

Minutes of RALALA Association Annual Meeting

August 9, 2025

Crooked Lake Township Town Hall

NOTE: This document is in DRAFT form until formally approved at 2026 Annual Meeting

Call to Order: Bob Eddy, President of the Association, called the meeting to order shortly after 9:00 am.

Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes: Copies of the 2024 Annual Meeting minutes were available for review and a draft of the minutes was posted on RALALA's website shortly after the meeting was held. No changes were suggested. Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Diana Lee (Treasurer) provided copies of the 2024 year-end financial statement and presented a 2025 report showing budget vs. actual through July 31, 2025. She then highlighted the following:

Income:

- A bequest in the amount of \$43,029 was received by RALALA from the Estate of William George in June. This was in addition to the \$72,500 bequest (partial payment in 2023 and final payment in 2024) from the Estate of Jo Ellen Batty-George. RALALA has invested those funds (in addition to other cash on hand) in two Certificates of Deposit totaling \$195,000 to provide investment income and to ensure there is a comfortable cushion that will help keep RALALA viable well into the future, since nobody can predict what challenges may lie ahead.
- Total 2025 income (including the bequest) is at \$101,692 as of 7/31.
- RALALA's balance sheet is in excellent shape. In addition to the Certificates of Deposit, RALALA currently has approximately \$100,000 in cash, and the only liabilities on the books are pass-through accounts for First Responders and Fireworks. The funds we collect in 2025 for those purposes will be passed along to the appropriate parties in 2026. To date this year, we have collected \$5,950 for First Responders and \$2,825 for Fireworks. The funds for First Responders are divided between Emily and Crooked Lake Township based on the lake address of each donor.
- Corporate donations are at \$560 and we expect another \$2,150. These donations are primarily as a result of corporate "match" programs, whereby members' employers are willing to match employee donations to nonprofits, or corporate donations based on an employee's number of volunteer hours.
- Cass County has agreed to "grant" \$5,665 this year to RALALA for AIS (aquatic invasive species)-related expenses. RALALA expects to also receive grants from the Outing Chamber of Commerce and Crooked Lake Fire Department, as they have in previous year(s).
- Aside from direct income (such as grants), RALALA has benefited from cost-sharing arrangements with both City of Emily and Crooked Lake Township. In past years, those entities agreed to pay specific amounts directly to vendors hired by RALALA for surveying and treating AIS, which reduced the amount owing by RALALA.

Expenses:

- RALALA budgeted to spend \$83,200 this year (including \$61,600 for AIS). To date, expenses are at \$10,475. The budgeted amount for AIS was based on last year's net expense of \$40,930 for surveys and treatment of AIS. Without grants and cost sharing, RALALA's expense would have been \$74,808 last year. Grants and cost-sharing agreements are not guaranteed from year to year. Based on the survey done in July, we do not anticipate expenses nearly as high as last year.
- Last year \$6,272 was spent on monthly "Enbridge" water testing where Spire Valley creek flows into North Roosevelt in order to detect any signs of a gas pipeline leak. After establishing a 12-month baseline and finding no signs of a problem, we have reduced the testing to 2 tests this year, resulting in a savings of approximately \$5,000.

Following the Treasurer's report, a motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the report.

Election of Board of Directors: Bob Eddy noted the following board changes:

- Retiring directors: Cyrus Malbari, Darril Wegscheid & Mary De Hanson
- New directors: Lisabeth Mackall Bonafede, Bonnie McGowan & Betsy Skagen
- Directors whose terms expire 2025—willing to extend: Robert Eddy, Gary Langer & Kim David

Bob Eddy then presented the following slate of directors, and respective terms, for approval:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Officer Title (if any)</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Extended/New Term</u>
Robert Eddy	President	2022-25	2025-28
Gary Langer	Vice President	2022-25	2025-28
Diana Lee	Secretary & Treasurer	2024-27	
Kim David	Director	2022-25	2025-28
Bob Lee	Director	2024-27	
Mark Mosman	Director	2024-27	
Lloyd Thyen	Director	2024-27	
Carolyn Gallagher	Director	2024-27	
Lisabeth Mackall Bonafede	Director	2025-28	New
Bonnie McGowan	Director	2025-28	New
Betsy Skagen	Director	2025-28	New

Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the above Board members were elected to serve the terms indicated.

