

BLAI ANNUAL MEETING
Thursday, August 1, 2019
Moore Community Center, Ellsworth Maine

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order and Introduction of Board Members** – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by David Edsall, President. David introduced the following members of the Board:
- Officers:**
President – David Edsall
Vice President – Chris Warack
Treasurer – Holly Griffin
- Directors-At-Large:**
Rand Griffin, Immediate Past President
Pam Dodge (not present)
Patricia Edsall
Walt Jonsson
Kelly Maltz
- David announced that Walt Jonsson would be retiring from the Board at the end of his term effective August 1, 2019 and thanked Walt for his 15 years of service to BLAI.
- II. Roll Call of Roads Represented** – The approximate number of people present from each Road was as follows:
- Branchview Dr - 7
Branchview N - 8
Cove Way - 5
Phillips Way - 15
Sargent Dr - 3
Walls Farm Way - 3
all other Roads – 1
- It was determined that a quorum was present to conduct the business of the meeting.
- III. Approval of Minutes from the 2018 Annual Meeting** – The Minutes from the 2018 Annual Meeting held on August 2, 2018 were presented. Following a motion to approve, which was seconded, the Minutes were approved.
- IV. Comments from BLAI President – David Edsall** – David reviewed the Agenda for the evening. He stated that the mission of BLAI was “clear, clean water and the preservation of property values.” He then discussed the impact of erosion and phosphorous runoff into the lake. He showed slides that depicted a natural shoreline with foliage and rocks (good), but also bare soil that runs right into the lake (bad). David showed slides with examples of the preferred three (3) levels of foliage – low level plants at the shoreline, then bushes, then trees – to diminish the runoff into the lake. He then reviewed examples of best management practices (BMPs) and directed everyone to review this on the BLAI

website. David concluded by stating that the Roads are the major source of pollution into our lake. Cover your bare soil.

- V. **Comments from Ellsworth City Manager – David Cole** – David Cole thanked the group for inviting him to come to the meeting. He stated that the City of Ellsworth is a 94 square mile area. He mentioned that he had just met with David Edsall and Rand Griffin of BLAI, John Wedin - Ellsworth Lake Steward, and others to discuss BLAI's concerns about the diminishing quality of the lake water. Mr. Cole stated that he believed "education is the issue vs. code enforcement (which they don't have the manpower to do)." The City is committed to working with BLAI on education, surveying and water quality testing. He stated that the City Budget for 2019-20 (just passed) included \$700k for paving; including \$275k for Winkumpaugh and Branch Pond Roads. Progress was made in 2018 with the paving of Boat Launch Road and the repaving of Winkumpaugh Road up to the Telephone Museum. He said he understands our concerns and also that 20 – 25% of the residential value in Ellsworth is on Branch and Greene Lakes. He then took Q&A:

Q – What else is happening with the roads?

A – The City Council has reactivated a local roads committee which will meet on August 22, 2019.

Q – What about construction on the lake – any enforcement?

A – Mr. Cole advised property owners to use "wisdom and discretion" as the City can't be everywhere. He restated that he wanted to focus on education.

Q – Since Branch Lake is the City's water source, is Branch Lake a higher priority for things like road paving?

A – Mr. Cole stated "safety trumps all" and that he knew the City "could not do enough to move the needle like Branch Lake residents would like." He asked the group "What is the worst road in the City?" And then said "The one in front of your house!"

Q – The lake water quality has deteriorated. What are you doing to test for this?

A – Mr. Cole stated that was "open for discussion", but he has limited resources and indicated that the City would work with BLAI on this issue.

David Edsall thanked Mr. Cole for sharing his thoughts with this group.

- VI. **Guest Speaker – Susan Gallo, Executive Director, Maine Lakes Society** – Holly Griffin introduced the guest speaker, Susan Gallo, who formerly was with the Maine Audubon Society. Ms. Gallo reviewed the mission and purpose of the Maine Lakes Society, and referred to their four (4) focus areas: LakeSmart, Lakes Alive, Annual Conference (50th Anniversary in 2020) and Legislative Advocacy. For more information on all these initiatives, she invited everyone to visit their website mainelakessociety.org. Ms. Gallo then shared an informative presentation on loons.

Highlights:

46 inch wingspan; solid bones so they can dive; can fly up to 90 miles/hr; territorial breeding (usually stay near where they were hatched); return to the lake the day after Ice Out; only lay 2 eggs; 29 days to hatch (mid-June or July in Maine); at 4 weeks molting feathers appear; at 6 weeks looks like a long bird; fly at 10 weeks; live to be 25 – 30 years old; avg survival is one (1) out of every four (4) eggs laid; threats to loons include

decreased water quality, insect outbreaks, emerging diseases, ingestion of lead sinker lures.

David thanked Ms. Gallo for her informative presentation.

- VII. **Treasurer's Report – Holly Griffin** – Holly presented the financial report for actual activity from January 1 – July 31, 2019 (attached). She stated that we expect to end the year at or better than budget. We have a Certificate of Deposit of ~\$11k that will mature on August 23, 2019. The Board will discuss how to reinvest this money. The Treasurer's Report was submitted, a motion to approve was made and seconded, and the Report was approved.

