

RALALA BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 21, 2024
Via WebEx

Welcome: Bob Eddy

Present: Bob Eddy, Gary Langer, Diana Lee, Kim David, Anne Bonnerup, Bob Lee, Mark Mosman, Darril Wegscheid, Lloyd Thyen, Mary De Hanson

Also Present: Jan Mosman joined for a portion of the meeting

Absent: Cyrus Malbari

Secretary's Report: Diana presented a draft of the February 22, 2024 board meeting minutes and no changes were requested.

Upon motion made by Darril, seconded by Lloyd, and unanimously carried, the minutes of the February 22 minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Diana presented a financial report for the period January 1 through February 29, and noted that the 2023 pass-through donations for Emily and CLT first responders and CLT fireworks have now been delivered.

She further noted that pursuant to IRS rules, RALALA is required to send a receipt or thank-you note (containing tax ID and other information) to donors contributing \$250 or more. There followed a discussion about whether all donors will receive some form of thank-you note. Diana will work with Kim to create a draft of a pre-printed thank-you "card". Diana indicated she will also draft a letter template for sending to the higher-level donors that needs to include the amount of the donation and tax-deduction language (per IRS rules). The topic was then tabled for the next board meeting.

Upon motion made by Mary De, seconded by Bob Lee, and unanimously carried, the February financial statement was approved as presented.

Registration with Minnesota Attorney General's Office: Diana reported that nonprofits raising \$25,000 or more in donations are required to register with the Attorney General's Office, and presented the completed Registration Form which requires the approval of the Board of Directors. The form contains financial data for the calendar year 2023. After the initial registration, an annual report will need to be filed by July 15 every year.

Upon motion made by Lloyd, seconded by Mary De, and unanimously carried, the information entered on the Attorney General Initial Registration Form was approved, as presented, and Diana and Bob Eddy were authorized to sign and submit the form.

New Board Member: Bob Eddy indicated that Carolyn Gallagher, a property owner on Lake Roosevelt has agreed to become a member of the Board. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have her begin participating immediately rather than waiting for election at this summer's Annual Meeting.

Upon motion made by Darril, seconded by Gary, and unanimously carried, the Board is accepting Carolyn Gallagher as a new board member to begin participating immediately and to be on the roster for re-election by RALALA at the next Annual Meeting.

2024 Budget: Bob Eddy indicated the final draft of the budget will soon be ready to present to the Board for approval and asked that all anticipated 2024 expenditures be submitted to him by the end of March.

Funding Opportunities: Minnesota Legacy Amendment and Emily Waters

Committee: Jan Mosman reported that several funds were created under the "Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment" passed by the Minnesota legislature in 2008, one of which is the "Clean Water Fund" established to protect, enhance and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, etc. She noted, however, that treatment and prevention of AIS (aquatic invasive species) does not fall into an allowable spending category. Jan suggested that we team up with Emily Waters and others to contact our legislators about getting this changed. However, Bob Lee issued a reminder that RALALA is at risk of losing its tax exempt status (as a 501(c)(3) organization) if we get overly involved in lobbying efforts, and therefore RALALA should not lead a lobbying campaign.

Jan further reported that she has volunteered to represent RALALA on the Emily Water Committee and to prepare RALALA's annual funding request with the assistance of Bob Eddy.

Bob Lee mentioned that the "Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund", also created under the Legacy Amendment, was helpful to RALALA and the Eggers family in connection with establishing the Roosevelt Lake Aquatic Management Area adjacent to Woods Bay.

Crooked Lake Township Annual Meeting: Lloyd reported that the meeting was well attended (approximately 60 people) and that he gave a RALALA presentation similar to what was presented to the CLT Board last September. Lloyd provided attendees with copies of the presentation and personally incurred the cost of doing so. With regard to the tax levy increase presented for approval at the meeting, Lloyd made a motion to add \$12,500 to the amount requested by the CLT Board. The full levy amount was approved, and now the CLT Board has the power to allocate the funds.

Bob Eddy noted that he received verbal assurance that the CLT Fire Department will cover 1/2 of this year's cost for Enbridge-related water testing.

Newsletter Planning: Anne requested that she and Kim receive a full list of the articles being submitted for the next newsletter so that they can track them as they come in. Followed was a discussion of the topics and who is responsible for each article. Anne indicated all articles are due in the first week of April.

There was also discussion about the Event Calendar to be published and what should be included. In that regard, the annual meeting date of August 3 was noted, and Lloyd agreed to reserve CLT Town Hall for that event. Anne indicated she will contact Dave Johnson, who has organized the Youth Boater Training event in recent years, about setting a date for this year's training. It was agreed that RALALA will again participate in Emily Day and the Corn Feed.

Event Planning: Anne suggested that an inventory needs to be taken of what RALALA supplies, equipment, signage, etc. are stored at Bob Eddy's home so that it can be determined what needs updating or replacing. She noted that, at a minimum, there is an immediate need for new signage to replace outdated or worn-out signage.

A follow-up discussion (from the last board meeting) then took place regarding the possibility of joining up with other lake associations to hold a large event, including speakers and possibly a BBQ – to replace the “Spring Launch Event” done by RALALA the past couple of years. By joining up with others, the burden of planning and related costs are spread among several people/organizations. It was agreed that it's not feasible this year but is something to consider for next year. Jan Mosman suggested it may be possible to get a “Go North” grant to help fund such an event.