RALALA Objectives and Activities: Bob Eddy summarized the association's objectives and activities including:

- Projects and initiatives designed to preserve, protect and improve our four lakes and their watersheds
- Educational programs and materials to promote healthy balance between recreation and protecting lakes as a natural resource

- Aid, assist & advise policymakers in making decisions affecting our lakes
- Receive funds and financial assistance to support our projects and activities

Special Guest Presentation—Sheila Langer (Loon Liaison between RALALA & DNR):

Sheila presented a variety of interesting information regarding the loons on RALALA lakes and answered a number of questions. Topics included:

- Locations and number of nests on RALALA lakes, as well as number of chicks born this year and survival statistics (information gathered via Sheila's frequent early-morning surveys by boat)
- Loon safety issues, including natural predators and human interference
- The need to continually educate people to stay far away from nesting areas – when adult loons get frightened and leave the nest too long, it can result in death of chicks
- “Loon banding” program coordinated via Dr. Walter Piper and The Loon Project
- “Banding” took place at night on July 26. Loons (including chicks) were removed from their nesting area and brought to shore. By placing 2 colored bands on the legs of loons, it is possible to track them through their long lives -- learn when and how they gain and lose territories, determine population increases and decreases, etc. Loons were then returned to their nesting area.
- Loons are not harmed in banding process, and the tags don't have a negative impact. The banding procedure is done by highly trained people and the bands are custom fit.
- The band on each loon contains identifiers including natal lake, sex, age etc. to enable studies regarding mortality rates, climate impacts, reproductive success etc.
- Sheila noted that it is natural for loons to gather in large groups to socialize in the fall after the chicks are old enough to be independent, and that chicks leave the lake later in the year than adults and don't return to the area for approximately 3-4 years.

Questions were asked relating to who to call in the event an injured loon is spotted. RALALA agreed to publish the following information in both an upcoming newsletter and on RALALA's website (ralalalakes.org):

Call Minnesota Loon Rescue Network
If you see a loon in distress
612-226-6571
www.acclakes.org/minnesota-loon-rescue
Terry Rammer or Sheila Johnson, Cross Lake.

RALALA President's Presentation (Part 1): Bob Eddy presented updates and information on a variety of topics and issues driving RALALA's projects and activities:

- Protect Our Lakeshore (POL) initiative including RALALA's Lake Steward Program. He emphasized the importance of lakeshore buffer zones that play a vital role in filtering out toxins in order to keep the lakes clean. RALALA's lakes have lost 40-50% of natural shoreline.
 - RALALA's POL activities and Lake Steward Program is one of the most important things we can do for our lakes. The purpose of the program is to recognize

lakeshore owners who have natural shorelines or are receptive to lakeshore restoration projects.

- The three phases of the Lake Steward Program: initial quiz, site visit & receipt of a Lake Steward Award sign (for those that meet the criteria) for placement near the recipients' lakeshore.
- RALALA offers information and support to any lake property owner who is interested in a lakeshore restoration project.
- There was a discussion about riprap (rocky material placed along shorelines) that is no longer recommended, but for those that have it, it should not be removed because, when destroyed, it would release large amounts of phosphorus into the lake all at one time.
- FACT: 1 pound of phosphorus going into the lake results in 500 pounds of algae.
- Bob Eddy conveyed that the board is in great need of a volunteer board member who would be interested in heading up the POL program. He encouraged attendees to get the word out and assist with finding someone who has a passion for this type of initiative. RALALA has the materials, contacts and support to assist this volunteer with continuing and growing the program.
- AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species)
 - An "AIS Roundtable" was held during the winter attended by an AIS lake surveyor, AIS treatment vendor, DNR AIS specialist and several RALALA board members. The objectives: (1) review current practices; (2) identify "best practices" and discuss areas that could be improved; and (3) develop recommendations to the board. Resulting recommendations were to (1) continue spring/early summer survey; (2) Continue treatment based on survey findings; (3) Add a second survey for milfoil impacted lakes in late August or early September; (4) Possibly add second treatment, based on second survey findings.
 - 2025 survey dates:
 - Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes—July 8
 - Leavitt and Smokey Hollow Lakes – late summer
 - Second surveys as recommended – late summer
 - 2025 treatment and treatment chemical—to be determined
 - Results of July 8 EWM (milfoil) survey: Only one location found (in southeastern area of lake)
 - Results of Starry Stonewort and Zebra Mussel Surveys (underwater dive surveys July 8 conducted at Roosevelt and Lawrence launch sites) – None found
 - July 8 underwater dive surveys did find Banded Mystery Snails. They can be a nuisance and can cause swimmers itch – but no treatment is available.
 - Curly Leaf Pondweed is also an invasive species and is found in RALALA lakes. It's most likely introduced at launch sites and most likely spread through boaters. It disappears in mid-summer. It may be treated using divers vs. chemicals, but no treatment is planned at this time. Early spring treatments are generally most effective.
 - Bob Eddy shared a chart showing a 10-year history of RALALA's costs for AIS surveys and treatments.

