

**Child, Girl, Woman Lakes Area Association
Board Meeting Minutes
Zoom Call
October 19, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by President Neal Scharmer at 6:32 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kathleen Scharmer, Neal Scharmer, Ann Stevenson, Jon Stevenson, Gordie Hess, Chuck Miotke, Nancy Schuelke, Terry Fay, Rich Hess, Linda Kane and Nancy Coughlin. Gary Knox joined the meeting later on.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jenny Chapman, Gwen Lappin, Myles Wagner and Larry Anderson

Steve Henry, AIS Lake Technician, joined the meeting to discuss decontamination stations.

DECONTAMINATION STATIONS:

Steve Henry was introduced and welcomed. Cass County has built up an excess of funds that are restricted to AIS activities. How do they use those funds? One item is decontamination units at lake accesses. They would be installed on busier lakes like Women. Woman Lake would have 2 inspectors on 4 days over the weekends at the main launch; one would inspect, and one would decontaminate. The holidays would also be staffed.

If the Association partners with Cass County, we would be required to make a \$1,000 donation for the cost of fuel to run the pumps. Cass County would move and fill the tanks, etc... Several locations were discussed to store the unit on off days.

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Kathleen inquired whether it was a CD3 station, but the answer was negative. Instead, it is a land decontamination trailer equipped with hot water and a low-pressure wash that is maintained at a temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit, which is lethal to various invasive species such as spiny fleas, zebra mussels, and starry stonewort. Conveniently, the tanks are filled before they are moved to the lake access area.

Neal asked how much time they would need to be set for the 2024 season. Steve stated that it takes 6 to 8 weeks.

Rich asked to clarify how much space these units take up. The parking lots can get pretty full at times. Steve stated that they take up one parking spot. Rich also asked about the security of the unit. Steve stated that the units have all steel doors with locks. All of the accessories go inside the unit, and the fuel area gets closed and locked.

Nancy S. brought up the fact that at the 2021 annual meeting, increasing the dues to continue to fight AIS was approved, and in fact, the dues were increased.

Nancy C. asked how long the decontamination takes. Steve stated that it only takes 6 to 7 minutes. According to State Law, if decontamination takes 15 minutes or more, boaters do not need to participate. Steve stated that gift cards could be distributed to those who willingly get their boat decontaminated.

Rich asked if the 140-degree water strips off decals or registration numbers. Steve replied that they have not had any issues with that. The water line goes down into the boat, and when training people, they specify staying away from the custom decals. Wooden boats are also a concern, and the owner has the right not to get their antique boat decontaminated.

Kathleen asked if it's portable, such as when there's a bass tournament. The answer was yes, it can be moved to Girl Lake or wherever it's needed.

Neal thanked Steve for the informative presentation and said we would get back to him. Steve then left the call.

Neal brought up the fact that this project is consistent with the Association's AIS initiative.

Nancy Coughlin stated that the Association has more than enough money and that \$1,000 doesn't seem too high for this project.

Jon agreed and stated that it all looked good for \$1,000.

Following more discussion, Kathy moved that we, as the Association, pursue this project based on what the contract entails. Jon seconded the motion. Following more discussion, Kathy then modified the motion to state that we pursue an agreement and partnership with Cass County, dependent on Neal's findings after his review of the contract. Jon seconded the modified motion, and it passed unanimously.

Neal will review the contract, and then there will be another vote if the contract is acceptable. The contract should be year to year vs multi-year. This way, we can re-evaluate after the 2024 season if it's worth continuing.

Neal or Jenny will get a copy of the contract and share it with Rich as well. Rich will then provide his analysis of what's in it and share the copy with each of us. He will give us bullet points of the contract relating to the Association's cost and liability.

Secretary's Report:

Neal reviewed the September minutes. He asked if anyone had any changes, and there were none. Terry made a motion to approve the September minutes. Nancy S. seconded this, and a

vote took place. Jon and Ann did not vote as they had not had an opportunity to see the minutes. Those who voted all voted unanimously to approve, and the motion was carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Terry showed us a September snapshot, with an income of \$223.34 and expenses of \$1,984.31. The current balance is \$59,909.27. The CDs are valued at \$25,618.36. A few more budgeted items will come in around \$7,000.00, which will be subtracted from a budget balance of \$9690.

There was much discussion regarding the higher interest rates we could get on the extra money. Following the discussion, it was decided that Terry and Chuck would talk with First National Bank to see our options.

Gary Knox joined the meeting.

Terry and Chuck will report back and send the group an email with their recommendations regarding higher-interest options.

Neal pointed out that we want to avoid the CDs doing an automatic renewal at a low rate and that we should take action before that happens.

Nancy Coughlin made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report that was presented. Linda Kane seconded this motion, and voting ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Rich updated the Board regarding the Girl Lake Fish Passage Project. Rich talked to the DNR recently, and the project is still alive. The project location is just inside the Chippewa National Forest boundary, and the USFS has a Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) with funding available, so this project qualifies. The DNR plans to apply for RAC to cover the 10% Conservation Partner's Legacy Grant (CPL) match, then apply for CPL to cover the rest. The RAC decision will determine if there is a need for a 10% cash match from other sources or not, and the DNR will know that before the CPL application. It was noted that the entire 10% is not expected from the Association and that they are knocking on multiple doors for the funds.

