

Labor Day Membership Meeting Minutes September 1, 2007 Cathedral of the Pines Church Camp

Board Members Present: Tim Nelson, Pres., Sally Westby, Vice Pres., Louise Suomi, Treasurer, Marj Ryan, Secretary, Jesse Neihart, Bob Reid.

10:05 Meeting called to order. Motion to approve minutes of 2006 Annual Meeting made by Lance Johnson. Motion seconded. Approved.

Treasurer Report: Currently we have ???? in our budget. Louise reported that 55% of Caribou property owners are currently members of the association. An internal audit of the association was conducted this July, with the results showing that our operations are running smoothly. After many years of Sandy Butler's professional accountant taking care of our operations, the transition in bookkeeping to our new volunteer treasurer went very smoothly.

Speakers:

Bruce Martinson, County Commissioner and Chair of County Board: graciously filled us in on the following: The County Board vowed to commit up to \$75,000 (\$50,000 cash) to be used to improve water quality in the community and are working closely with Dave Stark to do so. Inspections are ongoing in the Tofte/Schroder maintenance-sewer district. Inspections on Devil Track Lake were stalled when a contractor did not follow through with contracted work. The work will be re-bid in the following summer. The inspections done on Caribou Lake are being touted as a good example for all the follow. Commissioner Martinson also discussed the proposed county ATV ordinance and said how it was still in the drafting stages and constantly changing. He said meetings about the ordinance have been well attended by all spectrums of opinion and considerations before the board had to do with speed, not allowing ATV on shoulders of paved roads, licensing issues, speed on gravel roads and speeds when meeting up with people who are walking on roads. He took a poll of the membership in attendance at the annual meeting to see who was supportive of various types of restrictions. 26 people voted for no ATV use allowed on residential gravel roads. 6 people voted for ATV use with some restrictions. 1 person voted for ATV use with no restrictions. Discussion also involved the recently published Property Owner's Resource Guide and that it was given to realtors and developers to distribute, and also is available at various county offices. Lance Johnson brought up an issue regarding home wells and septic installation on adjoining land.

Paul Nelson-Wild Fire Prevention: Paul gave a very thorough and extremely timely talk on fire danger in our area. He stressed how critically dry our region was with drought codes reading now in the 600's with the last known highs of past years reaching only in the 380's. We only had 3/4 inch of rain over the summer. This is the worst it has ever been. He warned that all open fires would be ticketed. The Fire Department chiefs and the sheriff are currently working on evacuation plans for our area. The Gunflint Fire Department staged a very smooth operation during the Ham Lake Fire and other departments will be using them as a example. Paul explained that the worst place in Cook County for fire load was the Gunflint Trail, with the Upper Caribou Trail coming in a close second! He explained how evacuations take place with the firemen given maps and lists of people who live in an area to be evacuated and how they go from house to house to get people out. They post notices on houses where no one is around. If you decide to try to stay, you sign a waiver and they ask for a list of your next of kin. No joke. A great place to learn about preventing fire and what you can do on your own property is Boreal Access.org, link to Firewise at bottom right of the page. For a list of up to day reports from officials on fires, go to Firewise and click on the GT Wise link. This link is manned 24hours and is a great resource if you live away and want to check for problems in your area.

Discussion also centered on sprinkler systems. There is no money coming from the government to fund sprinkler systems. New systems are being developed at this time based on an agricultural model. The wait for systems to be installed is very long and costly. The Gunflint lake fire department is pushing to get systems standardized. This would help in the training of firemen to run systems and fix systems to help in fire fighting. Sprinklers do not guarantee that your house will not burn. They must be maintained and activated and the intake pipes must be in working order in enough time to do any good. In the Ham lake fire, 3 systems were never started, 2 started but had non-working pumps or broken pipes. More importantly, people can work on their own defensible space including having a wide enough driveway and thinning trees. Follow information found on firewise. If firemen see that you have not done your part, they may not risk their lives to help you. 72 forest service people have died this year trying to save houses! The county has proposed to open the gravel pit for slash removal provided several people volunteer to monitor the pit for contraband such as tires, garbage, etc. Two CLPOA members did volunteer to help become citizen monitors: Sharon Mulhberg and Tom Freeden. Thank you! Pat O'Neil is always available for hire to chip your slash too.

Biz Clark-President, (COLA) Cook County Coalition of Lakes Association: The group is trying to raise awareness of their mission and represents 10 area lakes including more than 1000 property owners. Discussion involved the new Property Owner's Resource Guide and that many were given to resort owners to distribute to people who might be interested in purchasing property in the area and staying at their resorts. Biz highlighted the important information of what property owners can do on their own shoreline to help preserve our lakes including no fertilizers, no phosphorous, screen shorelines, no clear-cutting. The group supports continued testing of lakes and urges the county to continue this important program. COLA is also working with the county to draft storm water, subdivision and shoreline ordinances in response to development. The group encourages wise development including smaller cabins/houses that leave smaller footprints; tries to examine variances; helps to implement countywide lake management plans.

