

RLAA 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2016

The Rice Lake Area Association (RLAA) held their annual members meeting on Tuesday, May 3rd from 6:30-9:00 pm at the Cambria Suites motel in Maple Grove. The meeting was well attended by almost 50 residents, representing about 25% of our e-mail database and considered the largest turnout in recent history. A free pizza buffet was held from 6:30-7:00 for those who paid their 2016 membership dues to the association.

The meeting formally started at approximately 7:05 pm as board member Rick Stulac introduced himself, than asked the other board members and the audience to give a brief introduction. Guests Mark Lahtinen (Maple Grove City Engineering) and Rich Brasch (Three Rivers Park District) were also present. Rick also reviewed the associations Mission Statement.

A review of the 2015 Financials and the 2016 Budget was also led by board member/treasurer Rick Stulac. 2015 Financial Objectives included:

- Increase annual dues participation (up by 18% vs. previous year)
- Increase City funding for lake projects (over 50% of the \$9,000 total project cost for 2014-15 was City-funded)

In the Treasurer's Report, Rick noted that 2015 saw a positive impact on our Savings fund, putting RLAA at \$18,000 total cash in the bank. The number of paying members was up to 40 households (an increase of 7 vs. 2014).

There were no questions or opposition from the audience regarding the Financials or the Budget.

A Dues Payment question was raised if the names of those who did pay their dues could be posted on the RLAA website, so others may be encouraged to do the same. It was decided that those who have paid their dues would be contacted to see if they minded having their names posted on the site.

Board Member George Schneider gave the General Lake Update which consisted of 5 parts:

- 'Year in Review' look at 2015
- Impacts on Water Quality
- Drawdown update
- 2015 Project Review
- 2016 Project Plans
- **2015 Year in Review**
 - Winter 2014-2015 the first drawdown since 2004-2005 was conducted
 - Winter 2014-2015 weather was below average for precipitation/temperature, resulting in good conditions for naturally treating Curlyleaf Pondweed (CLP)
 - At least 10 homeowner shoreline restorations conducted during the drawdown
 - Spring 2015 water level slow to recover (post drawdown); many boats not put in until June
 - Almost no CLP was observed in 2015
 - Spring 2015 was much drier than normal, increasing the amount of time it took to refill the lake
 - Water quality during the outdoor boating season was observed to be better than recent years without any major algae blooms
 - Summer/Fall 2015 – Fishing very poor the entire season. Visiting fishermen numbers were again down significantly. Fish restocking conducted in May/September/October
 - Winter 2015-2016 was again mild and lower than average precipitation
 - Spring 2016 water level close to average, even with reduced winter precipitation
- **Impacts on Water Quality**
 - Bad Weeds vs. Good Weeds
 - Reviewed Curlyleaf Pondweed (bad) vs. Coontail (good)

- Curlyleaf Pondweed has shown little growth last year and early this season.
 - Coontail has still been heavy growth on Elm Creek entry on west side of I-94.
 - Nutrient levels
 - 75% coming in from rest of watershed; 25% internal to Rice Lake (per Elm Creek TMDL)
 - Bad fish vs. Good fish
 - Rough fish (bad) consist mostly of Common Carp and Bullhead.
 - Game fish (good) population is low, but restocking efforts in 2015 hope to help swing the pendulum to a healthy fish population.
 - Do we want a lake dominated by algae or by native plants?
 - Being a shallow lake, we have the dilemma of either being a lake full of nutrients/algae or one full of native aquatic weeds.
 - One positive about a lake full of native aquatic weeds is that the water quality/clarity should improve, along with the gamefish population. Weeds can always be controlled by cutting if necessary.
- **Drawdown update**
 - Review of why we do a drawdown
 - Benefits vs. Negative impacts review
 - Benefits
 - Minimum cost (\$250 DNR permit)
 - Public works labor to open/close the dam gate
 - Not harmful to good aquatic plants or fish (when winter aerated)
 - Opportunity to clean up and improve shoreline
 - At least 10 residents took advantage of their exposed shoreline to work on erosion control projects.
 - Negative impacts
 - Loss of ice coverage surface area
 - Lake refill is based on watershed precipitation level
 - Drawdown history
 - 1998-1999
 - 1999-2000
 - 2002-2003
 - 2004-2005
 - 2014-2015
 - Drawdown Q & A
 - Was the 2014-2015 drawdown considered successful?
 - Yes, the last drawdown was considered a success since it did knock down the Curlyleaf Pondweed growth and gave residents the opportunity to work on shoreline erosion.
 - Will another drawdown be conducted in 2015-2016?
 - No, not at this point. As long as the benefit (reduced CLP growth) continues, there is no need to draw down again. (DNR only allows drawdowns for control of non-native aquatic plant growth; cannot do a drawdown to control algae.)
- **2015 Project Review**
 - Completed fish restocking effort in 2015 (\$7,500 of fish added).
 - City of Maple Grove reimbursed RLAA \$5,000 of the total cost.
- **2016 Planned Projects**
 - Continue to update the RLAA website

