



Annual Meeting Minutes June 13, 2020

In order to maintain social distancing, the annual meeting was held outdoors on the lawn at the Lake Emma Township Hall. Twenty-four people attended the social hour which began at 8:30 prior to the meeting. Four or five additional participants arrived during the meeting.

Call to Order: Association President Pete Tuomisto called the meeting to order at 9:15.

Introductions: Before the formal meeting began, each of the members introduced themselves and indicated where on the lake they and how long they had been on Blue Lake. A number of new residents were in attendance.

2019 Minutes: A motion was made to accept the minutes from last year's meeting, which had been distributed earlier. It was seconded and approved by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report: The Financial Report for 1/1 - 12/31, 2019 was handed out and presented by Treasurer Jim Peterson. Jim indicated that the Association was "in the black, but on a shoestring." Current balance is \$1,684.01. Dues for 2020 have not yet been deposited. Expenses are primarily for water quality monitoring, COLA dues and boat inspections. As of the meeting, 23 members have paid their 2020 dues.

Officer Elections: Jim Peterson has served as Treasurer for several years now, but has agreed to continue to serve. Mike Peinovich has volunteered to serve as Secretary. Both positions were approved by voice vote.

President's Report: President Pete Tuomisto began his report by thanking Bryon Dahl of Minneapolis maintaining our website: www.bluelakeparkrapids.com. He does this free of charge although he does not live on the lake. He is always looking for photos and story ideas to post. They can be sent to Pete via email at petertuomisto@gmail.com.

Pete indicated that he expects the grant from Lake Emma Township healthy lakes grant for AIS inspections to be increased this year to \$1,100. That corresponds to the amount the county charged for inspections last year.

He then moved on to the **Blue Lake Health Report**. We now have 18 consecutive years of monitoring. Data is collected 5 times a year (in May through September) and sent to RMB Labs in Detroit Lakes. Both the DNR and Minnesota Pollution Control agency use the data. The RMB reports and links to the DNR and Pollution Control agency can be found on our website.

The results can be summarized as follows:

- Secchi Disc readings have shown a slight decrease in the clarity of the lake over the last 5 years. The median is now 16.1 feet. Possible reasons include erosion of the ice berms and

pollen floating in the lake in the spring. Readings always improve later in the year, with the best clarity in August and September. This is the opposite of most lakes in the region.

- Phosphorous levels have been decreasing, which is a good trend. It shows that lawn care practices have improved and there is little farm run-off.
- 125 Boat Inspections were conducted over the last. The inspectors were at the access for 100 hours, primarily on weekends and major holidays. Two boats had drain plugs left in; the first time in the last 5 years that has happened. 6.7% of the boats came from infested waters. This shows the need for continuing education for boaters and fishermen.
- There appear to be more outside boats coming into Blue Lake this year. This can be attributed to the excellent Fisheries Survey which was conducted last fall. The survey is conducted every five year and is posted online. No Northernns were netted in the lake for the first time. There is an “excellent” Walleye population and “abundant” Tullibee and Cisco. Ron Johnson added that stocking is now done in the fall.

Finally, if anyone is interested in becoming a Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (HCOLA) Representative for Blue Lake they should contact Pete. HCOLA coordinates volunteers surveying for AIS on lakes in Hubbard County. There are currently none in Blue Lake, but if you find a suspicious sample, you should take it to the DNR in Park Rapids. Pete also had copies of the Hubbard County Shoreline Guide to distribute, especially to new residents.

Julienne Malm asked to read a poem by former resident Bob Guberud who is now in a nursing home. The suggestion was made to post the poem on the website.

Richard Smith provided an update on Enbridge’s Line 3 project. It is on hold pending review of the permitting process, but Enbridge seems to be stockpiling supplies and equipment in the northern part of the county. Friend of the Headwaters is contesting the project in court and pursuing other ways to halt the project. The pipeline would transport dirty tar sand oil from Alberta to Lake Superior. It does not benefit Minnesota and would soon become redundant given the sharp decline in oil prices and advances in clean energy.

Comments from members included the increase in shoreline damage due to large boat wakes, and light pollution from outdoor lights being left on overnight. Several properties have recently sold on the lake and construction of new houses and cabins has begun. We welcome new members to the Association. It was suggested that a directory of all residents on the lake be created. It would be published in hard copy and distributed over email only, not posted on the internet. Among the varieties of wildlife spotted on or near the lake are loons, eagles, bear, a mother fox and 5 kits, a beaver and racoons.

Next year’s Annual Meeting date: June 12, 2021

Socials are temporarily on hold, but we might be able to hold one outdoors and BYOB.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30.

Respectfully submitted by,
Mike Peinovich, Secty.

Status of the Fishery

Blue Lake is located seven miles northeast of Park Rapids in Hubbard County. Blue Lake has a surface area of 336 acres and a maximum depth of 84 feet. There is a state-owned public access with a concrete ramp located on the northwest shore of the lake. Blue Lake is known for its exceptional water clarity and sandy shorelines. Blue Lake has a very good Walleye population and gives anglers a chance at a trophy sized fish. Rainbow Trout are stocked in the lake and can provide a bonus fishery.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has classified Minnesota's lakes into 43 different types based on physical and chemical characteristics. Blue Lake is in lake class 23. Class 23 lakes are characterized by having hard water, deep basins, and very high water clarity. Other area lakes in this same classification include Boot, East Crooked, and Eleventh Crow Wing.

Blue Lake has an excellent Walleye population, both in terms of numbers and size of fish. Walleye abundance has been high the past several surveys. Good numbers of Walleye in the 14 to 18-inch size range were sampled with fish measured up to 31.4 inches. An abundant Tullibee (Cisco) population provides an excellent forage base for the growth of larger Walleye. However, Yellow Perch, an important forage species for Walleye were sampled in low numbers compared to past surveys.

Blue Lake is stocked in the fall with Rainbow Trout fingerlings during even numbered years. Four Rainbow Trout were sampled in the survey and ranged in length from 11.5 to 17.7 inches. Rainbow Trout stocking began in 1984 and trout have been sampled in low numbers in past surveys. Blue Lake was open to winter angling in 2007. Angler reports and success for Rainbow Trout have been limited for both the open water and ice angling season.

While not known for Panfish, Blue Lake does support populations of Black Crappie, Bluegill, and Pumpkinseed. Anglers will find low to moderate numbers of Black Crappie, with a few larger fish present. A moderate Bluegill and Pumpkinseed populations are present in Blue Lake, however, size of fish run small, with few fish over 7.0 inches sampled.

Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass populations are also present in Blue Lake in low numbers when compared to surrounding lakes. Largemouth Bass are the more common of the two species, while Smallmouth Bass are present in low numbers.

Present and past surveys have shown very low Northern Pike numbers in Blue Lake. Northern Pike were not sampled in the 2019 survey. While Northern Pike abundance is low, the abundant forage base of Tullibee (Cisco) and White Sucker can produce some big Northern Pike.

Currently no aquatic invasive species (AIS) have been identified in Blue Lake. To avoid spreading AIS, lake users are required to remove all aquatic plants or animals from their watercraft and drain all water from their boat before leaving.

For More Information: Park Rapids Area Fisheries Supervisor
301 S Grove Ave, Park Rapids, MN
Phone: 218-732-4153
Email: ParkRapids.Fisheries@state.mn.us