

Crystal Lake & Watershed Association
Annual Meeting
Saturday, July 23, 2016
Community Building, Congregational Summer Assembly
Pilgrim, MI

MINUTES

Attendance: 180 proxies submitted; 68 additional members registered in person; total of 248 eligible votes. (Additional non-members in attendance and members present in person who had previously submitted proxies were not counted.)

Call to order:

President Joel Buzzell called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. He announced that a quorum of members (including proxies) was present. He thanked the Congregational Summer Assembly for the use of its meeting space.

Minutes:

The minutes from the 2015 annual meeting have been reviewed and have been posted on the CLWA website. The formal actions taken were the election of new board members and officers. Reading of the minutes was waived without objection, and they were approved.

President's report:

President Buzzell introduced the members of the board of directors who were present. He reflected on where the CLWA is as an organization: it is healthy, continuing to actively address the ongoing problems of Crystal Lake. Two major concerns have been the fluctuating levels of the lake and the infestation of the swimmer's itch-causing parasite. Real-time readings from the automatic lake level monitor at the Outlet are now displayed on the CLWA website, helping to enable better oversight and control. The presentations later at this meeting will present the progress that CLWA's sponsorship of swimmer's itch research is making this summer. Buzzell also commended the completion of the Betsie River/Crystal Lake Watershed Management Plan (WMP), an accomplishment that will help facilitate future initiatives of the CLWA.

Buzzell expressed appreciation for the financial support that makes this work possible, and urged all non-members present to join the organization and to encourage others to do so.

Treasurer's report:

The financial statement for 2015 was distributed. Treasurer David Appleford reported that the Association's finances are strong and that its fiscal house is in order. The Endowment Fund grew by over \$15,000, which was a gain of about 13 percent. The Endowment Fund is still in its infancy but should play a vital role in the Association's financial future. Last year's budget produced a cash surplus, which has allowed major outlays for swimmer's itch projects this year.

Most income comes from membership dues and contributions and from bequests: Appleford encouraged those present to give to the organization.

Committee reports:

Development – Joel Buzzell reported that a large bequest was very helpful to the CLWA's activities this past year. He stressed that additional funds for swimmer's itch need to be raised this year.

Education and Communication – Chair Ellen Herscher described the role of the committee as educating the public about the special qualities of Crystal Lake and communicating what the CLWA is doing to protect and preserve those qualities. She encouraged everyone to explore the new CLWA website (www.CrystalLakeWatershed.org) and invited them to stop by the CLWA booth during local art fairs to meet and talk with board members.

Water Quality – Chair Hugh Walton thanked his active committee members and listed the tasks they are engaged in, including invasive species, water testing, boat washing, water level monitoring, and erosion. In August they will begin an aquatic weed survey, which will be a multi-year project to provide a baseline record of the status in Crystal Lake. A "Landing Blitz" event in early July furthered the ongoing efforts to educate the public about the need for boat washing.

Zoning and Land Use – Chair Ed Hoogterp noted that the way the land is treated directly affects the water. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has finally approved the Watershed Management Plan, which has now been forwarded to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its approval. All aspects of the watershed were studied in the preparation of this plan; the CLWA was involved in the project from the beginning. The CLWA, along with several other organizations, is also involved with the new Michigan Shoreland Stewards program, which includes an online tool for land owners to evaluate the use of their own property. Future plans of the Zoning and Land Use committee include implementation of the WMP, proposing township ordinances to regulate fertilizer use, and updating the Crystal Lake Overlay District regulations.

All the committee chairs encouraged interested volunteers to join them.

An audience member questioned the status of septic systems around the lake: good data are not available, but Hoogterp estimated that about 25 percent (ca. 200) may not be fully compliant with current standards. He stressed that the local ordinances are among the strongest in the state.

Nominating committee report and election of officers and board members:

The nominating committee, chaired by Ann Pepper, presented the following slate and had distributed brief résumés of the nominees. Nominees present were introduced.

Officers for two-year terms (to 2018):

President – Joel Buzzell (for reelection)

Secretary – Ellen Herscher (for reelection)

At-large board members for three-year terms (to 2019):

Ted Fisher (reelection)

Bruce Gerhart

Wanda Shreiner (reelection)

Hugh Walton (reelection)

At-large board member for one-year term (to 2017):

Stacy L. Daniels (reelection)

The nominations were seconded by Ed Hoogterp; there were no nominations from the floor. The slate was elected.

