

RALALA BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 14, 2023
Via WebEx

Welcome: Bob Eddy

Present (10): Bob Eddy, Gary Langer, Diana Lee, Sara Parke, Anne Bonnerup, Bob Lee, Mark Mosman, Darril Wegscheid, David Lawson, Mary De Hanson

Guest Presenter: Jan Mosman

Absent (4): Cyrus Malbari, Kim David, Jeff Caza, Lloyd Thyen

Secretary's Report: Diana presented a draft of the May 10 meeting minutes and no changes were requested.

Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the minutes were approved as distributed prior to the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Sara discussed the income report, including bank balances as of June 5 and there were no questions or changes requested.

Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the financial report was approved as distributed prior to the meeting.

Mining Update: Jan reported that the DNR sent representatives to the Emily City Council meeting to discuss the exploratory drilling underway and answer questions from the board and community members. Her report included the following:

- The Emily Mine Information Group compiled a list of questions from landowners in the drilling area, and sent the list to the council prior to the meeting so that they could request answers from the DNR during the meeting.
- Not all questions were asked/answered during the council meeting but the list was also intended to serve as an “educational tool” for the council to provoke thought and discussion surrounding the project.
- Several landowners in the area expressed concern that their wells had been adversely affected by the exploratory drilling done in 2010-2012 by Cooperative Mineral Resources and some people indicated the problems are starting up again (cloudy water, dark specks, bad taste etc.). It was acknowledged that there is no proof that the drilling and recapping process would cause problems with wells but some people believe the timing was too coincidental to be

unrelated. The DNR indicated this type of issue is for the Department of Health and not the DNR or city.

- The DNR addressed several of the questions posed by the council and community members.
- DNR advised that they are negotiating lease requests from North Star Manganese (NSM) for drilling on state-controlled land. To date, the exploratory drilling has occurred on private land. NSM is striving to lease 800 contiguous acres, but in order to be contiguous the area would need to include private leases. To date Crow Wing Power has purchased two 40-acre parcels and NSM has also purchased two 40-acre parcels.
- DNR stressed that this is not yet a “mining project”. They are only exploring what minerals are there. The process for permitting and getting a mining project underway is enormous and takes years, and would not even begin until it is established that a mining operation in this area is viable. They gave assurance there will be plenty of time for residents to voice concerns and give input, but it is premature to treat this exploratory drilling as the beginning of a mining operation.
- The Crow Wing Power Accountability Group is challenging the lack of transparency by the Crow Wing Power Board and also investigating agreements and payments that have been made related to the current proposed mining project.

Bob Eddy asked whether environmental issues, such as well water issues, would need to be addressed before any mining permit applications are submitted. Bob Lee explained that proponents are required to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as part of the permit-to-mine application process, and historically it takes years until all the necessary permits are granted to allow commencement of a mining operation. He further explained that the state considers exploratory drilling to be a relatively low impact process and that many thousands of cores have been drilled across Minnesota.

Financial Committee Report: Bob Eddy reported that no progress has occurred since the last Board meeting and that the Financial Committee would be meeting June 21.

AIS and Launch Site Management: Gary reported:

- The kiosk at the Lake Roosevelt boat launch site was installed on May 19.
- The ILIDs agreement is in place for this year. Video will be reviewed on launches made Mondays through Wednesdays, the days the inspectors are not present.
- Additional boat inspector hours – Cass County & WaterGuards indicate they believe they have the manpower to fulfill the additional hours that RALALA requested this year (additional 280 hours at Lake Roosevelt and additional 80

hours at Lawrence Lake) at a total cost of \$9,900 as approved by the Board at a prior meeting. The hours worked will be invoiced monthly so we will be able to monitor the actual number of hours vs. requested number of hours.

- Assistance with costs related to AIS management – Crooked Lake Township Lakes and Shores Committee committed \$5,000 and Cass County committed \$1,000 to help defray costs to RALALA for launch site projects
- Gary encourages people to introduce themselves and chat with the inspectors (Dennis at Roosevelt and Virginia at Lawrence).

Mark and Bob Eddy reported that they reinstalled the ILIDs and repaired a broken wire.

Protect Our Lakes Spring Launch Event: Anne reported that plans for the June 17 event are all set and reviewed the speaker lineup. She also reported that 12 people participated in the free consultations provided by Prairie Restorations on June 2 and 3 and she received positive feedback on those sessions.

Marketing Report: Mary De reported that the RALALA booth at Emily Day on July 15 has been arranged and discussed plans for give-aways, including RALALA and lake-related informational materials and also her plan to hold a free drawing to entice people to the booth. She contacted Tremolo who agreed to “sponsor” us by providing a giant inflatable loon floatie as the prize for our free drawing. There will also be lake and fishing-related coloring and activity books for kids. She said the intention of the booth is to provide visibility and to help educate the community on what RALALA is and what we do. Mary De and Diana will meet shortly to firm up plans for the day and will man the booth.

