

Caribou Lake Property Owners Association

Date: Saturday, August 31, 2024

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Lutsen Town Hall

Attendance: Lisa Miller-Johnson, Mike Nicklow, Julie Bittinger, Sharon Hexum-Platzer, Tom Rider, Larry Mullen, Karl Karst, Fred Morris, Charlie Austin, Jeanne Anderson and Tom Flink (once elected)

Tom Rider called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and introduced the guest speaker.

- I. Guest Speaker: Bob Thompson, Cook County Assessor.
 - A. Bob Thompson spoke to our group about how property values are determined, the timelines and what goes into assessing property values. He also talked to us about the fact that Minnesota has one of the most complex tax rate systems with about 40 different class types while other states only have 5 or so categories.

Bob Thompson Contact: 218-387-3650 or email: assessor@co.cook.mn.us

- B. Assessor duties are mandated per MN Statute 273.08

273.08 ASSESSOR'S DUTIES

The assessor shall actually view, and determine the market value of each tract or lot of real property listed for taxation, including the value of all improvements and structures thereon, at maximum intervals of five years and shall enter the value opposite each description. When directed by the county assessor, local assessors must enter construction and valuation data into the records in the manner prescribed by the county assessor.

Link to statute: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/273.08>

- C. Bob Thompson shared information regarding the number of properties and tax breakdown for Caribou Lake:

156 Parcels	Breakdown of properties
144 Taxable	95 Cabins
12 Exempt	26 Homesteads
1 Federal	15 Vacant or minor lots
	12 Exempt properties
	8 Short term rentals (All Licenced)

- D. **Vacation Rentals in Cook County**

Bob Thompson also discussed the breakdown and number of vacation rental properties in all of Cook County. At this time there is no cap on the number of rental properties in Cook County.

1. **367 Rental Units currently in Cook County.** Of these 346 are Licensed and 21 are unlicensed.
2. Vacation rentals are taxed at a higher rate than cabins or homesteads.
3. The Vacation Rentals in Cook County are regulated by Cook County Land Services. Land services has a "Vacation Rental Committee". To learn more about this committee you can visit the following website:

https://www.co.cook.mn.us/government/departments/land_services/vacation_rental_advisory_committee_docs/vacation_rentals_index.php

At this time there is no Cap regarding the number of vacation rentals the county can have. If you have questions regarding vacation rental property regulations in Cook County please contact Cook County Land Services Director, Tim Nelson @ 218-387-3630 or visit the Cook County Land Services website:

https://co.cook.mn.us/government/departments/land_services/index.php

II. Reports and Official Business

A. Approve Minutes from 2023 Annual Meeting

1. Motion to approve minutes from 2023 Annual Meeting made by Sally Westby
2. Seconded by Rene Swadburg

Motion Passes

B. Nomination and Election of Board Members. Nominees: Tom Rider, Karl Karst, Lisa Miller-Johnson and new member Tom Flink.

1. Motion to approve members by Ceil Neihart
2. Seconded by Tim Nelson

C. Treasurer's report by Charlie Austin

Current Balance as of 8/31/23 is \$2,273.

Charlie discussed all expenditures and deposits for the year. To view all information please visit <https://caribou.mnlakesanddrivers.org/membership-meeting-minutes/> and select the 2024 Fall Meeting Slides (download for full board presentation).

III. Cook County Coalition of Lake Associations (CCCoLA) - Presentation by Irene Mullen

A. This group is made up of 18 board members from Lake Associations, Road Associations and Individuals to protect, preserve and participate in the health of Lakes in Cook County MN.

1. Initiatives that CCCoLA has been working on:

- a) Get the Lead Out – Bucks is still collecting old tackle
- b) Fisherman's Picnic – Booth with a spinning game where kids and their families tried to answer questions about AIS, Shoreline Protection, Septic Use – great way to talk to others about best practices
- c) Septic Workshop – Cook County Higher Ed – video is on CCCoLA website – flyer – given to Cascade Rentals and others who rent out their cabins.
- d) AIS -Other lakes are now putting up signs like Caribou's
- e) Wake Surfing -Pike Lake and Poplar Lake have asked to see Fred's binder
- f) Shoreline Protection best practice
- g) Ilena Hansel, CCSW – shared budget and funding resources, \$60,000 from County, the same for the last 6 years
- h) Ann Sullivan, Cook County Commissioner, has been attending our meetings and is our liaison with the County.

(1) Working on making recycling better in Cook County so that all recycled items can actually be recycled. Working on a better system to let users know how to recycle (ie. clean bottles, no cross contamination, ect.)

(2) There is glass/aluminium/plastic recycling at the maintenance Facility on Ski Hill Road. Cardboard recycling in the semi trailer at the bottom of Caribou Trail.

IV. Water Quality and AIS reports.

A. Water Quality Report - Larry Mullen

1. Phosphorus - 13.7
2. Chlorophyll-a - 6.7
3. Secchi Disk - 6.8
4. Oxygen -

Depth	Temp	Oxy mg/l
3ft	70.3	9.2
12ft	69.4	8.5
24ft	66.2	3.4

*For detailed information (sampling site locations and historic data) regarding Water Quality for Caribou Lake please Visit our website

<https://caribou.mnlakesandrivers.org/membership-meeting-minutes/>

And download the 2024 Fall Meeting Slides presentation.

