

RLAA 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2018

The Rice Lake Area Association (RLAA) held their annual members meeting on Tuesday, May 1st from 6:30-9:30 pm at the Cambria Suites motel in Maple Grove. The meeting was well attended by over 40 residents, representing about 12% of our total potential members from our database, but falling short of last year's attendance of 50 residents. A free pizza buffet was held from 6:30-7:00 for those who paid their 2018 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), Mary Newman (WSB & Associates) and Brian Vlach (Three Rivers Park District) were also present. Rick also reviewed the associations Mission Statement.

A review of the 2017 Financials and the 2018 Budget was also led by board member/treasurer Rick Stulac. 2017 Financial Objectives included:

- Increase annual dues participation (same vs. previous year)
- Increase City funding for lake projects via the Lake Improvements Project (LIP) program.

In the Treasurer's Report, Rick noted that 2017 saw a negative impact on our Savings fund, putting RLAA at \$22,925 total cash in the bank. The number of paying members was the same as last year (46 households).

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

There is a lot of room for improvement for us to get more RLAA members to pay their dues. Out of 98 residents who live on the lake/creek with lake access, only 45% of them are contributing dues. Although dues payments are voluntary, it is strongly encouraged to pay your dues if you live on the lake/creek, especially if you enjoy use of the resource. *(Note: In 2017, the names of those who paid their dues were posted on the RLAA website, so others may be encouraged to do the same. The same will be done again this year.)*

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

- Review current Rice Lake surface water regulations
- 'Year in Review' look at 2017
- Impacts on Water Quality
- Drawdown review
- 2017 Project Review
- 2018 Project Plans
- **Surface Water Regulations**
 - No wake zones in creek and within 100 feet of shoreline or other water craft
 - No wake speed maximum is 5 mph
 - Speed limits
 - Daytime 40 mph
 - Nighttime 15 mph
 - See <http://www.maplegrovern.gov/about/lakes-and-water-quality/rice-lake/> for details
- **2017 Year in Review**
 - No need for drawdown in 2016-2018 as Curlyleaf Pondweed growth did not require it; however,
 - Winter 2016-2017 weather was again mild with lower than average precipitation.
 - Water levels were above normal for most of the 2017 open water season
 - Some more CLP was observed in 2017, but not enough to warrant treatment.

- Water quality during the outdoor boating season was observed to be better than recent years without any major algae blooms for the 3rd season in a row
- Summer/Fall 2017 – Fishing was relatively poor the entire season, although some game fish (largemouth bass, northern pike, sunfish and occasional crappie) were reported to have been caught this past year. Visiting fishermen numbers were again down significantly.
- Winter 2017-2018 was above average for precipitation and snow cover, resulting in good conditions for naturally treating Curlyleaf Pondweed (CLP).
- Winter aeration was done in 2017-2018 to help sustain 2015 & 2017 fish stocking.
- Spring 2018 water level has been slightly above average, but nothing significant.
- **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 & 2017 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 during our last drawdown in 2014-2015.
 - 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 2018-2019?
 - 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.)
 - We are dependent on your (RLAA members) input if you visually observe increased CLP growth in your area. Let the RLAA board members know via our e-mail (ricelakeassoc@comcast.net) if you feel levels are increasing.
- **2017 Project Review**
 - Fish stocking of native game fish
 - Over 7,500 crappie, bluegill and largemouth bass were installed in 3 different instances during the 2017 open water season.
 - The City of Maple Grove helped fund this project by paying 50% (out of \$7,500 total).
 - Boat Ramp lease
 - RLAA signed a 10-year lease (similar to the lease the City of Maple Grove has) with the current owner of the boat ramp, Dick & Joyce Drangeid. The lease provides access to the lake from the boat ramp as long as the Drangeids own the property.
 - Channel Dredging project postponed as no affordable contractor was found.
 - Adjacent homeowners to the project have signed off on the dredging request.
 - Possibly utilize a Boaters Fund to help offset the project cost for one of the homeowners. More information on this will be circulated among membership once we have secured a dredging contractor.
 - RLAA will continue to pursue this project in 2018-2019.
- **2018 Planned Projects**
 - Carp Assessment project with Fish Lake
 - Hired WSB & Associates to work with both lakes to measure level of carp in our lakes. Both trap netting and electrofishing will be done in both lakes beginning in August 2018.
 - This is the 1st phase of a potential 2 phase project to remove carp via commercial fishermen if the assessment shows heavy abundance of carp.
 - City of Maple Grove has helped fund 80% of this project.
 - Winter Aerator replacement
 - Considering replacing the existing winter aeration system with a submerged diffuser system, similar to what Lake Edward is running. Is easier to maintain and deploy than our current model. A task force has been assembled to evaluate this potential system transition.
 - Continue to update the RLAA website
 - Reminded membership that we have a Facebook page for RLAA contributions
 - Please utilize it and if you'd like to help design pages, let us know!
 - Consider Dredge Channel by Boat Launch (Winter 2017-2018)
 - 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.
 - Next step: secure an affordable dredging contractor for the project and work with the DNR to finalize a permit for the work.
 - 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
 - Information on a city-wide ‘Adopt a storm drain’ program will be coming out soon. Stayed tune for details!
 - Pick up litter along shoreline
 - Don’t use phosphorous in your lawn treatment
 - Consider aerating your lawn on a regular basis

