

**Cokato Lake Improvement Association
Annual Meeting
Cokato Lake RV Resort – Big Red Barn
August 12, 2023**

Officers and Board Members present: Louis King, Jim Wood, Heather Coffelt, Rick Schultz and Jim Anderson.

Approximately 80 members were present for the meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm

Motion to approve agenda: Craig Griepp

Second: LeAnn King

Secretary Report

Quarterly Meeting Minutes from June 10, 2023 were read by Heather Coffelt

Motion to approve Secretary's Report: Alan Hayda

Second: Frank Roberts

Treasurer Report

Read by Jim Wood

Statement of Financial Income and Expenses

July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

Income

Dues	\$2350.00
Fish Fund	\$326.00
Annual meeting meals	\$230.00
Total Income	<u>\$2906.00</u>

Expense

Buoy Chain	\$52.95
Annual Dinner Meat	\$318.00
Fish Stocking	\$1400.00

Total Expense	<u>\$1770.95</u>
Net Income	<u>\$1135.05</u>

Statement of Financial Position

Current Assets	July 1, 2022	June 30, 2023
Checking	\$1593.97	\$2729.02
CD (matures 10/22/23)	\$3596.12	\$3596.12
Total Assets	<u>\$5190.09</u>	<u>\$6325.14</u>
Liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00

64 Active Members

Motion to Approve Treasurer's Report: Craig Griep
Second: Claire Roberts

Old Business:

1) Discuss Carp Removal in 2023 (Phase 1 of our 3-year plan)

- 16,000 lbs of carp were harvested from Cokato Lake on April 25, 2023.
- We have a verbal commitment from the commercial fisherman to return and harvest additional carp from Cokato Lake this winter (if ice conditions are acceptable).
- The commercial fisherman and his crew were excellent to work with and we are hopeful they will return – they were very appreciative of the help from our members.
- The third net they used for harvesting carp was full of sunfish and crappies – which indicates we have a good population of those fish species. They returned the sunfish and crappies to the lake.

2) Lake Association Fish Stocking efforts in 2023

- 50,000 walleye fry were placed in the lake Spring 2023.
 - i. We received a larger quantity of fry this year from Rademacher – Louis believes it was much greater than the 50,000 fry we paid for but we can't quantify the exact amount.
- The DNR also placed walleye fry in our lake this year. This year the DNR used a different strain of walleyes from the Green Lake area – they were previously using the Dead Lake and Leech Lake strain. The DNR said the Green Lake strain has been thriving in this corridor.
- Louis will be present with the DNR when they do the electro shock testing on Cokato Lake in September 2023. They shock the lake, net the fish and count them to calculate the fish population.

- The DNR hasn't done this the past couple of years due to low water levels and Covid – so it will be helpful to see the current population status.

3) Landing Clean-Up Project:

- Louis may ask for volunteers if additional work is needed for this project.

4) Thank you to everyone that helps with our events/projects

- Your active participation in this association is much appreciated. Thank you!

5) Low Water Levels Discussion

- Many residents said they are pushing their boats off their lifts or pushing their boats away from shore due to low water levels.
- Some residents can't even get their boats in the water.
- A vast majority of members would like to see an increase in water levels (indicated by a "showing of raised hands" by those affected) – 3 people were opposed.
- Louis suggested putting the board in the dam to increase water levels by 6 inches (which would greatly benefit many people on the lake).
- Louis said the creek on the south end of the lake has stopped flowing – he believes the lake levels are the lowest he's seen since he started fishing this lake in 1988 (with the possible exception of last year - 2022).
- The board (6 inches high) in the dam is an inexpensive fix – Louis said it would cost approximately \$200 to implement.
- One resident on the northwest side of the lake (Toby Kotila) is opposed to placing the board in the dam to raise the lake level because he fears it will impact his property (it's happened in the past with heavy rains). Toby said higher lake levels have been tried before – when the dam was first constructed it didn't have a notch in it. The notch was added in the 1960's. He believes the notch is there for a good reason and doesn't want anyone to interfere with the current status of the dam.
- Louis attempted to find a compromise for the lake level to appease both sides of the argument (those in favor of adding a board to the dam to increase lake levels and those opposed to adding a board because it may affect their property).
 - First compromise suggestion:
 - Put the board in the dam for the next 1.5 months. If it negatively affects the property owners – we will remove the board.
 - Toby Kotila declined this suggestion.
 - Toby said he would call the DNR if the dam was comprised in any fashion.
 - Second compromise suggestion:
 - Measure the increase of water levels on Toby's dock. Place a mark on his dock that is 6 inches higher than the current

