

ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

www.rocklake.org

Minutes for September 20, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
City Hall

1) Call to Order – 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Mike Nesemann, Susan Trier, Bruce Ward, Jim Kerler, John Thode, Tom Krejcie, Jim Colegrove, Danny Durow, Cynthia Chmell

Absent: Candace Diaz

Guest: Keith Clark and Jean Schoeni

2) Good News Minute – Deferred due to full agenda.

3) Motion to accept the agenda. Made and seconded.

4) Secretary's Report (Mike)

- Motion to approve 8/15/22 minutes of annual meeting made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

- Motion to approve 8/29/22 minutes of officer election meeting made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

5) Treasurer's Report

- Tom went over the September report, highlights included a \$250 donation from American Family Insurance, a closing balance of \$20,700, and some issues with returning unusable Miljala tributary grant money to the DNR. The issues seem to be on the DNR side. Jim reported that we are required to establish an authorized signature record for every account, i.e., checking, saving, grant, and each individual CD. He and Tom pointed out that with the anemic returns on CDs, the logistical hassle with getting CDs through the bank hardly seemed worth the effort and we should consider other options for those investments.

- Motion to approve September, 2022 financial report made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

6) Public Comment(s)/Correspondence –

A. Guests. No comments.

B. Mail. Jim said we received a membership renewal, the most recent Rock River Reflections, a brochure for [Groundswell Conservancy](#), and a request to join the Lake Mills Community Foundation.

C. Email/Facebook. Susan noted the 14 spiny softshell turtle eggs we entrusted to the Four Lakes Wildlife Center, a Madison organization will hatch soon and she plans on posting videos of their release into Rock Lake on our FB page and getting newspaper coverage.

7) Other Reports:

A) County representative: Marisa was unable to attend but a discussion ensued regarding the need for a professional review of any plans people have involving shoreline alteration. When the city becomes aware of an illegal shoreline clearing, it intervenes. Often, the city's consultant, Mead and Hunt provides a plan on the city's behalf to the non-compliant-clearing homeowner that would meet city ordinances. The homeowner is billed for this design work, which is can be quite expensive and is generally an unhappy surprise to the homeowner.

In a previous meeting, Marisa had indicated that the city was interested in having her office provide these drawings instead of Mead and Hunt. John Thode called Marisa who felt that providing these drawings would be within her job description. She also said she is a biologist and is familiar with plant species selection that would be appropriate for a given sun exposure and soil type.

It was decided to further this conversation with her and determine when and if we should approach the city with this offer. It is felt that this might result in a superior plan and may cost the homeowner less than the current program. An additional benefit is that these plans would be more consistent with what is being provided from the county on the township side of the lake. This would also fit the general goal of increasing coordination of services between the county and the city.

B) JRLC: Wendy Catalani-Davies, Chair of the JRLC, reported:

i Their proposed budget has been submitted for approval by the town board and city council.

ii They are trying to consolidate two brochures. The first, Rock Lake Recreational Rules; Welcome to Rock Lake & Lake Mills, was developed jointly by the JRLC and LWCD. The other is more for tourists, identifying beaches and boat launches, but does contain some safe boating guidelines. The Rock Lake Recreational Rules are apparently available at the boat launches or provided with issuance of launch passes. The JRLC will wait until the current supplies are exhausted and then consider combining the two into one publication. John Thode said he had a large supply of the Rock Lake Recreational Rules, which he distributes in packets to new riparian homeowners as part of the RLIA welcome packet.

iii They submitted suggestions regarding changes in JRLC governing ordinances to the town and will submit to the city as well.

iv They would like to create public service announcements regarding various lake-related issues, e.g., aquatic invasive species (AIS). These would be more accessible than webinars and they hope to post them on websites and in the Leader. She was advised to contact Marisa who can provide information regarding current AIS status.

v Fundraising is allowable if consistent with the town ordinance, and they are hoping to reword their recommendation (that the ordinance will be reworded) to make the town and city rules consistent. Susan Trier strongly advised they be sure to specify exactly who is asking for the funds and the purpose for which those funds will be used.

vi They would like to establish a list of projects which would be consistent with the lake management plan. They would work with us to determine priorities and the current status of each area of concern. The first meeting on this will be 10/18 at 6:00 p.m.

