

Becker County COLA Meeting Minutes

Detroit Lakes Public Library, Thursday, June 22, 2023, 5:30 PM CST

Attendees:

Steve Lindow – Bad Medicine
Jenni Barr – Big Cormorant
Ken Mattson – Big Sugarbush
Roger & Jan Lee – Buffalo Lake
Gary Klein – Cotton Lake
Stephen Corbin – Fox Lake
Jim Brown – Height of Land
Marietta Keenan – Island Lake
Billy Tibert – Long Lake
Sue Livermore – Maud Lake

Jim Bond – Melissa-Sallie
Brian Johansen – Melissa-Sallie
Wanda Roden – Melissa/Sallie
Vicky Williams – Melissa/Sallie
Sue Borstad – Pickerel Lake
Tim Monson – Pickerel
Rod Nord - Pickerel
David Suby – Pickerel Lake
David Oberlander - Stakke

5:30 pm Program presentation by Tracy Borash and Emelia Thielman, RMB Labs

RMB Environmental Laboratories tests for a wide range of well water contaminants that often cannot be seen or smelled. They can cause sickness and increase risks of cancer, diabetes, heart disease and skin problems. They also affect children's health in major ways such as reduced intelligence, hearing, learning and behavior problems. Cost is \$65 per test.

Recommended Testing:

- *Coliform Bacteria should be tested for every year*
- *Nitrates every other year*
- *Arsenic at Least once and then every 5-10 years. Floyd, Abbey, Fox, Monson and Cormorant have had many tests with positive results.*
- *Lead at least once*
- *Manganese before a baby drinks the water*

They also have a lake monitoring program. Volunteers on each lake take lake water samples to RMB and do a Secchi reading 5 times each summer. The results are sent to the MPCA, Long term trends can be established after 8-10 years. Monitoring your lake can provide information for management strategies. 99 out of 310 lakes in Becker County are being routinely monitored. RMB is able to detect very low levels of phosphorus (3 ug/L), and their Client Services staff is available to interpret results.

Q&A

Q. Can invasive species be detected by lake water monitoring?

A. If clarity increases suddenly, it may indicate Zebra Mussels.

Q. What can be done to improve water quality?

A. Be sure to haul away any grass clippings or vegetation that is cut along the shore. If dumped into the lake, it can feed weed and algae growth.

A. Do not fertilize your lawn or use pesticides.

A. Native trees and plants provide a major role in preventing run off into the lake. Maintain a buffer strip along your shore. On undeveloped shoreline, "first do no harm". Before you cut or remove anything, take inventory of plants and trees that are already there.

A. Make sure your septic system is up to date.

Q. Is there any way to tell if you have arsenic in your water:

A. Plants being watered with contaminated water will not produce blooms.

Q. Can contaminated water be boiled to remove the arsenic?

A. No. that only increases the concentration. You must use a specific water filter.

Q. Can arsenic be absorbed by skin contact?

A. No. Only by drinking the water.

Remember small changes do make a difference.

RMB does charge extra to interpret your lake water testing data but Steve Lindow, of Bad Medicine lake, is glad to help if you have questions. (phone 218-573-3765)

Members thanked Tracy Borash and Emelia Thielman speaking and the business meeting began at 6:00 p.m. President, David Oberlander, presiding.

Old Business: Jim Brown made a motion to approve the May 18, 2023 minutes. Sue Borstad seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

Introductions:

Members introduced themselves by telling us the amount of their annual membership fee and talked about what the money was used for. Most associations used part of the funds to provide food at annual meetings and social events.

- Big Cormorant \$25 - There are 600 properties on the lake and less than half are members. Funds are donated to BC Rescue and Ambulance, and use to address emergencies and infestations of invasive species. A directory is also published every 4 years.
- Melissa Sallie \$35 – There are 400 members. Water Testing and a \$2000 donation to Minnesota Lakes and Rivers. Spraying flowering rush and an endowment fund for legal matters.
- Fox \$25 – They have a special initiative to stock Walleye on the lake. They also participate in the Lake Stewardship Program and donate money to Minnesota Lakes and Rivers.
- Pickerel \$25 – Out of 120 properties 75 are members. Members are very concerned about the lake. They keep seed money for stocking Walleye. It is mostly a social organization since there is so much turnover. They monitor loon numbers on the lake for the DNR. They also put out artificial Loons nests and have a camera to monitor them. Baby loons leave the nest after about 30 days. The nests can be left out for about 3 years if there is no ice damage.
- Long \$50 – About half of the properties are members 90-110. They use \$1400 for AIS Inspectors. They donate to the Wake Boat Study and also publish a directory.
- Buffalo, Rice, Rock \$??? – Donations to Minnesota Lakes and Rivers, Food for the annual meeting.
- Height of Land \$25 – 15-20 members. Most are older and retired. They meet once a year. They donate to Minnesota Lakes and Rivers, monitor water quality, and restock fish after a winter kill.
- Maud \$40 – Water testing, dinner, boat parade, ditch and beach cleanup. A directory is published every 3 years.
- Big Sugarbush \$??? – Contribute to Minnesota Lakes and Rivers and plant trees on the island.
- Bad Medicine \$20 – Publish a directory every 3 years. Contribute to an AIS fund and do water testing. Contribute to St. Anthony Falls study on wake board and also Minnesota Lakes and Rivers.
- Island \$50 – Donations to Becker Soil & Water, Frazee and Carsonville Fire & Rescue, Becker Dive & Rescue and Minnesota Lakes and Rivers. RMB Water testing and Vegetative Survey. We also have a special fund to increase the AIS inspections at the public boat launch. Buoys are placed to mark rocks.
- Stakke \$\$\$\$ -

New Business: Update from MN COLA Annual Meeting presented by David Suby

Presenters at the meeting were Greg Berg, SWCD Riparian Resources Specialist and Ted Rulsch, Author.

Berg focused on the role of SWCD's creating sustainability of our shorelands. He mentioned the "Restore the Shore" program and the Water Health Assessment Framework. He addressed problems with rip-rap and recommended more natural alternatives. (coir logs and cedar tree revetment)

He outlined many typical problems:

- Too much impervious surface
- Over development
- Shoreland erosion
- Degraded septic systems
- 1 pound of phosphorus can produce 500 pounds of algae.

Rulseh has written a new book ***Ripple Effects: how we are loving our lakes to death.*** His website is <https://www.thelakeguy.net/>

Discussion included The St Anthony Falls study of environmental effects of big waves and propeller downward thrust. The boating industry has spent \$300,000 while COLA has spent only \$3000 to lobby the legislature.

Bylaws Changes:

- Wanda Roden made a motion to approve the social media position. Tim Monson seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
- Steve Corbin made a motion to approve the Bylaws Article IV Dues, Section 2, Change September 1st to October 31st. It was seconded by Wanda Roden and passed unanimously.

New Membership Dues Form:

New forms with due increase will be mailed out this year by August 31st.

Ideas for September Meeting:

- Invasives
- Wake Boats
- How to engage and communicate with our members
- Safety issues with Becker County Sherriff

Our next general membership meeting will be held at 5:30 PM at the Detroit Lakes Police Department Community Room, 807 Summit Ave, Detroit Lakes. Steve Corbin from Fox Lake will be giving a presentation and answering questions on the relatively new Lake Stewardship program.

7:15 the meeting was adjourned.