

**DEER LAKE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION**  
**23nd ANNUAL MEETING**  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2024**  
**CARPENTER TOWN HALL**

The 23<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the general membership of the Deer Lake Watershed Association took place at the Carpenter Town Hall on the first Saturday of August, as stated in the bylaws of the organization. The meeting was open to all members of the DLWA. Thirty-two members signed in at the meeting. At 5:00 p.m. a pot-luck dinner was made available with a variety of food provided by members. Copies of the minutes of the previous year's annual meeting, a Treasurer's report, and an agenda for this year's meeting were handed out to attendees. Also available were copies of the annual newsletter, membership forms, and a laminated map showing the border of the watershed as determined by Itasca County SWDC.

Guest speaker Susan Hawkinson presented an overview of a book she authored titled *"Timber Connections: The Joyce Lumber Story"*. The book includes history of logging activity and settlement in the Bigfork Valley area of the county, particularly chronicling the Joyce estate and family.

DLWA President Bruce Steege called the annual meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. He introduced himself and other current regular board members: Travis Mangan, Gail Blackmer, Todd Reynolds, Vaughn Duitsman, Bob Gibbons, and Galen Vorland. Board members Andy and Sara Gregorich were unable to attend this meeting. Alternate board members Jim Kush and Chuck Botzet were also present and introduced.

The agenda for this meeting was accepted with no changes or additions.

**REPORTS**

Treasurer's Report – DLWA Treasurer Vaughn Duitsman prepared a written report of account balances, revenue, and disbursements for the fiscal year of July 1, 2023

through June 30, 2024. Revenue sources included the recurring sustaining categories of membership dues, contributions, and website sponsor advertising. Additional revenue was sought through grant requests submitted to Carpenter Township and North Itasca Electric Round Up program and the Ice-Out contest. Disbursements included dues to Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations (ICOLA) and MN Lakes and Rivers as partner organizations; West Bend Mutual Insurance for the annual premium, newsletter and office expenses, special events expenses for the Flotilla and Annual Meeting, laboratory fees to RMB Environmental for water quality testing, and beaver control payments to ensure continuous flow through watershed creeks.

The CCC Camp Savings account remains in effect as a separate account. The financial report was approved for filing on a motion by Audrey Johnson, seconded by Jim Kush.

Secretary's report – DLWA Secretary Gail Blackmer presented the minutes taken at last year's annual meeting held August 5, 2023. The minutes were approved as written on a motion by Audrey Johnson, seconded by Denny Carlson.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

Updates on the activities of various committees and events were presented to members as follows:

### A. Events

1. Gail reported that the MN DOT Adopt a Highway program has continued, with volunteers cleaning up a two mile stretch of Hwy #1. Seventeen DLWA members showed up on May 4, 2024 to make quick work of clearing roadside trash. Discussion was held on extending the sponsored area by an additional mile to the east.
2. The annual Fourth of July DLWA Flotilla was held again with a boat parade on Deer Lake followed by fellowship with hot dogs and ice cream on the beach at Carlson's Hideaway Resort. The weather cooperated again this year, there were approximately 20 boats on the water! We thank the Carlsons for allowing this

event to be held on their property each year and the DLWA board members for preparing the refreshments and serving.

**B. Water sampling**

1. Bruce reported that water quality sampling had been accomplished on Pickerel and Battle Lakes this year. He described the sampling process and requirements for getting samples to the laboratory. The information returned from the laboratory helps to form baselines and detect changes in water quality in our watershed lakes, however we still would like more information on what these statistics mean. The board appreciates any of our members with experience in graphing and interpreting data to join in with this project. The grant dollars we received this year were put into the Water Protection Fund.

Secchi disc monitoring continues on selected lakes, thanks to volunteers who have been doing this year after year.

**C. Outflow update**

1. Based on checking the flow of Deer Creek at the culvert on CR 525 and from volunteers who have travelled down the creek from Deer Lake, the water is flowing well, however there is wild rice growing in the middle of the creek and the vegetation does clog debris. Water level in the lake has remained high throughout the summer, with a reading of 5.4 currently, down from a season high of 5.9. Thirty-three beavers have been removed by local trappers and there is not a dam holding back water at this time.

Bruce Steege has purchased a surface drive motor that can be used by him to get through creeks for observation and working to clear debris. Bruce will monitor the cost of maintenance and use for the board to determine how the Continuous Flow Fund's designated contributions can be used for the goal of a boat and motor.

**D. Apparel update** - There is some interest in getting DLWA logo shirts or hats for members to purchase. This could be a fun way to provide exposure and raise

some funds depending on the price point. A vendor will be researched, and we will try to get some samples to feature in the newsletter or emails.

E. Ice Out Contest – The ice was gone from Deer Lake on April 12, 2024. Dan Gallagher had the best guess and splits the pot, with \$480 going to the DLWA treasury. Thanks to Mark Smith and on-the-ground observers for coordinating this fun event!

## ELECTIONS

The annual meeting is also the date for elections for the Board of Directors of DLWA. The regular board positions held by Bruce Steege and Todd Reynolds are expiring, these incumbents have been nominated for re-election to another two-year term, 2024-2026. Bob Gibbons was appointed as a regular board member following an alternate member position, and Galen Vorland was appointed at the June 5 meeting of the DLWA board. President Bruce Steege called for other nominations from the floor. After calling for other nominations three times, Jim Moffet moved to close nominations, seconded by Jim Kush. Audrey Johnson made a motion to elect the slate of nominees, seconded by Larry Salmela. Motion carried.

The floor was then opened to nominations for Alternate Members. Alternate members attend board meetings and may vote in the case there is not a quorum of regular members. Jim Kush and Jeff Dunlap have been serving as alternate members, Chuck Botzet was appointed at the June board meeting. Bruce called for other nominations from the floor three times. Greg Brandt was nominated at this time. Jim Moffet moved to close nominations, seconded by Audrey Johnson. Audrey moved to elect the slate of nominees as alternate members, seconded by Vaughn Duitsman, motion carried.

Board positions held by Andy Gregorich, Sara Gregorich, Gail Blackmer, Vaughn Duitsman, and Travis Magnan have one year left of their two-year term, 2023-2025.

## OLD and NEW BUSINESS

The meeting was opened for discussion of items of interest to the members present:

- Cattail removal – the board has been interacting with the DNR and county officials on the matter of removing cattails. There are many growing in Lorraine creek, almost shutting off open water coming from Lorraine Lake on that side of CR 533. Todd Reynolds has been regularly trying to get direction on regulations as to removing cattails, eventually being informed that a permit to remove by any mechanical means is denied. Hand pulling could be allowed, however that task would be a huge effort and beyond what a small number of volunteers could reasonably do. Cattails grow rapidly and spread once a piece of bog floats into any beach.
- A huge number of snail shells and live snails has been observed around Deer Lake. These are not considered Aquatic Invasive Species, but there are a lot, they are unpleasant in smell and wash up to cover beachfront. Board members agreed to get more information on these snails sent out.
- Seminars with information and training on AIS are available periodically. Larry Samela moved to have up to two representatives of DLWA attend a seminar with expenses paid by the organization. Seconded by Joyce Clarke, motion carried.
- Board meetings are open to members to attend, and are typically held at the Carpenter Town Hall, which now has internet access for remote attendance. The township is thanked for this public use.

There being no further business or discussion, Audrey moved to adjourn the annual meeting, seconded by Jim Moffet.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Gail Blackmer, DLWA Secretary



There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Audrey, seconded by Tom B.

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Gail Blackmer, secretary