

ROCK LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

www.rocklake.org

Minutes for Annual Meeting

August 27, 2022 at 10:00 AM

Upper Korth Park Shelter

1) **Call to Order** – 10:05 A.M.

2) **President's Welcome and Introduction of Board Members** – Vice-President Susan Trier thanked all the members for coming and introduced the Board members who were present: Jim Colegrove, Mike Nesemann, Tom Krejcie, Jim Kerler, Nathan Pyles, John Thode, and Bruce Ward. (43 members and 6 guests were present).

3) **Secretary's Report** (Mike Nesemann) – The 2021 annual meeting minutes were briefly reviewed. A 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 1/1/2021 – 12/31/21, and RLIA account balances as of 12/31/21 (\$40,557.78). These data were available on the website and paper copies were circulated at the meeting, followed by a discussion of revenues and expenditures. Jim reminded everyone that the fiscal year reviewed is the previous calendar year i.e., 2021 (coinciding with our fiscal year). 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) **Election of New and Returning Board Members.**

- a. The Board put forward its recommended slate including incumbent Tom Krejcie and new candidate Daniel Durow.
- b. Mike Nesemann called for nominations from the floor three times, and Susan Trier nominated Cynthia Chmell and the nomination was seconded.
- c. The candidates made brief statements regarding their experience and why they wished to serve on the Board.
- d. A motion to vote for the three candidates *en bloc* was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. The three candidates were voted in unanimously.

6) **President's Report** – Susan briefly reviewed the highlights and accomplishments of 2021, including: - Jefferson County Soil Builders. Given that 45% of the Rock Lake basin is agricultural land, this very important group of Jefferson Co. famers is working to adopt measures to cut down on soil erosion and run-off. They received a State grant and the RLIA has contributed \$1,000 as well as logistical support. Nathan Pyles has been instrumental in getting this group organized and was recognized with a nice round of applause.

- Trieloff Property. This is a 42-acre property off Co. A with significant waterfrontage on Marsh Lake. The county is moving to purchase this property which besides preserving a natural shoreline, may serve as a designated launch site for kayaks and canoes. RLIA donated \$5,000 to this fund and Susan noted that 50% of the raffle proceeds from Brew with a View events go towards this cause. RLIA members can donate to this fund, instructions will be on our website.

- Restoration of Wisconsin Executive (Governor's) Mansion shoreline. Hope Oostdik pointed out that Patricia Cicero, Director of the Jefferson County Land & Water Conservation Department has been a prime mover in this 14 year effort and that Jefferson County was cited by the Governor as a key element of this effort.

- Volunteers. Susan emphasized that volunteers are the life blood of our organization and then read the names of our volunteers and the areas they are working on. These areas included: water quality monitoring, frogs/bats/turtles, early detection of aquatic invasive species (AIS) monitoring, invasive species along shoreline, legendary learning nights, environmental cleanup, summer school, point/intercept aquatic plant survey, Miljala tributary restoration project planning committee, and website maintenance/drone photography/social media. She went on to cite Bob and Sue Volenec for their efforts county wide and then highlighted 3 "super volunteers" for their efforts across multiple areas, Susan Nesemann, Keith Clark and Jean Schoeni, and Cory Nelson and presented them with a token of our esteem.

7) Town of Lake Mills Patrol Boat Update. Lamentably, none of the patrol officers were able to attend. But Susan received the following comments which she will forward to them: crack down on boats too close to shore, get stats on stops and citations, how to increase patrol hours, what is the size of the force, and could they do some patrolling after sunset? Susan said both the police chief and town board chair told her they had not gotten any complaints and thus were unaware of the problems. Susan encouraged members to report any incidents, even if doing so is tedious and will not result in that particular incident being resolved. Such reports can be filed by calling 920-988-1944 or emailing the town clerk at townoflakemillsclerk@gmail.com as well as the town police at townoflakemillspolice@gmail.com.