10000 Docks as a resource for any dock or boat work

- Eric Swenson from 10000 Docks was unable to attend the meeting, but several RLAA members recognized him for doing affordable quality work on their docks. 10000 Docks also assisted RLAA this past winter with getting the winter aerator and cable recovered and put out again.
 - Feel free to contact Eric Swenson at 10000 Docks for more:
 - E-mail: leveldocks@gmail.com
 - Phone: (763) 227-5320

Elm Creek Watershed TMDL Project and Impacts on Rice Lake Update by Brian Vlach (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.
 - Brian, who replaced Rich Brasch as the Senior Water Engineer at TRPD, gave an overview of the study and how some recent projects have contributed to some improvement in the local watershed, including Rice Lake.
 - Completed projects
 - Tower Hill drive (Hamel) run-off enhancement
 - Elm Creek Restoration project (by Wayzata HS in Plymouth)
 - Current projects
 - Upper Elm Creek Stabilization project (Plymouth)
 - Peony Lane & Elm Creek Road
 - Fish Lake alum treatment
 - Indirect impact on Rice Lake may be receiving a better quality of water.
 - Continue management of Curlyleaf Pondweed
 - Rough Fish control
 - High efficiency street sweeping (Maple Grove)
 - Urban BMP retro-fit projects where water drains into Rice Lake/Elm Creek
 - Land use transition in upper watershed (30% development expected by 2030)
- Brian stated that this project has been approved by both the MPCA and EPA and periodic checkpoints will be done to insure progress is being made.
- TMDL Project Plan: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/elm-creek-watershed-management-organization-watershed-wide-tmdl-and-protection-and>

Joint Carp Assessment Project by Mary Newman (WSB & Associates)

- Background: In 2017, RLAA and FLARA (Fish Lake) solicited bids from both Carp Solutions (who presented at the 2017 RLAA Annual Meeting) and WSB & Associates to identify carp problems and assist in their removal, if

necessary. Both organizations have worked directly with the University of Minnesota invasive species expert, Dr. Peter Sorenson. It was decided by a Joint Task Force made up of Rice Lake & Fish Lake volunteers to accept the bid from WSB & Associates to work on the Carp Assessment (Phase 1) project.

- Objective: Measure and determine if Carp are in fact a nuisance on both Fish and Rice Lakes.
 - Come up with an action plan to combat Carp
 - Phase 1 – Track carp
 - Phase 2 – Remove carp
 - Request support and financial assistance from these entities:
 - Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission (ECWMC)
 - City of Maple Grove
 - Three Rivers Parks District
 - Rice Lake Area Association (RLAA)
 - Fish Lake Area Residents Association (FLARA)
- Current status
 - WSB & Associates will do trap netting in August/September and then electrofishing to measure the quantity of adult and juvenile carp in both lakes and adjacent ponds/wetlands.
 - A determination will then be made to decide if the carp population warrants removal by a commercial fisherman (Phase 2).

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.
- **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 4 current Board Members:
 - Rick Stulac
 - Scott Roeglin
 - Jeremy Coenen
 - Michael Thiede
- Both volunteered to serve another 3-year term ending in 2021.

Rice Lake Trivia Contest

Scott & Joy Roeglin hosted the 5th annual Rice Lake Trivia Contest. Members present at the meeting took part by scoring their own results. (visit the RLAA website for the questions/answers on our Events page)

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.