- Introduced Facebook page for RLAA contributions
 - Consider Carp Removal in Winter 2016-2017 (if necessary)
 - Consider Dredge Channel by Boat Launch (Winter 2016-2017)
 - Objective: To deepen the channel entering the lake from the Boat Ramp Bay, which has never been dredged out before and is getting shallower due to sediment contribution.
 - 100% approval of adjacent homeowners need to approve, but 1 has declined.
 - A good conversation resulted with the homeowner who does not approve of the project and others at the meeting. A focus group will be organized to discuss the issue and possible solutions in the upcoming weeks and to revisit the situation in 2016-2017.
 - Encourage resident shoreline restoration projects via Maple Grove Lake Improvement Grant Program
 - Residents can get up to \$750 reimbursement from City of Maple Grove on valid projects
 - Copy request form from our website (details coming later via e-mail)
 - Submit the completed form to George Schneider via e-mail (ricelakeassoc@comcast.net)
 - Continue working with Elm Creek Watershed on Impaired Waters Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) project plan (in tandem with RLAA Lake Management plan)
 - Storm Drain monitoring with City Staff
 - Continue to increase our membership
- **Water Quality – What can you do to help?**
 - Manage your shoreline
 - Keep the street drains free of debris
 - Pick up litter along shoreline
 - Don't use phosphorous in your lawn treatment
 - Consider aerating your lawn on a regular basis

Elm Creek Watershed TMDL Project and Impacts on Rice Lake Update by Rich Brasch (Three Rivers Parks District)

- Presentation to review the current TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load of nutrients) project and how the study will impact Rice Lake with future projects.
 - Rich, who has presented to RLAA in the past, gave an overview of the study and how some recent projects have contributed to some improvement in the local watershed, including Rice Lake.

Committee Update

Jeremy Coenen from RLAA Board gave an update of the current teams and the need to increase the numbers and involvement of these teams. Please sign up today to join one (or more) of these teams to help us get our lake back into shape.

- **Lake Management Team**
 - Fish Management sub-committee
- **Membership Team**
 - This team has not been active and we need to resurrect it.
 - As we (RLAA) engage in more projects, we will continue to require more funding and support for these projects. Increasing our membership and awareness of these projects is a vital part of this team's objectives. Contact Dave Wirig (davewirig@medicalsolutionsinc.com) if you would like to become part of this team.
- **RLAA Facebook page**
 - Share your knowledge and experiences/concerns about Rice Lake on our own Facebook page. Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/RiceLakeMG/>.

Board Member Elections

- Term was up for 1 current Board Member:
 - George Schneider

- George volunteered to serve another 3 year term ending in 2019.
- 1 more RLAA members also volunteered to serve on the Board of Directors and has since been elected to the board, bringing our total number of board members to 9.
 - Al Carlson

Rice Lake Trivia Contest

Scott & Joy Roeglin hosted the 3rd annual Rice Lake Trivia Contest. Members present at the meeting took part by scoring their own results. The winner was Jean Weber; Jean was awarded a \$20 gift certificate from a local retailer.

1. What is the average depth of Rice Lake? (11 feet)
2. How many acres is Rice Lake? (315; 330 including Elm Creek)
3. What is the legal top speed you can go in the slow, no wake zones? (5 mph)
4. What is the new location of one of the slow, no wake buoys? (There are 3 of these buoys: Entrance to Rice Lake where Elm Creek enters; Exit from Rice Lake to Elm Creek; Elm Creek near the dam)
5. What day in March was the aerator turned off? (March 12th)
6. How long did the aerator run and why was it put in the lake last winter? (continuously for 2 months; provide additional dissolved oxygen to the recently stocked fish population)
7. Oh, by the way, how many 911 calls were generated by the aerator? (4, including one by a state trooper)
8. What year was the damn on the North end of the creek built? (issue was discussed in 1965; dam construction completed in 1970)
9. What was the original name of the Maple Knoll cemetery on the east side of Rice Lake? (Old Fish Lake cemetery)
10. What is the name of the web site for Rice Lake Area Association? (<http://ricelakemn.com> or <http://ricelakehomestead.com>)

Scott & Joy also conducted the drawings for 4 more \$20 gift certificates from local retailers. Winners were:

- Pete Raatikka
- Mark Raskob
- Denise Zastoupil
- Jeff Swanson

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.