8) City of Lake Mills Projects Update – Eric Schreiner, the Grounds & Facilities Director, gave an extremely informative and well-received talk on the city's major projects including:

- Sandy Beach Redevelopment 3 phases.

i) Boat Launch. This is already underway and they are looking at trying to minimize congestion and interaction of motorized and non-motorized vessels.

ii) Parking lot and restaurant. They are looking at putting in an automated parking gate. A survey regarding preferences for a proposed restaurant just went out – the biggest delay here is the requirement for installation of a fiberoptic line to Sandy Beach. He emphasized that the initial project outlined by Meade and Hunt can and will differ substantially from the final outcome. Several questions were raised regarding use of semi-permeable surfaces for the parking lots to ameliorate runoff.

iii) Extend South Ferry Drive and redevelop the trailer park. He was questioned re whether town residents would have input and if the archaeological survey results would be presented. The project is headed up by the city manager and answers to those questions await the arrival of the new manager in September.

- Mill Pond. The Mill Pond has been filling up with sediment since last dredged in 1997, limiting access to the lake from the boat launch and properties on the pond. There is an estimated 3 feet of sediment in the channel, much of it sand which is washed into the pond from Bartel's Beach. The city has been working with the DNR on a dredging permit and has finished the initial review. An endangered species survey will need to be completed and Eric cited the finding of the threatened pugnose shiner which will require accommodations to avoid disturbing its spawning. They are still hoping to do the dredging this winter (2022-2023) but the initiative rests with the DNR. He responded to a question about the dam being obstructed by sediment by

pointing out it's fully automated and is opened every 1-2 months to flush out the gate. Also, the pond's aquatic plants slow down flow allowing sediment to settle before reaching the dam.

- Sand. Eric reviewed the movement of beach sand. Bartel's, as above, is flushed into the pond, while that from Sandy Beach largely migrates northeast ending up near the Woodlands beach. He has been trying to alleviate this problem by using a coarser grained sand and less of it, while preserving the appeal to users. Previously West Sandy Beach got 44 tons annually while East Sandy Beach and Bartel's each got 22 tons. He has cut that back to a total of 22 tons for all three, and none was required so far in 2022.

- Tyranena Park Shore Restoration. He referred to the extensive erosion at both Upper and Lower Tyranena Parks. This is particularly severe near the parking lots and individuals launching their kayaks seem to be a big part of it. He lauded Marisa for her work on this issue and said the project, which may include a dedicated kayak launch, is in the budgeting and approval process.

- Water testing.

During the swimming season, the city beaches are sampled weekly by The Environmental Public Health Consortium and tested by the State Lab of Hygiene. If the test results indicate E.coli levels high enough for closure, the city will test daily until the values drop enough to re-open the beach. Geese seem to be the main culprit with the West Sandy Bay Beach by far the most commonly affected beach, especially after rain. He outlined the various goose control measures available including the city's shooting off explosives to scare them off. He was asked to look into posting an advisory if levels are high enough to be of concern but not so high as to mandate closing the beach.

- A comment was made regarding the danger of mixing motorized vessels and swimmers in the channel between the Bartel's northern swimming boundary ropes and the private pier at the old Bartel's building. He recognizes the problem and will investigate.

9) Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department.

Marisa Ulman, the Waters Resource Management Specialist for the County, reviewed several projects:

- Clean Boats/ Clean Waters

- Shoreland condition survey and assessment. This is required by the DNR every 5 years and as it's a standard protocol, comparison of different lakes is possible. It is broken down by tax parcel and owners can request a report on their parcel, but NOT on others.

- Fish habitat.

- Healthy Lakes grants. These DNR grants can match 75% of the costs for improving shorelines up to a maximum of \$1,000. Lots within 1,000 feet of the shore are also eligible. Three have been completed with 3 more in process for this year, with two already planned for next year.

- Small sediment dredge survey. Results due this winter. They are looking for, amongst other things, spiny water fleas which are established in Madison's lakes.

- The RLIA is funding additional water quality testing e.g., phosphorous levels in both the lake and its tributaries.