B. Rusty Crayfish update

1. Introduction - Tom Rider

Tom discussed Caribou Lake's local Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), the Rusty Crayfish and Caribou Lake Property Owner's Association's efforts to reduce the numbers.

What harm do Rusty Crayfish do?

- Native crayfish eliminated
- Native grasses eliminated causing:
 - Trap sediment
 - Absorb nutrient pollution
 - Add dissolved oxygen
- Nursing environment for fish
- Fish population declines
- Property values?

There is evidence that harvesting the Rusty Crayfish drastically reduces their numbers and makes it possible for native crayfish to survive and promote lake health and assure our fish population can remain healthy. Because of the Rusty Crayfish size fish are not able to eat them.

Two Lakes that have had successful results from harvesting the Rusty Crayfish are Pike Lake and Woman Lake.

2. What was done this summer - Larry Mullen

- a) Hired Crawdaddies to harvest for 6 weeks
- b) NRRI, harvested two weeks
- c) Volunteer effort to supplement

Results Summer 2024

- (1) Crawdaddies, contract = 28,768 (8 lines, 60 traps, 6 weeks)
- (2) Crawdaddies, on their own = 5,094
- (3) NRRI: 133 lbs = 6,650 (2 weeks)
- (4) Volunteers = 4,000

Total so far for 2024 = 44,512 crayfish

**Crawdaddies continue to harvest (on their own for no fee at*

this time). We could possibly end up with a harvest total of around 60,000 Rusty Crayfish.

3. Plan for the future - Tom Rider

- a) The CLPOA Board strongly supports the efforts to continue harvesting the Rusty Crayfish on Caribou Lake. What does this mean?

(1) **FUNDING**

(a) Subordinate Service District (SSD) funding, which is used for Water Quality and Aquatic Invasive Species, should be increased in order to continue with summer Rusty Crayfish Harvesting. The SSD amount is distributed equally among all riparian (lake shore) property owners.

(b) The CLPOA Board has already unanimously approved increasing the SSD to \$250 every 5 years (\$50 per year per property owner).

(i) CLPOA submits the increased request to the County Board and the County Board holds a public hearing before approving or denying the request.

(ii) Tom Rider asked for an informal vote via raised hands. All individuals at the meeting showed their approval for this increase in SSD funding by raising their hands. Unanimous support. Tom will move forward with submitting this request to the County Board.

V. Comments from Commissioner Storlie

A. Cannabis Committee - was formed to discuss licensing in Cook County. The committee agreed to having 7 cannabis distributors for Cook County. That is the same number of liquor licences that the County has.

1. Commissioner Storlie is looking into how much \$\$ from Cannabis Sales Cook County would be able to keep.

B. Flood Update - there were 17 applicants who applied for public money to help with property damage during the flood.

C. There are currently 2 Elected office that the County Board would like to switch over to appointed positions:

1. County Recorder and County Auditor.
2. The current County Recorder (Dusty Nelms) is retiring and that position is being switched to an appointed position - by the County Commissioners.
3. More child care licences in the West End. Birch Grove now has another licensed daycare.
4. Renewed licence with the Forest Service for gravel pit brush dumping.
5. Generator for Lutsen Town Hall - is still not yet been approved by the County Emergency Services Administrator yet but getting closer. The Lutsen Township Supervisors would like the Lutsen Fire Hall to be an Emergency Shelter.

- a) *Side note:* Sharen Hexum-Platzer informed the group that even without County approval/funding the Lutsen Township Supervisors will be funding and opening the Fire Hall as an Emergency Shelter because it is the right thing to do.

6. Emergency to go bags - Commissioner Storlie shared some to go bags with the group.

VI. Wake Surfing Update - Fred Morris

- A. There is now a Wake Surfing sign at the public landing.
- B. Ordinance has passed into Law. Only able to wake surf in a very small, specific part of Caribou Lake. Our sign shows the area that can be used. There are 3 things that everyone should know if you do encounter a wake surfing boat on Caribou Lake.
 1. Boats, paddle boards, canoes, ect... have the right of way and the wake boat needs to shut down and give you that right of way.
 2. No wake speed while going to the area where wake surfing can be done.
 3. Local Sheriff is the enforcing entity. If you need to call for enforcement, call the local Sheriff's office.

VII. Issue from the floor

- A. For next Spring's meeting the Caribou Lake Property Owners Association (CLPOA) would like to change our name to something that does not sound like a Homeowners Association (HOA), which we are NOT. Some examples:
 1. Friends of Caribou Lake
 2. Stewards of Caribou Lake
 3. Please think about this for next Spring. We would like to have a name that would be welcoming to all and reflects our Articles of Incorporation:
"Organised exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes, including the promotion and protection of the water resources of the State of Minnesota through environmentally sound riparian stewardship action".
- B. Tax Levy (Sharon Hexum Platzer): Fire Department needs new air packs so there may be an increase to the Lutsen Township taxes. Please take this under consideration.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:00 pm