

Meeting Minutes

LARA Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at Jackpine Brewery, Baxter, MN

Board Members Present: Phil Hunsicker, Mike O'Brien, Nick Bernier, Sandy Holm, Tom Beaver, Eleanor Burkett (ex-officio)

Board Members Absent: Ann Beaver, Jodi Billy, Kent Montgomery (ex-officio)

Guests: Carla White and Leah Heggerston representing the National Loon Center, Kevin Woizeschke with the DNR Non-Game Wildlife Program

Meeting was called to order by P. Hunsicker at 4:05 p.m.

Minutes from 7/18/2017: Motion to approve was made by N. Bernier. Second by M. O'Brien. Approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Reviewed the August 18, 2017 Financial Statement. Motion to approve by M. O'Brien. Second by N. Bernier. One question of \$4.41 charge associated with the Secretary. Motion approved unanimously.

Discussion of a National Loon Center to be located in Crosslake

- Organizers Carla White and Leah Heggerston informed the board of their progress to date. Carla's contact information is tcwhite@crosslake.net or 612-845-5030. Contact info for Leah is fishes@crosslake.net
- Received funding from U of M's Central Region Sustainable Development Partnership and the National Joint Powers Alliance Board along with support from the Initiative Foundation to do a marketing and feasibility study.
- Long-range goal is to have a physical building for a National Loon Center on Army Corps of Engineers property near the dam in Crosslake
- Organizers also wish to start a Freshwater Institute in coordination with the National Loon Center
- Looking at an \$8 million dollar project
- Getting 501c3 status from the IRS and about to launch their website: www.nationallooncenter.org
- Organizational meeting open to the public on September 7 from 6:30 to 8:30 at the Manhattan Beach Lodge

No annual meeting this year, so what do we need to send out to our member associations?

- January-August Treasurer's report (Ann can put this together)
- List of LARA's accomplishments for the year (Phil will put a draft list together and share with the board for their additions/edits)
- Report of current LARA membership (Ann can put this together)
- Call for new board members
- Any changes to current board
 - Jodi is the only one on the board up for re-appointment. Jodi was absent from the meeting, but the board voted and approved her re-appointment pending her decision to remain on the board
- CWEPA Fund announcement (Ann can put something together and refer interested parties to our website for the application)

Next LARA Newsletter is scheduled for Early-September Release:

- Articles must be submitted to Newsletter Editor, Sharon Herwig, by Tuesday, August 29th.
- Phil already submitted an article and photos about the Lake-Friendly Awards

- Eleanor already submitted an article on EDDMapS
- President's message will be written by Mike.
- Article by East Twin Lake on their use of CWEPA Funds to plant trees along re-constructed Highway 371 in Nisswa. Since LARA has decided to not hold an annual meeting this year, an article by the lake association will run in the upcoming LARA newsletter and replace the requirement of an in-person presentation by CWEPA Fund award winners at our annual meeting
- Important news from Sharon: her computer is dying. It has about a year left. On it is the software she uses to do our newsletter. The software is too expensive to purchase again, so we may lose our newsletter, or we could possibly switch to posting information and articles on our website as a substitute. Something to think about and discuss.

We Are Water

- Initial organizing event for We Are Water was held on August 8, 2017 in the County Land Services Building. P. Hunsicker, K. Montgomery and E. Burkett were all there representing LARA in addition to other organizations they are affiliated with (DNR, Central Lakes College, and University Extension).
- The general feeling about the meeting was that it was good to learn more about the initiative and to meet with other people/organizations that care about water, but for the most part, the groups that were present were the typical organizations that we usually see represented at events like this, and the specific goals and objectives of this initiative are still nebulous and ill-defined. LARA will continue to be involved in future meetings to find out if there is a good niche for LARA to fill.
- Several organizations volunteered to take on a leadership role with the We Are Water initiative. Among them are the Crow Wing SWCD, the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation, and the Mississippi Headwaters Board. Many other groups – including LARA – signed up as “supporters.” They include Central Lakes College, University of MN Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Pine River Watershed Alliance, the DNR, etc.
- Next steps are to continue building the network of participating organizations – especially targeting groups that generally don't show up for discussions/actions about water. These could include local businesses, local arts groups, and local historic societies.

Next LARA board meeting: The first Tuesday in September is in just two weeks. The board felt that a meeting in September is not necessary. **The board will next meet on October 3.** Until then, the board can communicate via email.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Philip Hunsicker on August 31, 2017

Philip Hunsicker