lake level – if the water level goes above this mark when we put the board in the dam, we will remove the board.

a. Toby Kotila declined this suggestion.

iii. Third compromise suggestion:

1. Put in a smaller 2 inch board in the dam to test if it affects any properties

a. Toby Kotila opposed this compromise.

- Toby Kotila suggested Louis retrieve the original blueprints of the dam construction. He said it will likely have some information regarding water levels, elevations, etc. and help clarify why the notch was added to the dam decades ago.
- Dustin Radermacher has been in contact with the DNR – additional details about these discussions will be shared at future meetings.
- Louis tabled this topic because if there is any opposition to our proposals to add the board to the dam – the DNR will not allow it to happen.

6) Water Clarity Discussion

- Jim Anderson tests the water quality of Cokato Lake and submits it to the DNR. He said the current clarity levels are much better than when he started testing years ago.
- He said in most years we experience a June algae bloom and the clarity goes down to 4 feet. Then it rebounds.
- This year the clarity has been staying at 4 feet. We are hoping to see improvement with additional carp harvest.
- One member also suggested pursuing additional terraces in the fields adjacent to the RV Resort – there was a noticeable different in water clarity when the terraces were placed in other fields close to the lake. Working with the property owner and Soil & Water representatives was suggested.

New Business:

1) Winter Carp Harvest – 2024

- Commercial Fisherman is expected to return to harvest carp in February or March 2024 (dependent on ice conditions).
- If the commercial fisherman is able to harvest another 50,000 lbs of carp this winter - we will implement our sunfish stocking plan (Phase 2 of our 3 year plan).

2) New Vegetation growing around the lake

- Lower water levels have created an influx of vegetation in the lake.
- Long stem bull rushes are growing on the south end of the lake (and a few other locations) and Louis is hopeful they will drop seeds this fall and additional growth will occur.
- One resident (Judith Trolander) requested no more vegetation to be planted in front of her property.

1. Louis said we won't plant any additional vegetation without receiving permission from the lakeshore owner.

3) Phase 2 of our 3-year plan - Stocking sunfish in Spring 2024

- We estimate the cost of implementing the sunfish stocking plan to be \$10,000.
- We plan to stock the lake with sunfish ranging in size from 4-6 inches with an estimated cost of \$1/fish.
- Our goal with the sunfish stocking plan is to get ahead of the carp repopulating the lake. Sunfish eat the eggs of the carp. If we can couple the sunfish stocking with the carp removal it will hopefully limit the reproduction of carp.
- Water clarity should improve with the removal of the carp.
- We will likely need to host a fundraiser of some sort to raise money for the Sunfish stocking and vegetation plant.
- Donations are welcome to the fish fund to be used to implement this Phase of our plan.
- Donations can be mailed to Jim Wood – Treasurer:
Jim Wood
2779 Nevens Ave SW
Cokato, MN 55321

4) Boating Safety Reminders for Cokato Lake

- Shallow waters = Additional hazards
- Be aware of your surroundings, educate yourself on watercraft rules and please be careful.

5) Office & Board Member Election

1 Board Member Position – Jim Anderson

- We conducted the election by a show of hands:
2 people voted for Rob Radermacher
The remainder of the membership voted for Dan Flynn.
- Dan Flynn is elected for a 3-year term replacing Jim Anderson.
- Welcome to the board Dan – thanks for your willingness to serve!

1 Officer – Secretary

- Heather Coffelt was elected to another 3-year term as Secretary.

Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm

Motion: Craig Griep

Second: Al Hayda