Jon stated that Doug Schultz's view is that he does not want to disturb the top of the dam; however, people will be unhappy either way.

Thank you, Rich. There is more to come.

Child Lake Representative:

The replacement of the Child Lake representative was discussed. Neal will reach out to the candidate that Larry provided and report back to us by email.

Database Errors Cleanup:

Scott Kruse has suggestions on how to clean up the database and how to enter future information so that it stays clean. He will let Kathy know what the cost of this would be. Kathy will let us know when she receives these numbers.

Kathy then mentioned that Jenny Chapman, Chair of the Aquatic Wildlife Advocacy Committee, has devised objectives and a budget. Kathy would like us to vote on the budget. It was decided to do this when we discuss the Committee Reports later in the meeting.

Once again, “Standing Committee” vs “Task Committee” was discussed. Kathy suggested that we all look at the bylaws and make recommendations regarding re-wording them so that these committees and confusion can be cleared up.

The discussion of the small member lakes and what we can do for them as an Association is tabled until Spring.

New business

ACCL:

Nancy S. attended the meeting in September; Neal, Jenny, and Rich also attended. The membership dues will be raised to \$250 vs \$200, which was earlier thought. We are in a higher category. For perspective, Gull Lake is paying \$500.00.

Neal stated that these meetings are informative and highlight a variety of lakes with a variety of problems. Nancy S. affirmed that hearing from other lakes is a great learning opportunity for us.

AIS

Rich reported that zebra mussels were found in Girl Lake by Bernie Fashingbauer (1153 Fairall Road NE) and Mandy Tabaka (in Long Birch Lodge’s harbor). Girl Lake had already been posted as infested with zebra mussels ever since they were found in Woman Lake in 2021.

Rich has stored the AIS cleaning tools for the winter. The blue reacher/grabber tool was missing at the Girl Lake kiosk. Rich will replace it.

Fisheries:

Rich reported that the Fall electrofishing survey conducted on the night of October 7th for young-of-the-year (YOY) walleye had a low capture rate of 9.1 per hour. The capture rate in 2022 was 105 per hour. The mean length in 2022 was 5.96 inches, and this year was 6.5 inches (still good growth). Low numbers could have resulted from suppression (competition) by the strong 2022 year class or perhaps zebra mussels. We need to see what happens over the next few years.

Gary Knox brought up the zebra mussels on Woman Lake. Rich confirmed that young walleyes need what the mussels are eating.

Neal asked if electrofishing has ramifications regarding stocking. Rich said not in the foreseeable future. Rich relayed that Doug Schultz said he's pleased with the stocking level on Woman Lake and should buffer wild swings in the walleye population.

Membership:

Chuck reported that the Fall newsletter has been emailed and sent to the printer to be printed and mailed out to those members who want the hard copy. We have slightly over 90 members or 16% that want a mailed copy.

One new member and one renewal have been signed up since our last meeting. Chuck is working on the membership renewal letter for 2024.

Aquatic Wildlife Advocacy:

As stated earlier, Jenny Chapman has put together objectives, a budget, and a request for funds for her Aquatic Wildlife Advocacy committee, which is part of the Minnesota DNR Loon Friendly Lake Registry.

Loon Watchers: Girl Lake – Kathy Scharmer and Sue Meyer
 Woman Lake – Jenny Chapman, Nancy Coughlin and Julie
 Hofstedt (need more volunteers for other loon territories)
 Child Lake: Open

Committee Objectives:

As the Loon Liaison, Jenny will monitor the Loon population of the Woman Lake Chain throughout the Spring, Summer, and Fall with the help of volunteers. Observations include loon numbers, nesting success, activities, and any problems (predation or human disturbance). She will then report the data to the DNR and educate members on the data and any issues.

Continue to update the Loon Friendly Registry at the end of each Loon season. She will send the report to our DNR Loon Specialist, Jayden Jech, and also add the information to the CGWLAA website.

Protect and enhance critical loon habitat through the shoreline restoration project and working with the Lake Steward Committee.

Facilitate cooperation between government agencies, lakeshore property owners, and the public on behalf of the loons. Work with the GET THE LEAD OUT (GTLO) representative to increase the use of lead-free fishing tackle and educate the public on the importance of switching to lead-free. Spread the word to help pass a bill to ban lead fishing tackle in Minnesota.

Identify management needs and obtain funds for projects.

Build and/or maintain loon-nesting platforms as needed.

Increase public knowledge and awareness of loons through CGWLAA newsletters, annual meetings, Pinecone Press local paper, and social media.

Proposed 2024 Budget: The Aquatic Wildlife Committee's proposed 2024 budget is \$800.00. The bulk of the dollars are for added loon signs. She will reach out to other organizations for education and training materials free for Lake Associations to use. For example, from the DNR Loons Restoration, there is a Loon Nesting sign that we can place at the boat launches. They also will pay for all the supplies for building a new Loon platform. Jenny has requested two; one is for Stoney Point, and the other is yet to be determined.

