LEECH LAKE ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES -- April 24, 2016

Meeting called to order at 9:35 AM. Board members present: Bob Gisvold, Dave Laursen, Mike Seivert, Ray Gold, Jeff Brockberg, Bob Poirier,Steve Mortensen, John Eaton, Pat Mortale, Gail Tufte. Absent: Bill Schultz, Teri Weidemann. Guests: Carl Pederson, Timm Rennecke.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Gail Tufte moved to approve December 16 Meeting Minutes as written. Jeff seconded. Unanimous.

TREASURERS REPORT: Dave Laursen reported a checkbook balance as of February 28, 2017 of $15,988.78. Total bank balance was $32, 196.41. Ray Gold moved to approve. Tom McGovern seconded. Unanimous.

DNR REPORT: Carl Pederson reported on recent meeting of the Leech Lake Input Group. Walleye numbers good in all size ranges. Perch numbers remain far below long term average, though many YOY perch captured in seining operations. Talks continue about lowering bag limits on panfish. The DNR will continue to look for zebra mussel adults during 2017. Muskie spawn taking will take place in early May in Millers Bay. Carl also briefed the board on budget issues affecting the DNR, now and in the future if the fishing license increase fails to pass. Already, the local DNR Fisheries office is down two employees which will lead to reduced DNR efforts on Leech Lake this summer, including elimination of some creel census work and other lake survey projects. Also, no interns will be hired.

COE REPORT: Timm Rennecke reported that Leech Lake water levels are at the bottom of the summer band (94.30) and, assuming normal spring moisture, the lake should be in good shape for the walleye opener. Above normal moisture last fall made the winter drawdown somewhat tricky, with the dam discharging 1200 cps for a part of the winter. At the present time, all looks well.

CORMORANTS AND SHOREBIRDS: Steve Mortensen reported that cormorant control will continue, starting around May 1 as cormorants are collected for diet studies. Around 1400 are taken each year to maintain the goal of 500 nesting pairs. The common tern is holding its own, but loses out on nesting sites since it arrives later than cormorants or Caspian terns (which now have a nesting population on Leech Lake.) A grant is available to expand the common tern nesting area by increasing the size of the island where the bird nests, but lack of winter ice prevented t trucks from hauling sand to the island last winter.

ADDITIONAL LEECH LAKE BOAT INSPECTIONS: Application to the DNR to purchase additional boat inspections on Leech Lake were due prior to our April 24 meeting, so John Eaton's previous submittal to donate $1000 for 80 additional hours of inspections was left in place. Bob Poirier moved to approve the contribution of $1000. Jeff Brockberg seconded. Unanimous.

ROOSEVELT CANAL: Jeff has been in contact with Lake Safety people from the Sheriff's office who have been through the canal and found obstructions (rocks & silt) on the Trader's Bay side that need to be removed to facilitate safe boat traffic through the canal. Ryan Bruns to do the dredging on the north end only. Jeff will apply to the Leech Lake Tribal Land Office for the necessary permits. Cost of dredging should not exceed $3000.

OSPREY CAMERA: Bob Poirier updated the board on progress of the Osprey Camera project. Foundation money approved and available. BSU biologist on board with project. Bob has met with website developer. Will be similar to popular Cornell website. David Arvig contacted and will be donating equipment required at nest site. North Country Power to provide power to site. Construction can begin after nesting season this summer, with fall completion. All systems go by the spring of 2018. Bob also informed the board that the sponsoring foundation will bear ongoing expenses for this project, now and in the future.

EELPOUT TRASH REPORT: Tom McGovern reported on the many meetings he and Pat Mortale had with John Ringle, the Sheriff's department, the Eelpout promoter, and others in arriving at a plan to facilitate trash pick-up during and after the Eelpout Festival. The agreed-upon clean-up plan worked well. An outside clean-up provider (TVG Events) picked up the trash. City Sanitation hauled it away. Much of the trash could have been recycled, and recycling will be a possible improvement for next year. Tom has written an article for the Pilot regarding the Association's role in this improved clean-up operation, and will be delivering the article to the Pilot after today's meeting.

APPROVAL OF RMB LABORATORIES TESTING PROPOSAL. Pat Mortale moved to approve RMB Lab's proposal to test water quality at four sites at a cost of $980/year, and to test for algae at $750/year from two sites for a total cost of $1750. Ray Gold seconded. Motion approved with one abstaining. Tentative volunteers at various sites are: Stony Point (Ray Gold), Agency Bay (Pat, Tom, Bill); Kabekona,(John Eaton, Alternate); Walker Bay(Bill, Gail Alternate). Obviously, more volunteers and alternates will be needed. Others who are presently doing Secci disc studies in other Leech Lake Bays need to be contacted. We should also consider changing a test site if that would improve the test coverage.

ANNUAL MEETING: The annual meeting and picnic will be held on Thursday, August 3. Gail to contact Lucky Moose, the Chase, and Bluewater Lodge for availability and cost estimates.

Next Meeting is May 15. Jeff Brockberg moved to adjourn at 11:55. Tom McGovern seconded.

Minutes prepared by Dave Laursen