

Minutes of RALALA Association Annual Meeting
August 3, 2024
Crooked Lake Township Town Hall

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

Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes: Copies of the 2023 Annual Meeting minutes were made available for review. No changes were suggested. Upon motion made, seconded and carried, the minutes were approved as presented at the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Diana Lee (Treasurer) provided copies of financial reports for (1) the year ended December 31, 2023 and (2) for the period January 1-July 31, 2024. She then highlighted the following:

- The only liabilities are pass-through funds that are collected by RALALA for first responders and fireworks, which will be paid out after year end. As of July 31, \$5,560 has been collected for Emily & Crooked Lake Township First Responders and \$2,865 for Outing fireworks.
- RALALA received a bequest of \$72,500 from the Estate of Jo Ellen Batty-George. RALALA has invested those funds in a Certificate of Deposit to provide investment income and to preserve a cushion for the future.
- In 2023, expenses exceeded income (not counting the bequest income), and therefore dues were increased in 2024 to \$50 for family memberships and \$100-\$300 for business sponsors. Businesses receive the benefit of advertising in three consecutive newsletters, the size of the ad based on level of dues paid.
- As of July 31, membership dues have been received from 266 families and 34 businesses
- Dues and EQPI donations have increased from 2023 levels as follows:

	<u>7 months 2024</u>	<u>12 months 2023</u>
Family dues income	\$13,100	\$ 7,675
Business sponsorships	\$ 4,100	\$ 750
Add'l EQPI donations	\$31,334	\$19,384

- RALALA received a \$5,000 grant from Outing Chamber of Commerce and continues to seek additional grants from various sources. Cost-sharing arrangements with Crooked Lake Township, Emily, and Cass Soil & Water also help to reduce expenses payable by RALALA
- The "membership solicitation" figure of \$2,762 on the financial statement includes a wide range of expenses, including 2 solicitation mailings conducted by Lakes Printing, postage, large supply of letterhead and envelopes that will last beyond 2024, promotional materials, etc.
- RALALA budgeted \$9,400 for monthly water testing (for detection of gas leak) at the far north end of Roosevelt and Spire Valley Creek (due to Enbridge pipeline), but plans to reduce the schedule from monthly to twice a year. Reason for monthly testing was to establish a baseline of water quality at all times of the year.

- RALALA budgeted \$22,550 (which was the amount spent in 2023) for Milfoil surveys and treatment, but due to recent survey results will be spending considerably more than budgeted
- POL (Protect our Lakeshore) program expenses include a “bennie” program in which RALALA reimburses members up to \$500 for completion of shoreline restoration projects (that meet certain criteria) that total \$1,000 or more

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

Election of Board of Directors: Bob Eddy presented the following slate of current directors and respective terms:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Officer Title (if any)</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Renewal Term</u>
Robert Eddy	President	2022-25	
Gary Langer	Vice President	2022-25	
Diana Lee	Secretary & Treasurer	2022-25	
Cyrus Malbari	Chief Information Officer & Asst. Treasurer	2021-24	2024-27
Kim David	Director	2022-25	
Bob Lee	Director	2021-24	2024-27
Mark Mosman	Director	2021-24	2024-27
Darril Wegscheid	Director	2022-25	
Lloyd Thyen	Director	2021-24	2024-27
Mary De Hanson	Director	2022-25	
Carolyn Gallagher	Director (new this year)	2024-27	
Anne Bonnerup	Director	2021-24	Retiring

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—Maddi Nistler (National Loon Center):

Maddi Nistler gave an energetic, entertaining and educational presentation regarding Minnesota’s beloved loons that included:

- History of National Loon Center and information about the new building site in Crosslake expected to be completed in 2026
- Life cycle of loon
- Population of loons—Minnesota is home to 2% of all North American loons (approximately 12,000 of the over 500,000 total)
- Migration flyways and timing—Juveniles migrate with other juveniles and return in 3-4 years
- Loon breeds – there are several breeds – “Common” loon found in MN
- Played audio of loon calls (tremolo, wail, hoot & yodel) and their meanings
- Nesting facts—they build nest in late May – normally 2 eggs—28 days to hatch
- Threats to loons
 - Human disturbance (#1 problem)
 - Warmer lakes/high water/climate change
 - Poor water quality—they need to see & smell their food
 - Lead poisoning (fishing tackle)
 - Mercury poisoning from fish
 - Fishing line entanglement
 - Oil spills
- Steps that everyone can take to help keep loons safe & healthy:
 - Watch your wake
 - Maintain a distance from loons and nests
 - Control AIS – clean, drain, dry
 - Use lead-free tackle
- Loon nesting platforms—studies are underway to determine if manmade platforms are successful and worth the effort. Shoreline restoration is most helpful (natural shoreline—no riprap)
- Loons in distress—It can be difficult to determine if a loon is actually in distress. If you spot a loon that appears lethargic and unable to dive, take pictures and call the Loon Center or the DNR
- The National Loon Center offers educational and awareness programs including:
 - Junior Loon Biologist program
 - StewardShip floating classroom
 - Share Our Shoreline educational campaign
 - Loon Conservation workshops