Bob Eddy indicated, per RALALA’s Marketing Plan, he has begun the process of creating a “packet” of information we can provide to Emily City Council and Crooked Lake Board on a recurring basis to keep them informed of RALALA’s activities, initiatives and projects.

Newsletter: Anne indicated that she and Kim are shooting for August 1 as the distribution date for the next newsletter, and they are seeking ideas for topics and people willing to submit articles.

Water Quality Testing: Darril reported that testing was performed in May, including sampling from three inlet streams. He noted that nobody was available on Smoky Hollow Lake in May to do testing there.

Enbridge Water Testing: Bob Eddy reported that the cost for lab testing is now higher than originally estimated. The quote includes multiple tests from multiple labs and is currently estimated to be \$6,200 per site. We could save some money by drawing samples ourselves but that would not result in a significant savings. This year's budget can absorb this cost but the high cost could be a problem in future years. Bob indicated he will send out cost sheets to the board for review and further discussion.

Darril added that Pine River Watershed and WAPOA are also interested parties concerned about risks associated with the Enbridge pipeline and possibly they would be willing to share some costs.

Loon Island Buoy: Anne indicated that she received a call from Bonnie McGowan who has a summer home on the north end of Roosevelt and owns the island referred to as "loon island" and the adjacent shoreline. She frequently witnesses boats trying to navigate the shallow passageway between the peninsula and the island and getting stuck, as well as possibly disturbing the loons and loon nest. She has obtained a buoy from the DNR in order to deter boating in that passageway but is not allowed to install it without a proper permit from Cass County. She was told by Cass County that they would only consider approving it if RALALA submitted a letter of support. Bonnie agrees to install it, remove it and maintain it. After much discussion related to placement of a buoy vs. placement of a sign, and also whether RALALA should take a position at all, it was decided that Bob Lee will draft a letter in support of the buoy and will present it to the full board for further discussion and/or approval.

Own Your Wake Poster: Bob Eddy discussed the "Own Your Wake" document containing a map of the lake and guidance with regard to appropriate distance between a boat and the shore, based on type of boat and size of wake. Areas of the shoreline are highlighted where large wakes are highly discouraged due to sensitive shoreline. Small changes were suggested to the document and when it is final, the poster will be placed on the kiosk at the Roosevelt launch site. Due to time constraints, the draft of the poster was approved for distribution at the Launch Event on June 17.

Request for Funding of Tree Removal: Bob Eddy indicated he received a request from Dave Burrow that RALALA reimburse him for all or part of the cost he incurred when removing a fallen tree from the channel between Roosevelt and Lawrence lakes. After discussion, there was a consensus that RALALA should not be involved in financing any tree removal regardless of the location. However, in light of the fact that the channel is used by most boaters and the tree removal is appreciated, it was agreed that Mr. Burrow should be encouraged to create a GoFundMe page and, if he chooses

to do so, RALALA would agree to include the story and information about the GoFundMe page in the next edition of the newsletter.

Sunfish and Crappie Kill: Bob Eddy discussed RALALA's email blast regarding the discovery of an unusual number of dead fish this spring and the weather-related cause of the "kill". He indicated that positive feedback was received and that people appreciated the information.

Expanded AIS Surveillance: Bob Eddy opened up discussion as to whether the board is interested in expanding AIS surveillance beyond milfoil, and suggested possibly expanding to starry stonewort and zebra mussels. He indicated that PLM, in addition to milfoil surveillance, also conducts surveillance of starry stonewort at a cost of \$400 per site. PLM provides divers that survey an area approximately 50' x 50' around boat launch ramps, which is where the problem apparently first shows up. If starry stonewort is found, they harvest it.

Anne reported that training is available for surveying for starry stonewort and the process taught involves wading in the area near a boat launch and using a special rake designed for this purpose.

In light of the fact that Roosevelt is at high risk for starry stonewort since it is currently present in nearby Thunder Lake, there was consensus that (1) PLM should be hired this year to survey both Roosevelt and Lawrence launch sites; and (2) going forward, we should examine setting up an "Adopt a Harbor Program" and finding volunteers to get trained to do the surveying on a regular basis.

Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the hiring of PLM was approved to survey both Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes for starry stonewort at a total cost of \$800.

4th of July Boat Parade: Following up from a discussion at the May board meeting where Mary & Darril indicated they are passing the torch on being leaders of the annual boat parade, Bob Eddy asked for a volunteer to lead this year's boat parade on Sunday, July 2. Mark Mosman agreed to fill the role.

Adjournment:

Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned.