



The Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA) met Thursday, June 11, 2009 at the Minnesota State Community & Technical College in Detroit Lakes. President Dick Hecock called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Dick Hecock began the meeting with roll call. There were 25 members present representing 21 associations. Two items were added to the agenda under old business: • The election of a Vice President • Discussion of the nomination process

Secretary's Report – Marietta Keenan

The minutes of the May 14, 2009 meeting were reviewed and approved as presented with no corrections or additions.

Treasurer's Report – Wayne Lee

The Treasurer's report dated May 31, 2009 was reviewed and approved. Total available funds are \$29,258.28.

2008 Membership fees have still not been paid by:

- ***Cormorant Watershed • Fox Lake • White Earth***

Water Testing bills are still outstanding for:

- ***Bad Medicine • Lake Detroiters • Round-Ice Cracking • White Earth***

Please contact your lake association treasurer if you are behind on a payment.

Monitoring – Bob Taylor

Saturday June 6th, Darrin Hoverson of the DNR met with the monitoring group of Lars-Nels-Ross to address questions on Curley Leaf Pondweed.

Bob introduced two new members from Tulaby Lake. He has trained a new monitor on Middle Cormorant Lake. Their last Secchi Reading was 23 feet.

Otter Tail County COLA has enlisted the help of one the 4-H Clubs to monitor water quality for West Olaf Lake. Bob suggested we develop a youth program. Dick made note that we had a long history of supporting youth programs in the past.

Mention was made that our 2008 Water Quality Report had been distributed to the Becker County Commissioners.

Communications – Fred Tuominen

Gov. Pawlenty line item vetoed the \$200,000 in funding for the Star Lake Board out of the 69 million that had been approved by the legislature. This veto was seen as many as a slap in the face to Lake and River Associations who by their nature would be the most effective use of Legacy Funds for cleaning up the waters in Minnesota. Even so, the Star Lake Board will continue to pursue funds through the Clean Water Legacy Act and will identify lakes that meet criteria for grants. Lake Associations are encouraged to apply for and obtain Star Lake Status, as this designation will open the door for funding grants. The grants must be used to enhance and improve our lakes and rivers. At least 50% of the lake shore owners must belong to the lake association, the lake must have a lake management plan that is reviewed annually and must maintain a lake monitoring program to be designated as a "Star Lake". Fred has preliminary criteria for preparing a lake management plan. Lakes may contact him for more information.

The newsletter is out and extra copies will be available at the meetings. It was suggested that we post the newsletter on our web site. Discussion followed. The newsletter is one of the added benefits of COLA membership. If it were available free of charge, it might cause our membership numbers to decline. Sending the newsletter via email was also discussed.

With a data base of approximately 2800 names, it was felt that this might be more difficult to update and manage than a regular mailing list.

Addressed copies of The *Becker County Shoreline Guide to Lake Stewardship* will be ready for the next meeting. They can be picked up by COLA Reps and distributed. If there are any address corrections to be made, please let Fred know. If you wish to purchase additional copies for \$1.00 each you may bring a check to the next meeting.

Environmental – John Postovit

John read an extensive list of the lakes that had not returned the Memorandum of Understanding. If your lake was among them, please check with your president to see if there are any areas of disagreement or concern.

Other Old Business : Because relatively few lakes currently participate in the Restore the Shore tree orders, Dick recommended that we end COLAs direct involvement in the program. He presented his analysis of the program to membership and a motion was made and approved to drop the current Restore the Shore program. Marietta volunteered to provide educational and resource materials to COLA members. She will contact local nurseries to see if discounts could be given to COLA members and will contact the Becker County Master Gardeners to see if there is any interest in selling suitable plants at their spring plant sale.

COLA has been without a Vice President for some time. This poses a problem since the V.P. is chairman of the nominating committee. Lonny Bentley was nominated by Lanny Brantner for V.P. There were no nominations from the floor. Tom Riedman seconded the nomination and it was unanimously approved. The President and Treasurer are up for election in October, although there are no term limits according to the new bylaws.

New Business: In the spirit of “*Lake Associations teaching Lake Associations*”, we will be starting a newsletter exchange project. Extra copies of newsletters from your associations can be distributed at our regular meetings. Dick brought the Pelican River Watershed and Pickerel Lake newsletters to share.

Announcements

- Our annual meeting will be held August 13th on Lake Melissa. The program, by SJE Rhombus, will feature new septic technology. A picnic will also be held.
- Bad Medicine has received a grant for an invasive species prevention project. Chuck Church of Bad Medicine applied for a grant that provides a uniformed person to do boat inspections at the public access most weekends. The cost to the lake was \$480 for the summer. To write a grant request for your lake check the DNR website. There is \$100,000 available but applications must be in by the February deadline.
- Fred Tuominen distributed a handout on “*Frequently asked questions about Curly Leaf Pondweed*”. He reported that Big Toad continues to treat and monitor for Curly Leaf Pondweed. In 2003 the lake was badly infested with large mats of the foul smelling weed. The point of infestation occurred at the public boat access and spread to hundreds of acres in the lakes littoral area (where water is 6-15 feet deep). The lake has been treated with herbicides but not without some controversy and a vocal opposition. They have spent over \$50,000 of their own money over the past three years in weed control. Upper Cormorant has now received a grant from the DNR to treat 200 acres on their lake. The weed comes to the surface of the water during June and the plants turions (seed pods) can remain viable for 10 years in lake sediment.

Program – Tom Riedman

Tom Riedman and Bill Sherlin are members of the COLA Environmental Concerns Committee. Tom is also the COLA Rep on the Becker County Planning Commission whose duties and powers are to review and make recommendations to the County Commissioners on applications for:

- Zone Change requests
- Conditional Use Permits

- Subdivision of Land
- Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)
- Comprehensive Plan
- Amendments to Zoning Ordinances

Land owners are required to present plans for shoreland development. The Planning Commission reviews these plans and identifies environmental concerns. It recommends mitigation alternatives or may recommend and EAW (Environmental Assessment Worksheet).

Once an application and plans are filed with the Zoning Office a public hearing is scheduled. COLA Rep, Bill Sherlin alerts the respective lake association of the proposed change. Testimony supporting or opposing the application is taken at the hearing or in written form. Final approval or denial of the recommendation is reserved for the Board of County Commissioners. If you have an area of concern or a specific case in question, please contact the respective volunteer on the Environmental Committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Marietta Keenan, Secretary