RALALA President’s Presentation: Bob Eddy presented updates and information on a variety of topics and issues driving RALALA’s projects and activities:

- AIS Prevention Measures
- History of milfoil found and acreage treated 2016-present
- Freshwater Scientific’s 2024 Milfoil survey and the resulting report issued in the past week
 - AIS surveys were conducted on Roosevelt & Lawrence in late June and early July. Surveys will be conducted on Leavitt & Smokey Hollow in late summer

- The survey report identified 31 sites on Roosevelt for which they recommend treatment. No milfoil was found on Lawrence.
- PLM will be hired for the treatment and proposes using two herbicides (ProcellaCor and Diquat) depending on size and density of infestation
- ProcellaCor can eliminate the plants, but is extremely expensive to use on all 33 areas. It is therefore recommended for only the larger sites.
- Diquat cannot kill the roots but can help stop the spread, and is recommended for the smaller patches.
- PLM has provided RALALA with two proposed treatment plans and respective cost estimates.
- The Board will meet to discuss the options and related pricing and to decide upon a plan to move forward with treatment
- Starry Stonewort & Zebra Mussels – RALALA hired divers to conduct surveys at both Roosevelt and Lawrence launch sites in early July. Neither of the two invasive species were found. However, Banded Mystery Snails were found that can be a nuisance and can cause swimmer's itch. No treatment is available for the snails. Zebra Mussels are present in Thunder Lake (9 miles away).

Launch Site Management (presented by Gary Langer)

- RALALA has taken the following steps to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS in our lakes:
 - As a result of partnership agreement between Cass Soil & Water, Crooked Lake Township & RALALA--New Landa Decontamination unit is placed at Roosevelt launch site Thursday-Sunday, mid-May through mid-September (purchase price of \$32,000 was paid by Cass Soil & Water)
 - Inspector hours have expanded at both Roosevelt & Lawrence launch sites—ILIDs installed for off hours support
 - Kiosk was erected at Roosevelt launch site for displaying important signage
 - Own Your Wake signage at all 4 launch sites and Outing public dock

President's Presentation (Cont'd)—Bob Eddy

- Revised 2024 Expenditure Forecast shows projected expenses to be \$90,626, a significant increase over the original forecast, primarily due to the significant amount of milfoil to be treated
- 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

- POL (Protect our Lakes) Initiatives
 - RALALA encourages natural shoreline and lakeshore buffers to preserve lake water quality—RALALA's lakes have lost 40-50% of natural shoreline
 - Lake Steward Program -- purpose is to recognize lakeshore owners who have natural shorelines or are receptive to lakeshore restoration projects. The program involves a quiz, a site visit and presentation of a Lake Steward Award & sign for those that meet the criteria.
 - “Bennies” Program – RALALA will reimburse \$100 for the cost of a Cass Soil & Water site visit and \$500 reimbursement toward the cost of completed restoration projects that total \$1,000 or more.
- RALALA Projects slated for 2025:
 - Continue to enhance AIS prevention measures at launch sites, including additional inspector days and hours, maintaining decontamination unit at Roosevelt, etc.
 - Expand fundraising since Milfoil will be an ongoing challenge—including expanded cost sharing arrangements, ongoing search for additional funding sources, continued efforts to secure grants, new fundraising ideas for 2025
 - Continue to promote and support POL programs
 - Expand membership
 - Reach out to University of Minnesota's MAISRC (Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center) to investigate whether there is an opportunity for RALALA lakes to be involved in a MAISRC experimental project related to treatment of AIS
- Water Patrol – Volunteers are needed in order for RALALA to re-establish the Water Patrol. Volunteers would occasionally patrol the lake in a Sheriff's boat. Although nobody outside the Sheriff's office has authority to stop or punish any unsafe or undesirable behavior, the sheer presence of the boat is believed to deter some of that behavior
- 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