Fundraising Committee Plan: Gary reported that the Fundraising Committee met several times since the last Board meeting to agree on a plan to present to the Board. He then presented 2023 and anticipated 2024 income & expense numbers and summarized the facts supporting the need for more aggressive fundraising. Gary stressed that (a) last year we had deficit spending (if the bequest is ignored); (b) we can assume expenses are not going to decrease; and (c) we have heavily relied on governmental cost-sharing arrangements, for which there are no guarantees in the future.

Fundraising Plan -- Line Item Approvals:

- Increase in membership dues from \$25 to \$50
Motion to raise dues: Made by Mary De, Seconded by Bob Lee and Passed with 9 aye votes and 1 nay vote
- Increase business membership fees from \$30 and create tiers tied to specific benefits
 - \$100 – RALALA will publish business card in three consecutive newsletters and on the RALALA website
 - \$150 – RALALA will publish 1/4 page ad in three consecutive newsletters and on the RALALA website

- \$300 – RALALA will publish 1/2 page ad in three consecutive newsletters and on the RALALA website
 - When necessary (ads resulting in too many pages), an advertising “supplement” will be mailed along with newsletter
- Motion to implement tiered business membership and modification of benefits: Made by Bob Lee, Seconded by MaryDe and Passed with 9 aye votes and 1 abstain***
- Mary De has agreed to lead the charge on recruiting new business members. She will solicit memberships from businesses that are patronized by RALALA members, including those outside the Emily/Outing area. She will also work to maintain current business members.
 - Establish new EQPI donation tiers/categories so that the membership solicitation form shows the following donation options:
 - \$150 Sunfish
 - \$300 Walleye
 - \$500 Loon
 - \$1,000+ Eagle

--Include options/suggestions for one-time donations (i.e. in memory of, dedicated to, happy birthday etc.)

--Send Eagle donors a questionnaire, followed by an interview, followed by a written article in the newsletter so the donor can share their story and why they care enough to give the generous donation.

--Publish the Sunfish through Eagle categories, along with donor names in each category, in at least the year-end newsletter (if not all newsletters)

--Request Kim and Anne to incorporate the above changes into the membership solicitation form and to send to committee for approval

Motion to establish the above new EQPI tiers and to implement all other listed items under this bullet: Made by Darril, Seconded by Mary De and Passed unanimously
 - It was agreed that the 2024 EQPI donation goal is \$40,000, and that a “visual” will be created to track progress towards the \$40,000 goal. It was further agreed that the visual will be a thermometer, placed on a sandwich board, to be displayed at all RALALA events (Corn Feed, Emily Day, Annual Meeting etc.) and any other sites that are deemed feasible.
 - The Fundraising Plan includes the need to find profitable investment products so that a large sum is not sitting in a savings account earning minimal interest until the funds are needed. It was agreed that, until further options can be fully explored by the Finance Committee, the immediate purchase of a 6-month Certificate of Deposit is advisable.

Motion to authorize Bob Lee and Diana Lee to select a 6-month Certificate of Deposit from an FDIC-insured institution in the amount

of \$150,000 and to authorize Diana, as Treasurer, to purchase such CD: Made by Bob Lee, Seconded by Gary and Passed unanimously

- The Fundraising Plan advises that RALALA should continue to apply for State and Local AIS grants, and continue to pursue financial AIS support from Crooked Lake Township, CLT Lakes and Shores Committee, City of Emily & Cass County SWCD
- The Fundraising Plan advises that Bob Eddy and Gary present to the Outing Chamber of Commerce a letter requesting a \$10,000 donation from pull tab proceeds. The letter will emphasize the major initiative expenses incurred by RALALA (including Enbridge-related water testing) in support of our mission to “preserve and protect the lakes and watershed.”
- The Fundraising Plan advises hiring Lakes Printing to print, assemble and mail the Membership Solicitation package (President’s Letter, renewal form, personalized envelope and return envelope) thereby saving both time and money for RALALA. Various options were supplied by Lake Printing and it was agreed the option that costs \$1.95 per mailing and includes the return envelope was the desirable choice.

Motion to hire Lakes Printing to print, assemble and mail the Membership Solicitation package at the estimated cost of \$1.95 per mailing: Made by Anne, Seconded by Mary De and Passed unanimously

Additional Fundraising Ideas: Mary De listed several additional ideas related to fundraising, including purchasing a “point of sale” device, accepting credit cards, creating a donation bucket to set out at events, etc. After discussion, Mary De was asked to present some proposals at the next board meeting.

Communications Committee: Anne noted that several people who served on the Communications Committee are no longer on the Board and that we need to re-establish the committee. Bob Eddy agreed that this committee is a safety net to ensure that all communications on behalf of RALALA are legal and professional.

After discussion, it was agreed that (in advance of sending/publishing/signing):

- newsletters must be reviewed by Bob Eddy
- other written communications should be sent to three officers (Bob Eddy, Gary and Diana) with only one approval necessary
- Contractual documents should be sent to two officers (Bob Eddy and Gary) with only one approval necessary
- Documents that may need legal review should be sent to Bob Lee

Water Level Monitoring: Darril reported that the DNR intends to place a water-level gauge in Lake Roosevelt (in a visible but safe location), possibly near the channel, so

that the water level can be monitored and the findings reported back to the DNR. The DNR will send a proposal with regard to location and reporting schedule.

Other Business:

- Bob Eddy indicated there is a person on Leavitt that has expressed interest in becoming a board member. Interviews are in progress.
- Kim asked that any printing support needs we have should be directed to her including colored letterhead, pre-printed thank you notes, etc.

Adjournment:

Upon motion made by Lloyd, seconded by Bob Lee, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by:
Diana Lee, Secretary