

Crystal Lake & Watershed Association
Annual Meeting
Saturday, July 24, 2021
Mills Community House and via Zoom Teleconference

MINUTES

Attendance: 48 present, 8 present via Zoom; 162 ballots returned by mail; total of 256 eligible votes.

Call to order:

President David Wynne called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. The Secretary reported that the proxies received represent a quorum of voting members. Wynne introduced the board members present and thanked the board of directors: they are all volunteers, and it is their work that enables the CLWA to function. He also thanked the Mills Community House and its facility manager, Michelle Leines, for allowing the CLWA to use this beautiful and historic venue.

Minutes:

The minutes from the 2020 annual meeting had been reviewed and posted on the CLWA website. The formal actions taken were the election of new board members and officers. The minutes had been approved by mail ballot.

President's report:

President Wynne introduced Lindsay Saldebar and Tommy Heidt and thanked them for organizing the "Keep Crystal Clear" benefit event that was held last evening. Saldebar spoke briefly about why they wanted to support the CLWA and announced that the event had raised over \$10,000.

Wynne presented a PowerPoint surveying the CLWA's major initiatives and ongoing programs. These projects include:

- invasive aquatic plant monitoring and control – the aquatic plant survey done in 2016-2018 found infestations of Eurasian watermilfoil at several locations in the lake, especially the east end. Treatment of this aggressive invasive began in late June, and a second treatment is planned for next week; it is important to control this invasive at an early stage;
- operation of the boat washing station at the DNR Crystal Lake boating access site – this deters other invasives from entering the lake. It is the law in Michigan and local townships to clean boats after being operated in other waters;
- installation of new signage at 21 secondary launch sites to inform boaters about boat cleaning;
- swimmer's itch control, based on a scientific study of swimmer's itch vectors done in 2016 at a cost of \$60,000. SI can have different dynamics on different lakes: Crystal Lake's is carried by merganser ducks and *stagnicola* snails, and is being managed by

humanely trapping and relocation of the mergansers. Eleven broods and 90 ducklings have been relocated so far in 2021. This expensive procedure will likely need to be continued for many years.

- participation in educational events and outreach including the *Crystal Whitecaps* newsletter and website. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the annual middle school Walkabout could not take place in 2020 or 2021 but art fairs are now resuming;
- monthly water quality monitoring – over 50 years of data have been collected from Crystal Lake; secchi disk readings go down to 40 feet;
- water quality depends on watershed health: partnering with the Benzie Conservation District, the Village of Beulah and the Periwinkle Garden Club to promote lake-friendly land management practices and support Beulah’s non-point source grant, including qPCR testing of enteric bacteria that originates from Cold Creek;
- drone-based shoreline survey of the entire lake providing baseline data to monitor for future changes such as erosion or signs of septic malfunction;
- protection of shoreline through lake level monitoring – the CLWA installed and maintains the automatic monitor at the Outlet, which provides the data for the County Drain Commissioner in accordance with court-ordered levels; these live readings are posted on the CLWA website;
- promoting septic system health and enforcement of zoning requirements – currently working to update the watershed Overlay zoning ordinance;

Board member Catherine Boshier spoke briefly about the work of the CLWA Land Use committee to recommend updates to the Crystal Lake Watershed Overlay zoning ordinance, which is now 27 years old and no longer reflects current needs. The committee did extensive research and consulted widely in making their recommendations, now under consideration by the Crystal Lake Township Planning Commission.

President Wynne stressed that all CLWA’s work is supported by its membership and donations.

Treasurer’s report:

The financial statement for 2019 was posted on line and distributed. Treasurer Bruce Gerhart presented a chart showing the growth of CLWA contributions and investments over the last five years. The main expenditures are on water quality, including swimmer’s itch control and operation of the boat wash, which remain fairly constant. These figures, however, do not show the tremendous amount of volunteer time that contributes to the CLWA’s accomplishments. Membership numbers are currently 791 households/1,067 individual voting members.

Increased expenses anticipated for this year include the treatment of the Eurasian watermilfoil, increased water monitoring and testing at Cold Creek, the new lakewide signage at launch sites, a new program for membership management, and legal costs.

Nominating committee report and election of officers and board members:

Wanda Shreiner, chair of the Nominating committee, presented the results of the on-line election; brief résumés of the nominees had been posted and distributed.

Officers for two-year terms (to 2023):

Vice President – Susan Brown (for reelection)

Treasurer – Bruce Gerhart (for reelection)

At-large board members for three-year terms (to 2024):

Catherine Boshier (reelection)

Susan Kirkpatrick (reelection)

Barbara Leonard (reelection)

Mark Walton (reelection)

The slate had been elected by mail ballot. President Wynne thanked the Nominating committee for its work over the past year. He also announced that John Wheeler, who had been nominated for reelection, had to withdraw his name after the ballot went to press: Wynne thanked Wheeler for his valuable service.

New business:

Wynne announced that the amendment to the Bylaws was also approved by mail ballot. The board of directors had recommended this change because the name and purpose of the former Zoning and Land Use committee no longer fit its current activities.

Questions:

President Wynne opened the floor to audience questions. They mainly concerned the merganser trapping program. Also mentioned were the seeming decline of zebra mussels and seagulls in the lake.

Wynne thanked all for coming and encouraged those present to join committees and participate in the protection of the lake.

Adjournment:

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Herscher, Secretary

(Minutes approved by mail ballot July 23, 2022)