COLA also wanted members to be aware of planned herbicide use by Arrowhead Electric under power lines to keep vegetation in check. The group is strongly opposed to this use and encourages people to contact Arrowhead Electric in response to this proposed practice. This leaves our lakes vulnerable to these chemicals through runoff and leeching.

Dave Stark-Cook County Water Planner: Dave began his talk describing that each state must have a water plan as a guiding document. Minnesota implemented its plan in 2005 and it is a very broad document that allows for continued and expanded water quality monitoring. He noted that various studies about continuing water quality decline have been in the news lately including the poplar river, which Caribou drains into, and that its failure is based mostly on the turbidity of the water. Dave reported that a storm water ordinance is currently being worked on.

Coastal grants are being applied for to pay for water quality sampling. (Bob Reid has spent many hours putting the Star grant application together.) (CLPOA has voted to reimburse Pat Vaughan for his expenses related to water sampling until grant money comes through.) Sampling costs \$80 per sampling. Sampling is being done on three levels including chlorophyll, total phosphorous, and secchi depths. There are 32 trained monitors throughout the county with Pat Vaughan dedicated to Caribou Lake. Sampling is taking place for two years for 5 months per year. Sampling has been done through ERA labs in Duluth but Dave was impressed with the web site for RMB labs and the comprehensive reports that they put together. You can view a sample report for Caribou Lake at RMBEC.info. Caribou Lake is showing a slight improvement in total phosphorous with mean values around 21 and last year at 22. The lake is still on the edge of being eutrophic and although improving we need to be vigilant in how we use our lake and the shoreline. Anything to help save energy in your cabin and anything to save water ultimately help saves the lake!

Septic information: All inspected with a 50% failure rate. Have two years to correct with 36 permits applied for repair.

By-Laws:

The board presented a very scaled-back version of by-laws for membership comments. Due to the feedback from previous meetings the board decided to move forward with three changes to the by-laws. The board proposed expanding the number of members from 9 to 11. Because of the complexity of current issues and the numerous issues involving the lake, the board felt that more people were needed for energy and expertise. The board also proposed to eliminate term limits. (For example, our current president had been serving in violation of these limits, yet his leadership was essential in getting us through the very complicated hillside development issues and septic issues.) Finally, the board proposed that properties that had corporation, partnership or LLC's would be allowed two votes per parcel, similar to joint owners and married persons. Other smaller changes were changing the registered address since we could no longer use the Butler corporate offices, adding electronic mail to the ways that directors can be notified of special meetings, and allowing fall meetings to be held either directly before or after the annual meeting.

Lance Johnson moved to postpone the issue again because he felt adequate notice was not given in regard to the by-law changes. Discussion was held and Tim Nelson pointed out that by-law changes did not need membership approval but that we were interested in membership opinion and thus had brought the changes to membership attention and that this was the third meeting in which we had brought proposals to the membership. A voice vote failed to approve Mr. Johnson's motion. Motion was then made for membership approval of the changes proposed. Motion passed with 2 dissents noted.

Elections: With membership approval of additional people to the board, 6 people were offered for membership election to the board: Bill Dunn, Louise Suomi, Fred Morris, Diana Kamp, Pat Vaughan and Larry Mullen. Four positions had been up for renewal: Tim Nelson, president, who declined to run again, Bill Dunn, Louise Suomi, Treasurer, and Fred Morris. Motion was made by Sue Frankowski to elect the six proposed candidates. Motion was seconded, and voters approved. Tim Nelson was thanked for his devoted service to the lake association for the past 8 years!

Loon Report: Pat Vaughan reports that there were 5 adult loons on the lake that did mate but whose nest was disturbed with no loon chicks for the second year in a row.

Additional Business: Discussion was initiated by Mrs. Mullen, that in the past, a donation was given every couple of years to the first responders/fire fighters. In consideration of the dangerous conditions and potential for disaster Ceil Neihart moved that we give \$500 to the Lutsen Fire Department. Motion seconded and passed. Pat Vaughan volunteered to find out who to send the check to and how best to do so.

Sharon Mulhberg brought up for discussion that perhaps a by-law should be added which calls for periodic review of the by-laws. She felt that perhaps this should be addressed at the next annual meeting.

Sharon Muhlberg also brought up her concerns that people were ignoring the firewise information/advice and that the board should come up with a way to monitor people or spread information to more people.

Motion to dismiss came at 12:30.