President Buzzell thanked retiring board members, Richard Cassard and Jack Maurer, for their important years of service to the CLWA.

Adjournment:

There being no other business, the business meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

INFORMATIONAL PROGRAM:

Swimmer's itch update on current research and programs

President Joel Buzzell introduced Ted Fisher, chair of the Crystal Lake Swimmer's Itch Partnership, and thanked him for all the time and hard work he has devoted to CLWA's efforts to control swimmer's itch. Fisher recognized the leadership of Jim Vondale from Higgins Lake, who has spearheaded the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership, a coalition that has greatly expanded the initiatives to combat swimmer's itch in northern Michigan. Fisher described the two research projects being conducted on Crystal Lake this summer, which will be presenting their work this morning. Oakland University Department of Biological Sciences, under the direction of Thomas Raffel, is carrying out research here for the second year, for which the CLWA is contributing \$2,500, expanding to more lakes and more sites, and mainly focusing on snails. SICON LLC, represented by Ronald L. Reimink, is mainly focusing on waterfowl, at a cost of \$60,000 to the CLWA.

Thomas Raffel:

Dr. Raffel thanked the many volunteers who have helped with data collection for the Oakland University project. He described the swimmer's itch life cycle, which was first identified in Michigan. His research has suggested that the parasite may be different in northern Michigan than in the southern part of the state. It is estimated that about 80 percent of people are allergic to the parasite.

Some of their findings to date:

The numbers of cercariae seem to demonstrate considerable daily variation, affected by wind, temperature, and the presence of algae. The number of snails also varies widely, even in a single lake. Treating the water with copper sulfate is effective in snail control, but ecologically damaging – the snails also seem to come back quickly from all control methods. One known predator of snails is crayfish. Other methods being explored are bird and pollution control.

Raffel noted that newer protective skin creams are becoming available which may be more effective than previously available products. Among these he mentioned LipoDEET, which is more waterproof and long lasting than earlier products: it has not been tested for swimmer's itch, however, and thus he is not "endorsing" it.

This summer, Raffel's research team is trying to answer the question, "What determines patterns of schistosome abundance?" In the future he is planning a study of the economic impact of swimmer's itch.

Ronald L. Reimink:

Mr. Reimink described SICON'S program and goals. Their research has identified the common merganser as the main carrier of swimmer's itch on Crystal Lake (other waterfowl may carry it in other locations). They are also active in public education, with a website for reporting swimmer's itch cases and sightings of merganser broods. They caution the public not to feed the birds, and have learned that toweling off after swimming does not help prevent the allergic reaction.

This summer on Crystal Lake they are collecting snails from ten different sites, recording their density and species, and testing whether they are infected with the parasite. This produces a "severity index" for the site. They are also evaluating whether spring harassment of mergansers is effective and examining potential nesting sites. In the past they have trapped and relocated mergansers on Glen and Higgins lakes, which reduced the snail infection rate significantly but is a labor-intensive process.

Reimink urged the audience members to report incidents to the SICON website (www.swimmersitchcontrol.com), which can also be accessed via the CLWA website, www.CrystalLakeWatershed.org.

Audience Q and A:

There followed a period for audience questions.

Q (for Mr. Reimink): Realistically, what will be the cost of implementing SICON's program on Crystal Lake after this summer?

A: At this time we don't know. Mr. Buzzell: CLWA wants to work together with other Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership members to reduce the costs.

Q: What is "raking" as a snail control measure?

A (Mr. Fisher): A section of chain link or other device is dragged along the lakebed to disturb the snails and consequently reduce their number. CLWA is currently testing this method to determine whether or not it is effective.

Q: Where in the water are the cercariae located?

A (Raffel and Reimink): They go toward the light, so concentrate in the upper layers of the water. They also may be affected by wind and currents.

Q: Is the reduction achieved on Higgins and Glen lakes sustainable?

A (Reimink): Swimmer's itch infection went down over five years, but it is still occurring in some areas. (Fisher): Following the initial intensive program, there needs to be continuous maintenance.

Suggestion: There should be a resident survey of Crystal Lake asking, "How big a problem is swimmer's itch to *you*?)

The informational program concluded at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen Herscher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ellen Herscher, Secretary

(Minutes approved July 22, 2017)