

The Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA) met on Thursday May 14, 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 29 members present. Members gave their names, lake association and their position in COLA. Of the 28 affiliated associations 21 were represented.

Dick spoke about the mission of COLA:

“It is our mission to encourage, assist and nourish strong Lake Associations in their quest to maintain and improve water quality in area lakes, rivers and streams.”

This year he hopes for greater involvement of lake associations. More business will take place during meetings with less emphasis on programs and individual lake association reports. When asking for additions to the agenda, Dick Alsop, president of Lake Detroiters, asked that we consider a discussion of flowering rush in our new business since 8 lakes in Becker County are now infected.

Secretary’s Report – Marietta Keenan

The minutes of the April 16, 2009 meeting were approved as presented with no corrections or additions. The current meeting agenda and minutes from the last meeting will now be e-mailed to all but those members who request postal delivery. They will be sent out BCC: so that the addresses will be kept confidential. In any correspondence sent, the subject line will read Becker County COLA.

Treasurer’s Report – Wayne Lee

The current report as of April 30, 2009 was reviewed. *Wayne has received no response from the associations that are past due in their membership and water testing fees. If your treasurer is behind on payment, please request that they take care of this before the June meeting.*

Restore the Shore orders were discussed. It was noted that the checks for the 2008/09 order have only recently been deposited. Originally the project came about by working with Becker County Master Gardeners who selected 7 “special varieties” for lake shore restoration. In 2008/09 only 14 associations participated and Bad Medicine ordered 40% of the total. There are other retail outlets such as Becker County SWCD and Interstate Seed that individual associations could utilize. Alternatives to this program will be reviewed including the possibility of making a resource list available to associations.

Monitoring – Bob Taylor

The May 13th training session was a success. 19 lakes attended. Advice was sought from Johanna Schussler in the St. Paul Office of MPCA, also from Brad Grand of Becker County Soil and Water, and from Bruce Paakh of the local MPCA on how to conduct the meeting. The program focused on what can be accomplished with the data that is collected through the monitoring program. We are all members of Minnesota Waters and can attend meetings and conferences on lake stewardship. Dick Hecock said years of monitoring brought him a great deal of personal satisfaction, but it is also important that we take the next step and act on the data collected.

The “Lake Water Quality Monitoring Report” for 2008 was distributed to lakes that were present. On page 22 there is a list of lakes scheduled to do chemical testing. There is still grant money available for pick up stations for the new lakes and other lakes can use the same schedule if desired. The pick up sites are at Shell Lake,

Richwood Grocery and Two-Inlets Grocery. Samples are taken 6 times per year. Monitoring water quality to characterize lakes, identify problem lakes, and identify trends has been the focus of COLA since 1991/92. Most lakes have seen little change since then with some exceptions. If you would like to prepare a lake history for your lake, you may do so for the next publication and submit it to Bob.

Communications - Fred Tuominen

Fred passed out the April 16, 2009 "*Communications Report*" to those who were not present at the April meeting. The new invasive species billboards have been installed and will be up for the next five months. The outline for the "*Becker County Shoreland Homeowners Guide*" was also reviewed. The complete guide will be ready sometime in June. We have ordered 5000 copies at approximately \$1.25 each. Copies will be distributed to all COLA members.

Environmental – John Postovit

The *Shoreland Rules* update was distributed. Updates continue to be posted on www.mndnr.gov. The preliminary draft is 87 pages long and can be viewed at www.mndnr.gov/waters/shoreland.html. There is a specific section that pertains only to resorts. There is also a quick comparison which is only 18 pages long.

Shoreland rules were updated in 1969 and again in 1989. The new rules reflect increased pressure on shoreland development. It is probable there will be some political pressure to relax the rules once the final draft is presented. John felt that Becker County was more progressive than many of the counties he had visited with. Dick Hecock credited John Postovit for many of the positive changes that have taken place.

Once the new rules go into effect the DNR will be responsible for enforcement and oversight of the county. This is a major change. Setbacks will now be based on the highest recorded water level rather than the ordinary high water mark.

Other Old Business

Fred continues to make progress on resolving corrections to the mailing list.

New Business

Copies of the old and the revised By-laws were distributed at the last meeting for associations to review. Changes were made during the meeting as follows:

Article II – inserted in the last line after state, "and other appropriate agencies".

Article IX (this was incorrectly numbered VI) – Section 3 was changed to reflect written notice to be given to the member Lake Associations at the previous meeting in advance of the date at which action will be undertaken

Motion was made to approve the By-laws as revised. Motion was unanimously approved.

The new budget was reviewed. The \$2,000 expense for 2010 Budget Year Transaction was removed and a transfer from savings of \$3,610 was added to income to reflect a balanced budget. The budget was approved as modified.

Since the meeting was running late the Star Lake Program will be discussed at the June meeting.

There was an open discussion on lax enforcement of zoning laws. Most felt that this was an issue of fairness. Members were encouraged to contact their commissioners and ask them to address violations. Possible positive actions that might be taken will be discussed at future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marietta Keenan, Secretary