Leech Lake Association Meeting Minutes -- July 17, 2017

Meeting called to order by President Gisvold at 9:35 AM.

Board Members Present: Dave Laursen, Bob Gisvold, Mike Sievert, John Eaton, Ray Gold, Jeff Brockberg, Tom McGovern, Pat Mortale, Steve Mortensen, Bill Schultz, Bob Poirier, Gail Tufte. Guests: Doug Schultz, DNR; Timm Rennecke, COE; Sharon Nepsha, OPA; John Owen, Federal Dam.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Ray Gold moved to approve June Meeting Minutes as written by Tom McGovern. Jeff Brockberg seconded.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dave Laursen reported that checkbook balance on June 30 was $11,949.13. Total bank balance was $28,170.19. Deposits made during July included $230 in member renewals and a $500 donation from First National Bank towards Roosevelt Canal excavation. July expenses included $226.78 to Hummingbird Press for picnic invitation printing, and $66.79 to the post office for mailing. Bob Poirier moved to approve Treasurer's Report. John Eaton seconded.

DNR REPORT: Doug Schultz reported that with approval of the license increases by the legislature, additional help will be coming to Walker Fisheries, and a cancelled creel census to be reinstated. Around 550 cormorants will be taken this year as part of a diet study, which will begin looking into the relationship between cormorant numbers and AIS. Walleye fishing according to reports has been slow.

COE REPORT: Timm Rennecke reported that Leech Lake is at minimum outflow (120 cps), and at 1294.20 -- below the summer band. At least one lakeshore owner has written to COE headquarters in St Paul complaining about the low water level and its effect on use of his boatlift. The low water levels and lack of rain prompted the question of what effect changing the minimum outflow at the dam from 100 cps to 120 cps has on present low water levels. Timm assured the Board that because of multiple factors ( including evaporation) the 20 cps change in outflow would have little to no effect. The question was raised whether writing the Corps in St Paul or our local representatives could change any policies regarding managing Leech Lake water levels and the consensus was no, that such letters are simply bucked back to the local authorities. Timm agreed to provide the Board with an analysis of the effect of rainfall, temperature, and evaporation on water levels so we could answer questions from our membership. It was agreed that water levels would continue to decline without rain.

FISHING TOURNAMENTS: John Eaton reported that the heads of our local Leech Lake Fishing Tournament (Gretchen Gribben and John Dainsberg) may be more receptive than in the past to adopting a catch, photo, and release(CRP) type tournament, and would be willing to attend one of our meetings to discuss. The Board agreed that CRP should be the wave of the future (Al Lindner endorsed this type of tournament in a recent interview with Joe Fellegy in Outdoor News). Pat Mortale attended one of the CRP tournaments held annually on Lake Pokegama, and stated that there was plenty of excitement at the weigh-in using multi-media. Lack of a live weigh-in and the attendant excitement has been one of tournament sponsor objections to a CPR tournament. The Board should continue to support going in this direction.

The Board also decided against inviting Pat Kastning to speak to the Board in regard to the Enbridge pipeline.

OSPREY CAMERA: Bob Poirier reported that his project is moving along, with short and long term financing assured. Bob asked the Board to provide him with help making phone calls to some of the groups partnering on this program (Lakes Country Power, Arvig, BSU, etc). Need to put together a website, Coordinate with Cornell, Elizabeth Wray at BSU. Construction will begin in September after young have left nest.

FEDERAL DAM MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL MAILING: Mike Sievert mailed out 254 letters and reply cards to residents on Ottertail Point, Battle Point and Federal Dam. Cost of the project was $152 for printing and $96 in postage. A half dozen replies have come in so far.

AIS REPORT: Pat Mortale and Bill Schultz have completed training and been certified as AIS Detector/Trackers. Bill will be looking for Starry Stonewort on August 5. He will also be attending an AIS seminar at the University on September 13.

ROOSEVELT CANAL: Steve Mortensen reported that the National Resource Conservation Service, which looked at re-engineering the Roosevelt Canal, decided that the project needed more capability than they could provide. Doubtful that this option will proceed.

RMB WATER TESTING: Water collection by volunteers proceeding as planned. The third samples will be taken next Monday, July 24. There will be two more collections after that.

Mike Sievert moved to adjourn at 11:50. Bill Schultz seconded.

Minutes prepared by Dave Laursen.