Launch Site Management (presented by Gary Langer, Vice President)

- RALALA has taken the following steps to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS in our lakes:
 - As a result of partnership agreement among Cass County Soil & Water Conservation District, Crooked Lake Township & RALALA, a Landa Decontamination Unit is placed at Roosevelt launch site Wednesday-Sunday, mid-May through mid-September. RALALA was not responsible for the cost of purchasing the unit, but has agreed to pay up to \$1,000 per year for maintenance. To date, no maintenance has been required, and no costs have been incurred by RALALA.
 - Inspector hours have expanded at both Roosevelt & Lawrence launch sites (inspectors stationed Wednesday through Sunday on Roosevelt).
 - ILIDs are installed for off hours support (recording videos of boat launches and broadcasting a verbal message) at Roosevelt and Lawrence launch sites.
 - Kiosk is located at Roosevelt launch site for displaying important signage.
 - Own Your Wake signage is posted at all 4 launch sites and Outing public dock.
 - Monofilament fishing line collection tubes are currently placed at Roosevelt and Lawrence launch sites and will soon be added at Leavitt and Smokey Hollow.
- DISCUSSION POINT: A question was raised about wake boat rules and a general discussion took place. It was suggested that a sign be placed on the bridge, visible to boaters entering North Roosevelt from South Roosevelt reading “No Wake Boarding on North Roosevelt”, due to the narrow waterway and the proximity to shorelines. There were no conclusions reached and the point was made that special permission from the DNR would be necessary for signage on the bridge. Bob Eddy explained that RALALA’s “Own Your Wake” guidance is based on the results of studies conducted by the DNR, the University of Minnesota, etc. As further studies are conducted and more information becomes available, RALALA’s guidance and signage can be updated.

President’s Presentation (Part 2)—Bob Eddy

- Water Quality Testing in Partnership with WAPOA (Whitefish Area Property Owners Association)—RALALA volunteers conduct monthly water testing (May-September) to determine the health of our four lakes (samples are delivered to WAPOA and sent to a lab for analysis).
 - Actions lakeshore owners can take to keep water healthy
 - Keep phosphorus out of the lake by preventing runoff
 - Do not use fertilizer containing phosphorus (1 pound of phosphorus = 500 pounds of algae)
 - Maintain septic systems
 - Let natural vegetation grow at waters edge to form barrier from runoff
 - A copy of the 2025 Water Quality Report was shared by Bob Eddy and is available to view in the 2025 Annual Meeting Slide Presentation posted on RALALA’s website.
- Enbridge Water Testing—RALALA’s monthly water testing in 2024 (for signs of any gas pipeline leak) showed water quality in “normal range” and therefore testing will only occur twice in 2025. RALALA’s testing schedule is based on recommendations from an independent hydrologist and former EPA scientist.

- 2025 RALALA Funding Sources—Gary Langer shared a list of RALALA’s current funding levels and sources including member dues, EQPI donations, business sponsorships, grants and cost-sharing arrangements.
- RALALA Projects slated for 2026:
 - Promote and Support “Protect Our Lakeshore” programs – including finding a person to take the lead on this important program
 - Continue to support and improve Launch Site Management, including further expansion of inspector hours, ensuring Decontamination Unit remains at Roosevelt launch site, signage is updated as appropriate
 - Assess the Roosevelt/Lawrence channel depth and research options that may be available, if and when necessary, to ensure channel remains navigable
 - Continue and expand fundraising opportunities (including grant applications and cost-sharing arrangements with local governments)
 - Continue to assess AIS (prevention, surveys, treatment)
- Expand membership, including a New Membership Initiative to reach new property owners and others not familiar with RALALA’s mission
- Water Patrol – Volunteers are needed in order for RALALA to re-establish the Water Patrol – the purpose of which is to remind boaters, when necessary, to adhere to practices that are safe for people, lake habitat and lake properties
- Other RALALA activities include:
 - Participating in Emily Day
 - Participating in the Corn Feed (including the “Get the Lead Out” campaign)
 - Youth Boater Training held annually – conducted by the Sheriff’s office, sponsored by RALALA and hosted at The Channel
 - Adopt-a-Highway program – RALALA is designated a 2-mile stretch of Highway 6 (starting near downtown Emily and running north to near Mill Road). Volunteers gather in the spring and fall to pick up garbage alongside the highway and in the ditches.
 - Buoy management – Volunteers are involved in the installation, monitoring and repair of buoys

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes prepared by: Diana Lee, Secretary