

Caribou Lake Property Owners' Association Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

Date: August 30, 2025 **Time:** 10:00 AM - Noon **Location:** Lutsen Town Hall

The meeting was called to order by President Tom Rider at 10:00 AM. The board members present, Larry Mullen, Mike Nicklow, Charlie Austin, Lisa Miller-Johnson, and Sharon Hexum-Platzer, introduced themselves.

The Cook County Firewise scheduled speaker was unable to attend. See the Cook County web page for Firewise information.

Guest speaker Ginney Storley, County Commissioner, gave a county update including:

Building in County

- Northshore Transfer Station
- New apartments by UP Yonder
- New Apartments on Gun Flint
- Transfer stations
- Hoveland
- Tofte
- Adding on to public safety building

Bike Trail – extended - Tofte and Lutsen next year

HWY 61 rebuild 2027 – Tofte – to county line

The **business meeting** started with a motion to approve the 2024 Membership Meeting minutes made by Tim Nelson and a second by Bob Reid. The motion passed.

Board Members Election

Julie Bittinger decided to leave the board. Many thanks for her years of service as a board member and as secretary.

Re-elections of - Mike Nicklow, Sharon Hexum-Platzer, Larry Mullen, Fred Morris, Charlie Austin, Jeanne Anderson

Motion to approve -Tim Nelson. Second by Sally Wesby. The motion passed

Financial Overview (Treasurer's Report: 9/1/24 to 8/30/25) by Charlie Austin

- **Total Income:** \$7,802.80, with significant contributions from "Donations – Rusty Crayfish Fnd" (\$2,260.00) and "SSD reimbursement" (\$3,750.00).
- **Total Expenses:** \$2,613.51 before Rusty Crayfish expenses, and an additional \$7,270.43 for Rusty Crayfish specific efforts.
- **Net Income/Expense (before Rusty Crayfish):** \$5,189.29.
- **Rusty Crayfish Expenses:** These constitute a major expense at \$7,270.43, including an Outboard Motor (\$3,019.00) and Crawdaddies at \$3,750.00.
- **Change in Cash Position:** A decrease of \$(2,081.14 , leading to an ending balance of \$747.36 as of August 28, 2025. There is an account receivable (cash coming in) from the SSD fund of approximately \$7,000.
- **Dues Payment Options:** Members can pay in person, mail to PO Box 11, Lutsen MN 55612, or online via the website: <https://caribou.mnlakesandrivers.org/>.

A motion to approve the report was made by Sharon Hexum-Platzer and seconded by Carrie Nicklow. No objections were made. The motion passed.

Cook County Coalition of Lake Associations (CCCoLA) Report by Irene Mullen

- **Purpose:** Protect Preserve Participate - Lakes of Cook County.
- **Membership:** 21 board members made of Lake Associations, Road Associations and individuals. 3 new lake associations joined this year.
- **Meetings:** Held Second Thursday of each month, with 4 in-person meetings and the rest via Zoom. Anyone can attend meetings.
- **Community Outreach:** Activities include Fisherman's Picnic, Canoe Races, Take a Kid Fishing, and engagement with local media (WTIP and Cook County News Herald).
- **Key Concerns:** Surface water usage is big concern for members. Water is used for some of their cabins. A specific call to action: "GET the LEAD OUT." Hungry Jack lake is using Fred's binder as an aid for their possible wake surfing ordinance request.
- **Cook County AIS:** Conducts Boat Inspections at boat landings. This June had an inspection station on highway 61 noting that 4 out of 10 boats inspected had plugs

in and were from out of state. Also conducts Survey for Spiney Water Fleas and Calcium testing.

- **Cook County Soil and Water (SW):** Offered Algae and Cyanobacteria Presentation, Shoreland workshop, pH monitoring equipment, and SW will do site visits.

Shared MPCA simple quick test for blue green algae – cyanobacteria, using a jar. If you have a concern, contact CCSW. www.pca.state.mn.us

- **Shoreland Stewards:** Emphasizes that Cook County has over 90% of its pre-European settlement wetlands. Plant native flowers, shrubs, trees.

Tom Rider shared that there is a Cook County ordinance requiring a 50 foot buffer of undisturbed land from the lakeshore.

Gunflint Loon Project:

Goal is to get data on Cook County loon populations due to observed declines in northern WI by Dr. Piper. Volunteers make observations every two weeks on divided sections of the lake until loons leave. Members were asked to volunteer to participate in forming a Caribou Lake Loon Project for next year.

Water Quality Report by Larry Mullen

- **Key Monitoring Parameters:** Phosphorus, Chlorophyll-a, Secchi Disk, Oxygen, Calcium, and pH Factor. Five historical sampling sites are used.
- **Phosphorus:** Goal is 15 PPB or less. The 2025 average (2 recordings yet to come in) is 16.3, slightly above the goal, but Average 14.9 in 2024 was below.
- **Chlorophyll-a:** Goal is 8 PPB or less. The 2025 average (2 recordings yet to come in) is 2.9, which is well below the goal.
- **Secchi Disk:** Goal is 6 feet or more. The 2025 average is 7.3, exceeding the goal.
- **Oxygen and Temperature (Site 205, Bottom 28 feet):** Surface water oxygen is normal at 8 milligrams per liter.
- **pH Factor:** A healthy pH factor for a lake in Cook County is between 7.2 and 8.3. The Caribou reading on 8/28/2025 was 7.75, which is within the healthy range.
- **Calcium:** The latest 8/13/2025 reading at 7.7.

Concerns from the floor: Manure pile on Foothill Boulevard

Rusty Crayfish Management by Tom Rider

- Rusty Crayfish are highlighted as a major concern, causing harm by Native crayfish eliminated, Native grasses eliminated, and Fish population declines.
- **Harvesting as the Primary Strategy:** Various parties contributing.
- Hired Crawdaddies to harvest for 6 weeks.
- Volunteer efforts, including a loaned boat, trap lines managed by volunteers, and Cathedral of the Pines camp using their boat and CLPOA traps. Many members harvested from their docks.
- A substantial increase in harvesting, with a projected total of 3075 lbs = 130,000 crayfish, compared to 60,000 in 2024 and 12,000 in 2023.
- SSD will continue to fund, \$50 per taxpayer per year = \$50 x 138 taxpayers = \$6900.
- Build Up Volunteer effort: purchase boat, expand volunteer pool, harvesting earlier.
- Explore an internship.

Concern from the floor: Migration of Rusties from Murmur Creek and the need for a barrier. The board has established a subcommittee that will address that issue with the DNR.

Potential Name Change by Tom Rider

Discussion around changing the name from "Caribou Lake Property Owners' Association" to "Friends of Caribou Lake" or "Stewards of Caribou Lake." The current name causes confusion, sounds inappropriately like a HOA, and mis-represents our mission which is to preserve and protect Caribou Lake. The membership was invited to share their opinions and suggestions with the board members between now and the next meeting. The board will then decide on a name and bring it back to the membership for approval.

The current strategy is that the name would be used as a DBA (doing business as) and that the legal name for the Secretary of State and tax filings would remain as Caribou Lake Property Owners' Association.

Other:

Sharon Hexum-Platzer shared Lutsen community announcements, the Fire Department's pancake breakfast and the Lutsen Flea Market.

The Meeting Adjourned 12:00 pm.