Leech Lake Association Meeting Minutes -- October 18, 2021

Meeting called to order by President Gisvold at 9:31.

Board Members present: Dave Laursen, Bob Gisvold, Tom McGovern, Bill Schultz, Jeff Holten, Sharyn Nepsha, Mark Bovee, Jennifer O'Neil (via Zoom). Absent: Jeff Brockberg, John Eaton. Guests: Carl Pederson, DNR, Dana Gutzmann, ESD, Raining White, LLBO, Nicole Kovar,DNR (via Zoom)

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Tom McGovern moved to approve the September Meeting Minutes with the following change: The Board approved at the September meeting two additional days of financial support of the Starry Stonewort dive team in the amount of $5200 total, not $5200/day. This amount was not disbursed, as the dive project was ended. Bill Schultz seconded. Unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dave Laursen reported that the Leech Lake Association bank balance at the end of September was $61, 835. 61. Income for the month was $960 in membership renewals. Expenses were $1147 for Liability insurance, and $54 to Hummingbird Press for printing of a reminder letter to members past due. Jeff Holten moved to approve Treaurer's Report. Mark Bovee seconded. Unanimous.

STARRY STONEWORT DISCUSSION: Nicole Kovar, the DNR AIS Specialist, briefed the board via Zoom regarding the diving operation outside of Andersons Cove to remove Starry Stonewort by hand pulling and vacuuming the biomass into a nearby barge designed for that purpose. It was determined that it was too late in the season to do this effectively and the diving operation was terminated after harvesting six acres over a period of four days. A key question is what effect Starry Stonewort will have on the wild rice? It has apparently infiltrated some six acres so far. The presence of wild rice will also likely determine whether chemical treatments can be applied, copper being the most common. Anderson plans to use chemical treatment in the harbor itself, though this has not yet been done, nor is it likely that such treatment will be done this year. Nicole mentioned that she will be applying for grants to deal with this infestation and will take a wait and see approach before deciding the best way forward in the future. Jeff Holton mentioned that resorts are key to controlling harbor infestations going forward, and this group needs particular attention in the way of outreach. Mark Bovee volunteered to chair an AIS committee, working with Jennifer O'Neill, to do an educational outreach to resorts.

We thank Nicole for her commentary and the overheads she provided showing the area and extent of the present infestation. We also thank Dana Gutzmann and Jennifer O'Neill who observed the actual diving operations and for their commentary and pictures they took while on the scene. Raining White, who was representing the Leech Lake Tribe in Steve Mortensen's absence, made clear the Tribe's concerns with the presence of Starry Stonewort in the wild rice beds, and offered himself as a resource going forward.

DNR REPORT: Carl Pederson received a text from Steve Mortensen during the meeting that 1390 cormorants had been taken during 2021. It was estimated that there were 2023 cormorants on the lake at their peak this summer. The stated goal is 500 breeding pairs. Carl also mentioned that there had been no recent update on the status of the Miller Bay Purchase, but that it was moving forward.

LEGISLATIVE: Jeff Holten mentioned that there were two ongoing projects affecting Leech Lake before the planning commission. One project regards land adjoining both Agency and Trader's Bay, where a variance would be needed to build on part of the property. The other is a project at Trappers Landing by Jeff Arnold.

Jeff also checked into the ownership of a big house and harbor on Ottertail Point that has got a lot of attention from some of the board members and others. To wit: how did this harbor and development get approved with an apparent lack of attention or publicity?

Public records show that this is a single family home, 6000 square feet, with a harbor, all constructed with the necessary permits. The owner: ZPax Holdings. Our concern is that such large projects, affecting so much lakeshore, even when permitted, could have long term adverse effects on the lake.

MANAGEMENT PLAN: John Eaton has been reviewing the Leech Lake Association Management Plan which is several years old and needs updating. John has agreed to update the sections he previously wrote, and is asking others to update their sections. Dave Laursen will update his sections, and Jennifer O'Neill will assist with the overall project.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS: Dave Laursen reported that the reminder letter to members in arrears was having a good response. Some 70 renewals so far, a dozen or more at the Sponsor level.

Bill Schultz moved to adjourn at 11:25. Sharyn Nepsha seconded. Unanimous

Minutes submitted by Dave Laursen