- RLIA is also funding chloride monitoring in the spring and fall, which should reflect road salt contamination, which has remained stable for 10 years.

This generated a discussion about road salt use including the fact that the RLIA sponsored a well-received road salt zoom workshop (Road Salt 101) in March of 2021. Thereafter, the city engaged with Wisconsin Salt Wise, a

nonprofit organization that promotes best-practice by municipalities to minimize road salt pollution of Wisconsin waterways. Two main strategies are key: first, calibrating the snowplow salting devices so that the operators can distribute a known and optimal amount of salt. Second, depending on the situation, the use of liquid salt brine rather than rock salt, can lead to significant reduction of salt use and runoff thus both protecting the lake and saving taxpayers money. Appropriate use of brining requires a significant amount of specialized equipment, education, and training. The city now owns the brining equipment and scheduled its snowplow operators to receive training from Salt Wise in the fall of 2021. RLIA did not get feedback from the city as to methods employed this past winter, but anecdotally, no one present at the Annual Meeting saw evidence of brining. The city may very well have calibrated the salt-spreader machinery. The town, to the best of our knowledge, did not require the snowplow contractor to use the free education program or to require salt optimization best-practices.

Disappointingly, although one town board member did attend the Road Salt 101 workshop, the town board decided in April 2021 to purchase a significantly larger amount of road salt for the winter of 2021-2022 than had been utilized in recent years. We have not gotten feedback from the town as to the amount of road salt actually utilized this past winter and no town representative was present at the annual meeting. There was disappointment expressed regarding the town's response to the education program and the lack of optimal road salt usage strategies.

10) Joint Rock Lake Committee. This report was deferred due to time constraints.

11. RLIA Committee Reports:

a. Recommendation for Slow No Wake ordinance modification. SNW means maintaining as slow a speed as possible, yet maintain steering control; it is *not* operationally defined by the absence of a wake. Tom Krejcie presented this town ordinance proposal, which involves adopting an expanded zone where SNW is required a uniform 200 feet from shore for all motorized vessels. This would replace the current confusing rules requiring motorized vessels to observe a zone of 100 feet from shore, rafts, piers, or restricted (swimming) areas, while jet skis must operate at SNW 200 feet from shore. (Note, this additional 100-foot SNW buffer does not exist for the buoys demarcating protected areas like Korth or Schultz Bay.) Given that swimmers are legally allowed to swim without a chase boat out to 150 feet from shore, the potential dangers seem self-evident. Other lakes, i.e., Lake Ripley and the Madison chain, have established such an ordinance and have received positive feedback while the DNR wardens say a uniform buffer would make SNW enforcement easier.

RLIA started this effort 18 months ago (February 2021) and the Joint Rock Lake Committee (JRLC) wrote to the Lake Mills Town Board in support. Because 60% of the shoreline is in the town, the town establishes the ordinances governing the lake and provides the lake patrol. Similarly, the JRLC is composed of 3 town residents and 2 city residents (60/40). The town board agreed to hold a public hearing regarding this proposed ordinance change following a presentation to the town at their February 2022 meeting. However, at a subsequent town Board meeting, the issue was tabled and seems unlikely to be revisited any time soon. Various options to persuade the town board to at least reconsider holding a public hearing on this SNW ordinance modification, including a petition, were discussed.

b. Miljala Tributary Restoration Update. Deferred due to time constraints.

c. Fisheries report. Deferred due to time constraints.

d. Turtles and other critters. Deferred due to time constraints.

12. Stewardship Award. Jim Colegrove presented a wonderful and sincere review of a very surprised Stan Smoniewksi. He was presented with an original print of a kingfisher which Susan's father had made – a very, very special award to a very special friend of the lake.

13) Adjourn. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn at 12:15.

a. Next Special New Board Meeting to elect officers: Monday, 8/29/22 at 6:30 PM on Zoom, see website for details.

b. Next Annual Meeting 8/26/2023 10 AM at Upper Korth Park Shelter