VIII. **Business**

a. **Projects**

- i. **Hazard Markers – David Edsall** – David displayed the map of Branch Lake noting the hazard markers. He stated that four (4) were lost over the winter and three (3) have been re-installed. Next year, we will try to install any lost markers by May. BLAI buys the markers, and works with the City to install them.
- ii. **Watershed Survey Status – David Edsall** – David stated that a Watershed Survey should be done every ten (10) years and the last one was completed in 2008. There were plans to complete one in February 2019, but planning and resources were lacking. The cost could be around \$12k and grant funding is no longer available as it was in the past. David put a question to the group – “Should we do a Survey in May 2020?” It was noted that it takes about a year to plan to do this well. The question of being able to secure the 20 volunteers needed in May was raised. A suggestion was made for the Board to plan for a Watershed Survey to be done in 2021 and to request a commitment from the City to help (~\$15k). The Association approved the timing of the next survey for 2021. John Wedin noted that any requests to the City for this to be included in their budget for 2021 needed to be submitted by January 2020.
- iii. **Water Quality Testing – Rand Griffin** – Rand noted that the focus used to primarily be on milfoil - there are 82 private boat launches on the lake and those owners need to focus on uninspected boats being privately launched. However, soil erosion is a real problem/threat to our lake. Cove Way is one of the worst areas on the lake for silt and reduced visibility in the water. We need to test for clarity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, phosphorous, etc. There are three (3) places in lake that are supposed to be tested for these (Cove Way, North Lake and South Lake), but this testing has not been done consistently since 2013. As previously mentioned by David Cole, the City has made a commitment to reactivate the testing. BLAI had offered to purchase the necessary testing equipment, but deferred to John Wedin to discuss the status of ordering the equipment. Rand stated that BLAI stands as an advocate for this testing and will continue to be the squeaky wheel going after the City.

- iv. **Orientation/Welcome Package – Rand Griffin** – Rand noted that BLAI intends to give new residents to the lake a Welcome Packet and these are also available for sale for \$15.
- v. **“What can I do to help the Lake?” – Chris Warack** – Chris stated that “BLAI happens because we are all volunteers!” He noted the following ways people could become involved: Board Member, Secretary position, Chair of Merchandising Committee, City Liaison to attend Council Meetings, database entry, IPP Rangers, Loon Counters, NPSP lot survey volunteers and volunteers for the 2021 Watershed Survey. He concluded by suggesting that “Next year – bring a neighbor to the meeting!!”
- b. **Presentation of slate of 2019-20 BLAI Officers and Directors-At-Large, as approved by the BLAI Board, and call for nominations** – David Edsall presented this (attached) and Holly Griffin noted that Pat Edsall’s name should have been on the slate as a Director-At-Large. David asked for any other volunteers to be on the Board and Melanie Joy volunteered to fill the open Secretary position.
- c. **Election of 2019-20 Board Members by BLAI Membership** – A motion was made to approve the Slate of Officers and Directors-At-Large as presented with the addition of Pat Edsall, Director-At-Large, and Melanie Joy, Secretary. The motion was seconded and approved.

IX. Reports from Standing Committees

- a. **Water Quality Monitoring (IPP) – David Edsall** – David noted that there are currently 30 Rangers, and we are looking for two (2) more. Also, he mentioned that 25% of the lake is being inspected via snorkel and water propeller (owned by David Edsall).
- b. **Wild Life Monitoring (Loon Counters) – Pat Edsall** – Pat thanked all the Loon Counters who volunteered on July 20th. There were 23 sections of the lake covered and unofficially, there were 15 adults and no chicks sighted.
- c. **Merchandising – Walt Jonsson** – Walt thanked everyone who purchased merchandise, encouraging future sales, stating that all proceeds help the lake, and in his view - “Branch Lake: The Way A Lake Should Be.”
- d. **Publications – Holly Griffin** – Holly encouraged everyone who did not receive a Spring newsletter to see her. She thanked everyone who sent in pictures and stories, and asked for more for next Spring. She also reminded everyone that we were considering allowing advertising by local merchants serving the lake property owners in the Spring 2020 issue.
- e. **Online Presence – Chris Warack** – Chris suggested that everyone check out the updated website and reminded everyone to check us out on Facebook and Instagram.
- f. **Social – Kelly Maltz** – Kelly sold tickets during the meeting for a 50/50 raffle. David Edsall drew the winning ticket held by Sue McKay. Sue graciously donated her winnings back to BLAI for total proceeds of \$151. Kelly then shared that the 2nd Annual Meet & Greet held on July 8th was very well attended. She announced that the Family Fun Day scheduled for Saturday August 3rd was cancelled due to lack of interest.

- g. **City of Ellsworth Watershed Steward – John Wedin** – John thanked everyone for caring about the lake and its health. He addressed the question of lack of data posted and said he would look into it. He agreed that phosphorous levels should and would be tested more often and that he was going to test for toxins from blue/green algae. He indicated that the City will purchase the necessary testing equipment for conducting these tests and will do so expeditiously. He invited people to become private and/or public boat inspectors. To do so, contact John by March. John mentioned that he had trained over 200 boat self-inspectors over the last six (6) years – this is a great idea for people who rent their properties (“renter inspectors”). He also asked for volunteers to help with water quality testing and buoy placement. He suggested that BLAI have an on-call list of volunteers, maintained by the David Edsall and John Wedin. John ended by mentioning that everyone should take a look at the Camp Road Manual.

X. **Set date for next Annual Meeting** – The date for the next Annual Meeting was set for August 6, 2020.

XI. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Holly Griffin

August 19, 2019

Approved
