

Minutes of the Caribou Lake Property Owner's Association, Annual Meeting  
August 31, 2019  
Held at the Lutsen Town Hall

Present, CLPOA Board: Fred Morris, Tom Rider, Larry Mullen, Bob Reid, Karl Karst, Louise Suomi, Carol Westbrooks; absent: Julie Bittinger, Bill Dunn

Meeting convened by Fred Morris, CLPOA board President at 9:50 am. Present were the board members noted above, plus about 35 members.

Introductions were made by the CLPOA board and by the members present.

Fred thanked all those who participated in the highway cleanup the day before.

Minutes from the 2018 annual meeting were approved unanimously by all members present.

Fred thanked Louise for her service as Treasurer and board member for 13 years. She has resigned and Fred shared with the members that Tom Rider has agreed to serve as Treasurer effective as of the date of this meeting.

Louise reported on finances: bank balances, expenses, income. All in good order. Closing bank balance was \$5072.18.

Next Larry Mullen presented the water quality report. Compared with past data, overall all measures of water quality were good and mostly improved. Data for phosphorus were one of the best ever. Chlorophyll-a and Chlorophyll were both well below targets. Secchi disk readings set a new record of 7.93' (average reading for the summer) compared with the goal of 6'. Oxygen levels were good: about 8 ppm and want at least 5 ppm for good fish health. Oxygen concentration decreases with depth and is about 4 ppm at the bottom of the lake. The lake has been warmer this summer.

The Cook County Coalition of Lake Associations (CCCLA) is exploring stocking walleye in various lakes, and assisting with money. The DNR is looking into this. Motion made, seconded, and passed unanimously by members, to contribute up to \$1750 in the board's discretion to walleye restocking efforts in Caribou Lake.

Larry shared some historical data about walleye in the lake. Gill netting this summer caught 5 fish; in 1950 they caught 50.

Larry reported on boat inspections to combat AIS. The County pays for inspectors on weekends, and our volunteers staff midweek.

Anyone interested in testing well water can still drop off samples at McKeever's Well Drilling through early October. A discussion followed about creating a database of test results provided by property owners. The board agreed to discuss that. Several members volunteered their test results and all were within acceptable ranges. It was noted that Joseph Routh at the County will come to your house and conduct the tests for \$150 for anyone that wants to have their water tested but does not want to do the test themselves.

Irene Mullen reported on what's happening at CCCLA. Irene is the chairperson of the board of CCCLA, and Larry Mullen represents Caribou Lake at CCCLA meetings. See the CCCLA website for meeting minutes and other info. They are working on a lake management plan. A key ingredient in these plans is maintaining a 50' buffer along the lakeshore. We are doing a pretty good job of this on Caribou Lake. CCCLA heard a presentation about lakebed core sampling that has taken place in the region. One thing they learned: spiny water fleas could be in the lake bottom but don't show up in the water for 30 years! In 2018 we carried out 372 AIS inspections, which is up from the prior year.

A Facebook page has been started for CLPOA. We hope to keep the members to people in the watershed. The Facebook page will have announcements, post photos, and share information about the lake. You can join by making a request on the Facebook page, or by emailing CLPOA.

Next on the agenda was a report from Ginnie Storlie, Cook County Commissioner, but she was not present so no report was forthcoming.

Next on the agenda was our featured speaker, Diane Booth, a master gardener from the University of Minnesota Extension Service and Cook County Community Center. Diane provided for members to take a number of folders containing information about lake protection and management, and AIS. The focus of her presentation was a review of plants suited for shoreline buffer areas. Diane reviewed scores of plant and tree species for each of the shoreland zones; aquatic zone; wetland transition zone; and upland zone. Her full presentation will be uploaded to the CLPOA website.

Diane noted there was info in the packet about "jumping worms", the latest AIS.

She also noted that increased humidity in recent years has caused a widespread fungus on red pine. It starts on the lower limbs, and works its way upwards until it kills the tree. Not much that can be done.

At the conclusion of Diane's presentation, Fred conducted elections for the board of directors. The following actions were approved by the members. Susan Hexum-Platzer was elected as a director, and the following existing board members were re-elected: Fred Morris, Julie Bittinger, and Bill Dunn. Louise Suomi has resigned as Treasurer and board member.

Fred then introduced Susan Shubert, a representative of a group opposing the “border-to-border route” currently being explored by the DNR. Susan noted that sediment is a big pollutant and that the traffic caused by this program would be detrimental to streams and lakes in the watershed. She noted that the planned route crosses 59 waterways. Lakes are more susceptible to harm from sediment as they don’t flush out as quickly as rivers and streams. She also noted that all of the rivers and streams in the watershed are inter-connected so that damage to one affects others. She noted that this route is not mandated by the legislature, but rather legislation merely says that the DNR should look at it. Industry groups supporting off-road vehicles are actively lobbying in support of the trail. Under the proposal, no new roads would be created, but existing roads would be designated as part of a “border-to-border route” for off-road vehicles between the North Dakota border and the Canadian border. It would be a nationally-advertised route, and included as a recreational asset on the DNR website. It would be 850 miles long as currently proposed. Various towns, government bodies have opted out including Grand Portage, five townships, and two counties, as they are concerned about impacts to their land and waters, and costs of maintenance. There is concern that these vehicles will travel in large packs or caravans. As there is no funding for road maintenance, so local taxpayers would be on the hook for additional road maintenance caused by this traffic.

At the conclusion of Susan’s talk, Tom Christenson noted two concerns about Cathedral of the Pines Camp: a bright light that shines across the lake all night, and a loud siren that is activated by campers. There was a consensus that these were detrimental to the members’ enjoyment of their property and that we should ask the camp if it would change these practices. Fred agreed to share our concerns with the camp director.

Membership meeting adjourned at 12:05.

Following the meeting of the membership, the board of directors held a separate board-only meeting. Same attendance of board members as above. Re B2B issue, there was consensus to gather further information before taking a position, including but not limited to seeking input from B2B supporters. CCCLA was going to meet shortly and discuss whether to take a position on this issue, as will the Poplar River Management Board. The board was interested in hearing from those and other lake/stream groups on this issue before making a decision about our position.

We next talked about speakers at upcoming meetings. It was agreed to have someone from Odds and Ends in Grand Marais come to the spring meeting, and that we would see if Yousef from Arrowhead Electric would come to the 2020 annual meeting in the fall.

We agreed to go back to a 10:00 start time for future meetings.

Adjourned at 12:30.