

BPLA Membership Meeting
Saturday, August 28, 2021 – 9:15 AM
Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order; Pledge of Allegiance – John

The meeting, held in person at the Finlayson Community Center, was called to order at 9:20am. There was also an option to join the meeting via Zoom. 30 members present (including several new members) and 6 members present via Zoom.

2. Introduce board – John

John introduced the board: John Mueller – co-Chair | Membership; Maria Gobely – Treasurer | Buffer zones; Jim Corbo – Secretary; Ron Redding – co-Chair | Projects | Picnic; Dan Frey - Newsletter | July 4th parade; Don Roepke – Logo-wear | Fisheries; Dwight Benoy – Water quality. All board members were present at the meeting except Dwight Benoy and Al Droubie.

3. Review agenda – John

The agenda was presented and briefly reviewed. Hand-outs were noted and the raffle ticket process was discussed. This year, each participant was issued one raffle ticket (instead of 5 tickets in years past) to allow more opportunities to win.

4. Approval of Spring 2021 meeting notes – Jim

Spring 2021 meeting minutes were presented. Motion to approve by Gary (Ron, 2nd). Motion passed.

5. Treasurer's report – Maria

The budget and balance sheet were presented. Community giving over the past year was great. Thank you. We are on budget for 2021 with approximately \$7,500 yet to be expensed and all planned revenue received. Maria shared an update on the current plan of investing some of the BPLA balance into various CDs to gain a slightly better interest rather than letting the cash sit in the checking account. Most of the CDs are held at Northview Bank (staggered yearly). One CD currently held at Members Credit Union. Motion to approve by Jim (Michael, 2nd). Motion passed.

6. Election of Board Members — John

A. Big Pine Lake

John Mueller has completed year 2 of his 2nd term and is pursuing a 3rd term. Maria Gobely has completed year 1 of her 2nd term. Jim Corbo has completed year 1 of his 1st term. Al Droubie has completed year 2 of his 1st term and will not be pursuing additional terms. This results in one open position and one position continuation to be confirmed. John Mueller was approved to continue for a 3rd term. No current interest to fill the open position, so the board will seek candidates throughout the remainder of the year.

B. Pine Lake

Ron Redding has completed year 2 of his 3rd term and must step down from the board for one year. Dan Frey has completed year 2 of his 1st term and is pursuing a 2nd term. Don Roepke has completed year 1 of his 1st term. Dwight Benoy has completed year 1 of his 1st term. This results in one open position and one position continuation to be confirmed. Dan Frey was approved to continue for a 2nd term (thanks to Pat Makala for the endorsement). Roger Olson, who has previously served, has expressed interest in re-joining the board. He was approved to be a future board member.

7. Committee reports

A. Membership – John

196 members in 2020. 218 members in 2021 (includes 18 new members). Membership directories and business directories are available at each meeting.

B. July 4th Boat Parade & Fireworks – Dan

The fireworks show was very nice. Special thanks to the Makalas, Karels, Freys, and Drakes for their additional help and to everyone who donated to the fireworks fund. A new contract with the pyrotechnics company is being negotiated. The boat parade was also a success and the top three winners from each lake were acknowledged. The biggest concern to be addressed was making sure future parades will not conflict with the July 4th events in Finlayson. Next year, both the parade and BPLA fireworks show will be held on July 3, 2022.

C. Roadside clean-up | Picnic — Dan

The next roadside clean-up event will coincide with Project Days on September 25, 2021. The date was moved to avoid conflicts with St. Urho celebrations in Finlayson. The BPLA picnic was a success and big thanks goes out to Ron and Sue Redding who helped plan the event even though they could not be present for it. There were 50-60 participants. Some discussion was had about investing in large tents to provide more shade.

D. Projects – Ron

Thanks to all the volunteers who have shown up at the various Project Day events. Ron reviewed the various projects completed throughout the year (docks, boat landing and hiking trail clean-up, loon nest platforms, kiosks, watershed signage, etc.). The next event will be held on September 25, 2021.

Ron also mentioned that he continues to take water level readings at the dam on the north lake. As of this meeting, the water level reads 2.50 which equates to about ¼ inch above the dam. For reference, a reading of 2.48 equates to the water level being even with the dam (no outflow). This is the lowest our lake has been in the last five years and is roughly down four inches from 2020 and nine inches (average) over the past three years. Note: since the meeting took place, major rainfalls happened. One question was asked from the members regarding the pile of “muck” that was at the landing for a period of time this summer. Ron explained that pile of “muck” was from cleaning out the rock pile that had accumulated off the boat landing, most likely a result of power loading. The DNR eventually came and removed it.

E. Water Quality Report — John

Minnesota has recently approved a 10-year Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy, which seeks to improve and protect 80 watersheds throughout the state. Big Pine and Pine Lakes are part of the Kettle and Upper Saint Croix River watersheds — which are included in this WRAPS report. This vision will help guide future discussions for long term planning for our lakes and how BPLA can support those plans. More information is available through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

BPLA continues to monitor the quality of the water in our lakes through various tests conducted throughout the year. Phosphorus, Chlorophyll-A, and Nitrogen levels are monitored and water clarity is measured via secci dish readings. Overall, levels are trending lower, but fluctuate throughout the year. Secci dish readings were at an all-time high this year, possibly caused by low water levels and lack of rain. A question was asked about sources of phosphorus in the lake. Since the lakes are stream fed, we do not know exactly what comes from each stream (runoff from farm lands and livestock, fertilizer, etc. could all contribute), but will look into taking more upstream samples. Each home owner can help lower phosphorus levels by eliminating grass fertilizers and ensuring septic systems are functioning properly.

F. Fisheries – Don

The drought has negatively impacted our source's Walleye stock. At this time, the availability and quantity of fish remains uncertain. The Minnesota DNR will stock the lake in 2022 (every other year). Lake surveys will be conducted on Big Pine and Pine Lakes in 2022. These surveys will determine the types and quantity of fish present. A brief discussion was had regarding the daily limit of Northern. Remember, Northern measuring between 22" and 26" must be released.

G. Buffer Zone projects –Maria

Four projects in Aitkin County (including the narrows) and three in Pine County. The completed projects look very good. Thank you to all the volunteers. They contributed nearly 430 hours of time to these projects. Grants from the state plus in-kind labor totaled approximately \$22,000. If interested in volunteering or to get on the list for a project, please contact Maria.

8. **Old Business – John**

None.

9. **New Business – John**

The following questions/comments were asked either from in-person participants or from zoom participants.

- A. Concerns noted about the ongoing use of fireworks.
- B. Motorcycle club update: They will have unrestricted use of their property from sun up to sun down; however, no racing will take place during the first two weeks of deer hunting rifle season. Appeals took place, but did not affect the final decision.
- C. In regards to water quality, does the calcium chloride used on dirt roads to decrease dust have an effect on the watershed? While the chemicals may end up in the water at some point, the impact is said to be minimal. BPLA will look into this issue more.
- D. With the water level low, should there be concern about taking boats out? Not particularly; however, always use caution and avoid power loading.

10. **Adjournment – John**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54am.