbents John Thode and Susan Trier, and new candidates Candace Diaz and Jim Kerler.
- b. John C. called for nominations from the floor three times, none were made.
- c. The candidates made brief statements re their experience and why they wished to serve on the Board. Mike read statements from John Thode and Jim Kerler who were unable to attend.
- d. The Board’s slate of 4 candidates was voted in unanimously. Three of the electees will serve the usual 3 year tours (those of John T and Susan and that of Director Ralph DePasquale who is resigning) while one will serve the remaining two years of Shar Webster, who also resigned. As they all received the same

number of votes, the Board will decide who will serve the truncated term.

7) President's Report – John C. briefly reviewed the highlights and accomplishments of 2020 and then asked for brief committee reports.

8) Committee Reports.

a. Jefferson County Soil Builders. Patricia Cicero reported that a Producer Led Group requires a minimum of 5 farmers and to qualify for grants to help pay for activities of the group. They plan to concentrate on cover crops and other measures that help reduce runoff and improve soil quality. The Rock Lake [watershed](#) (p. 17 of 2018-2028 Rock Lake Management Plan) is about 12 square miles. Stretching from just north of County Hwy B to a bit south of State Hwy 18, it is rather small so a county-wide group was formed instead. They will be submitting their grant request in September. Another group, the Rock River Regenerative Grazers has also formed. John C expanded on Patricia's remarks, pointing out how exceptionally important this project is and praising Nathan, Patricia, and the producers for their efforts. Although Rock Lake has some springs, it is considered a drainage lake, dependent on surface water input so controlling runoff is essential.

b. Miljala Channel. Susan gave a very informative report on the Miljala Channel and the drainage ditch (aka The Ditch) upstream, including a review of its formation and a useful aerial map. She also referred to the [2014 Montgomery Report](#) and the [2013 UW report](#), both of which emphasized the necessity of stabilizing the channel's banks up stream with an eye to re-establishing a wetland just above Cedar Lane that would act as a filter for any sediment coming down the ditch. Merely dredging the channel downstream would be at best a temporary fix, as has been shown by past efforts. Part of the issue has been obtaining unanimity amongst all the landowners along The Ditch re remedial measures, an issue that is showing promise of being resolved. Even once that is accomplished, it will require a great deal of work and money to do this – the first step is applying for a surface water grant (up to \$200,000). Patricia also discussed issues with easements, etc.

c. Waterfront Landowner Reference Guide. Susan called attention to this guide, put together with John Thode and Shar Webster, along with JRLC's Susan Neemann. The Town was still evaluating it and had not posted it on its website. Susan also referred to a recent newspaper article that seemed to impute its accuracy. She vigorously defended the brochure's accuracy and usefulness and noted they had received very positive feedback from the City and County, and encouraged the audience to promote its use. It is on both the County's and RLIA websites – the guide was strongly endorsed by John C. The audience gave the authors a round of applause.

d. AIS Cleaning Stations and city storm sewer marking update. Jim reviewed our funding of the cleaning stations' tools, a part of an Eagle Scout's project. He alluded to some pilfering of the tools and plans for replacement. He also reviewed the storm sewer marking program, noting that there are about 66 storm sewers in Lake Mills, many draining directly into the lake, the rest into Rock Creek. He noted that the town has a few "cuts" that perform in a similar fashion. It was noted that the city did an excellent job at having additional catch basins built into the storm sewer system in the newly renovated Lake Street.

e. Fisheries. Bruce said he and Cory had had informative discussions with the DNR re stocking and limits and there are currently no plans for major changes. They had hoped to have a new fishing survey this year, but COVID stopped that. He noted that the fishery is self-sustaining, except for walleyes. They are looking at an additional fish stick at the south end of the lake next year.

f. Road Salt Initiative. John C described the webinar we had sponsored as highly successful. There were 98 attendees including town and city leaders, as well as representatives from other municipalities. The city plans to begin using its brining equipment this winter.

g. Save the turtles and other species. Mike and Susan described our funding of permanent turtle crossing signs on two county highways as well as multiple smaller, temporary signs. They had good anecdotal feedback. 6 turtle cages were provided to landowners who observed turtles nesting, and they hope to expand this program next year, possibly as part of a Girl Scouts project.

9) Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department.

Patricia Cicero recalled starting here 22 years ago, working on the Rock Lake Priority Watershed Management grant. Marisa Ulman is the new Waters Resource Management Specialist for the Office. Patricia reviewed the current Rock Lake water quality testing program, noting that the RLIA is providing volunteers and has assumed costs for testing total phosphorus and chlorophyll for Mud Lake, internal phosphorous sampling of Rock Lake for fall 2021 and spring 2022, as well as total phosphorous sampling from 3 stream sites in the watershed. The Land and Water Conservation Department continues to work with the Town and City of Lake Mills on grants for the Clean Boats/Clean Waters program as part of aquatic invasive species prevention program. Marisa Ulman was unable to attend but put together a very informative Rock Lake Water Level and Dam Operation Synopsis. A copy of that and Patricia's water quality handout are attached.

10) Joint Rock Lake Committee

Stan reviewed their major areas of interest over the past year including:

i) We recommended to the town that our lake ordinance be changed so that a standard 200 ft **Slow No Wake Zone** for all motorized vessels, rather than as is currently done, 100 foot for motorized boats and 200 feet for jet skies be adopted. Lake Ripley and the Dane County lakes use a uniform 200 ft. Slow-No-Wake from shore. This would be safer, given the increasing numbers of non-motorized users, as well as protecting sensitive areas.

ii) **Bartel's Beach.** We contacted the city and town re safety concerns over increased motorboat traffic in the narrow corridor between the northern swimming area ropes and the private dock to the north.

iii) **Waterfront Landowner Reference Guide** See 8 d above.

iv) **Boat Trailer Parking.** We sent a Letter to the city supporting RLIA's recommendation to better control the boat trailer parking at Sandy Beach.

v) Set priorities for 2021/2

- Recommend ways to ensure a safe and enjoyable recreational environment on the lake for all users (motorized boating, paddle sports, sailing, open water swimming, fishing, and passive users) through education and enforcement, while minimizing any negative ecological impacts.
- Propose methods to prevent new aquatic invasive species (AIS) from entering Rock Lake.
- Encourage practices that reduce the delivery of pollutants including sediment and phosphorous to the lake and watershed from the city and town roads, construction, and shoreland alteration.
- Revisit the JRLC's role in implementing the practices recommended in the 2014 Montgomery report for restoring the ditch upstream from the Miljala Channel.

11) Adjourn. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn at 1155.

a. Next Board Meeting 8/30/21 at 6:30 PM at City Hall or Zoom, see website for details.

b. Next Annual Meeting 8/27/2022 10 AM at Upper Korth Park Shelter

A ceremony recognizing this year's Lake Steward Award followed the business meeting. This year's awardees were Peter Jordan and Margot Peters who rather than sell their land on the north side for development, donated 10 acres to the [Land Trust Network of Jefferson County](#). Martine Koepfel accepted the award on their behalf. She gave a brief overview of the network, which is responsible for 6,000 acres in Jefferson County now being set aside and protected.

Members then enjoyed light refreshments and a photo/video exhibit celebrating RLIA's 50th anniversary.

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