Finally, as an FYI, she said they evaluated having the sediment screening curtain at the origin of the Miljala Channel replaced and 3,600 cubic yards of sediment removed. The first was estimated to cost \$20,000 and the second \$220,000!

8. Old Business.

A) Review Annual Membership Meeting.

1. Logistics. Deferred due to time, Susan will send an email asking people to outline what they did to facilitate next year's planning.

2. Survey Results These had been sent out to the board and will be posted for sharing with all members. The top three concerns involved lake water quality. Also, most agreed with making the Slow No Wake Zone a uniform 200 feet, but cited lack of enforcement and inadequate water patrol hours as obstacles to meaningful implementation. A discussion ensued over a follow-up survey, since only those at the annual meeting

participated in this one, and not everyone who was there participated. There was a strong inclination to do a follow-up survey electronically, as the costs and time doing it by mail are significant. Jim and Danny will evaluate the costs and logistics of setting up a Survey Monkey account, as the numbers involved or anticipated functionality exceed what is available with a free license.

3. Water Patrol. Susan told the group that she had contacted the JRLC about hosting the Water Patrol at one of their meetings and having Dave Grooman record the session. She asked for enough notice to publicize the meeting among the membership and community. It was also suggested we find out the patrol hours/practices at other lakes and if ours vary, try to ascertain why.

9. New Business.

A) Discuss coverage for pertinent municipal committees. This began with a discussion of a request from the chair of the city ZBA for our support in obtaining additional training for that board. Susan had circulated a letter supporting his request and a motion was made and seconded to approve the letter and send it to the city council as well as posting on our website. After some discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. Susan suggested that some committees, e.g., storm water management and shoreline be encouraged to monitor the pertinent city committees.

The discussion of the letter and coverage of municipal committees, where a board member assumes responsibility for monitoring and attending committee meetings, evolved into a more existential debate over what the RLIA's role should be. One approach was that we should be actively confronting deviations from established city ordinances, with members identifying themselves as representing the RLIA and speaking for or against the Plan Commission's issuance of specific CUPs or the ZBA's approving appeals. Concern was raised that this would alienate members and potential members as well as impact our status as impartial lake advocates. But concern was also expressed that not taking such an approach would accomplish little, citing several recent examples of egregious violations of city ordinances as evidence. Others favored our traditional approach, which was one of education and persuasion, with us being seen as a friendly resource. References were made to similar discussions at past board meetings as having decided which direction to take, but there was some question as to exactly what had been decided. Mike was tasked with searching past minutes to locate records of such discussions.

B) Discuss new Surface Water Management Grant and new community survey. November is the end of the grant cycle so it seems unlikely that we would be able to complete any grant application in time. Given there is a new city manager, and that Meade & Hunt's survey included nothing re the lake, we discussed whether we should undertake a survey that would apply to the lake, e.g., people's feelings re priorities, its economic impact on the community, etc. There are grants that cover such surveys and provide support in estimating the economic value. A question was raised regarding what specifically does such a grant cover and of what use would it be? In response, it was said being able to point to the economic value of the lake would encourage the city to more meaningfully apply and enforce its ordinances. A typical planning grant of this nature runs between \$15,000 and \$18,000 but we would likely need less than that. It was decided to get some info about other lakes where this has been done, e.g., Red Cedar Lake.

C) RLIA Committee Assignments. Susan will send out info re current committee composition and chairs. Although Nathan will remain involved with agriculture, the committee will need a new chair.

D) Zoom meetings. It was felt meeting via Zoom improved both board and guest attendance, especially in the winter months, so board meetings from November through February will be via Zoom. A link will be on the webpage.

E) Board member recruitment. Susan said Anita Martin declined, leaving us with potential recruits who are not currently members. She will send out another email to all members strongly requesting that someone step forward, while we pursue the other leads.

F) Bylaw modification of membership requirements for voting and board candidacy. Deferred.

10. Propose agenda items for October. Directors were requested to submit ideas to Susan.

11. Recognition of previous directors. A motion was made to allocate up to \$100 to present former directors John Crump and Nathan Pyles with something to recognize their service. The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously after discussion.

12. Adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously passed at 8:10 p. m.