Loon Friendly Lake Registry: Jenny turned in the Loon Friendly Lake Management Plan to Jayden Jech, our DNR Loon Specialist. They are in the process of developing additional material related to the Loon Friendly Lake Registry. The Loon Management Plan is designed, updated, and created for the lake association's use. They have the information saved internally at the NN DNR on our Lake Registry but encourage people to share the Loon Friendly Lake Management Plan (or specific information from the plan) with the Lake Association's board and members in newsletters, websites, social media, etc.

Other Lakes that CGWLAA Represents: Reach out to some of the property owners regarding possible Loon territories and see if they would like to volunteer for Loon surveying next Spring.

Widow and Heffron Lakes both have reports of having Loons on the lake. Heffron had a Loon platform at one time.

Pike Lake has worked with Annie Knight from the Northern Waters Land Trust. Annie said it would be a good idea to see what they have done with their lake shore.

Regarding the \$800 budget. Terry noted that she can add a separate line item for Jenny's budget Kathleen moved that we fund \$800 for Jenny's budget. Nancy C. seconded this, and it was passed unanimously. This will begin in 2024.

Gary stated that he talked with Mark Anderson, who built a loon nest on IXL which is used every year by the loons. Mark may be a resource for the Association in regard to building loon nests. Jon offered to assist with the building, and Gary offered his workshop in his pole barn.

Navigation:

Jon reported that all of the hazard buoys would be removed on October 15th. The Navigation Buoy Maintenance Team will inspect the buoys when they are on land and do any necessary repairs. The floating NO WAKE and CAUTION LOON signs have already been removed.

Newsletter:

Linda thanked everyone for their contributions to the latest newsletter. During Winter, Linda will get the list of volunteers from Chuck of those wishing to help out on the newsletter and will report at the Spring meeting.

Road Signs:

Jon reported that since last month, one new member sign has been installed as well as one renewed member sign. The totals for this year are as follows:

- installed 13 new member signs,
- delivered 1 new member sign,
- replaced 6 member signs,
- removed 31 signs of those who moved or are no longer members,
- reinstalled 15 renewed member signs.

Water Patrol:

Water patrol activities were wrapped up the weekend of September 9/10. The patrol boat will remain on the lift until the end of September at which time the lift and dock will be pulled and the boat put on the trailer. Dennis Sawyers at the All Seasons Resort will complete these activities. Follow-up, Dennis reported that on September 30th the dock and lift were removed and the boat was picked up by Cass County deputies and taken to Wheeler Marine for storage.

A total of 17 volunteers donated 126 hours over 24 days of patrol. There were a few rained-out days and a couple of weekend days when no one was available. Several weekday patrols were conducted and during the peak summer weeks, this produced many good contacts with lake users. Documented contacts totaled 237, with many more unreported casual contacts with swimmers and other recreational users. More than 75 coupons for ice cream at Frosty's were awarded to youngsters. Not all coupon awards were recorded on the log sheets, so the exact number has not been determined.

5 new volunteers came on board late in the season and were able to get out on patrol for their initial introduction to our patrol activities. If these new volunteers remain active for next year, we will have a solid core group to patrol all weekends with people only being called once per month.

Aside from the usual questions; Where are the fish biting? How do we get to Longville? How young do I have to be to get free ice cream? Who are you and what do you want? There were many queries about the water clarity, the status of zebra mussels, and other AIS questions.

Jon sent thank you notes to all of the volunteers this year with a reminder that they will hear from him in April 2024 to start the scheduling for the new season.

Water Quality:

Ann reported that water monitoring is complete this year. It has been done 5 times at 4 locations in 2023: Child, Girl, Woman Lake, and Broadwater Bay. The water is very clear due to the zebra mussels. Ann thanked all of the volunteers.

Lake Representatives:

Larry Anderson – absent

Gary Knox – nothing

Nancy S. – nothing

Nancy C. brought up the fact that there is no light at the main access on Woman Lake and wonders if there should be one.

Neal had contacted the DNR, and they said certain lake associations pay for electrical service. Chuck stated that we should not encourage nighttime fishing without inspectors. Gary stated that those fishing at night should be experienced.

Shoreland Restoration:

Myles received a phone call from David Tanner, Chair of the Woodrow Township board. He stated that he heard that the Association was going to put up a sign at the old landing regarding the shoreline restoration that was done there. David stated that we, as an Association, cannot do anything there without his consent. Myles stated that Woodrow Township and the Lake Association are stewards of that property. It was decided to carry this topic over until the May meeting. In the meantime, Linda Kane will look for old newsletter articles pertaining to this topic.

President's report:

Neal reported that he would like a Nominating Committee to have a list of names for replacements of Board members when needed. He also wants each of us to preserve what we have learned, and think about who our next leaders could be and how to identify them.

Other Business:

None.

Gary made a motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Jon. All were in favor and the motion passed.