

MINUTES - Lake Edward Conservation Club (LECC)

Board Meeting - August 24, 2024 at 10 AM at Lake Edward Town Hall

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance: The meeting was called to order at 10 am by President Paul McCullough, with 20 members present.

McCullough introduced the Board members present: Lynn Hansch, VP; Nancy Fischer, Sec; Wendy McCullough, Treas; David Christensen, Ditch 13 Committee; and Ron Czerepak, Newsletter. The attendees introduced themselves.

Absent: Mike Chapman, Water Quality Committee; and Liz Hintze, Website.

Minutes from June 8, 2024: The minutes of the 08/08/24 Annual meeting were distributed. Motion was made to accept the minutes, with no corrections, seconded and passed.

Treasurer's Report as of July 31, 2024: Treasurer Wendy McCullough reported Total Fund Balances of \$40,476, with General Funds of \$24,588 and Designated Funds of \$2,938 for AIS-CLP and Fisheries of \$12,850.

As of 5/31/24, LECC had receipts of \$1,930 and expenses of \$2,124 for a net cash flow of (\$194).

Dues and Membership – 15 members have paid so far in 2024, in addition to some collected today.

2023 Directory available – There are no copies of the 2023 Directory left. We plan to reprint it in 2025.

Committee Reports

Water Quality & Lake Levels –

Mike Chapman was unable to attend but sent a report.

He attached a chart with lake level readings for the year to date. The last reading was 1,207.52 ft. on 8/14/24. Historically, from 12/15/1933 to 8/14/24 there have been 1,413 readings, where the Highest was 1,208.18 ft. in 2001 and the Lowest was 1,201 in 1933.

He performed two of the 3 Starry Stonewort surveys at the public access and the 3 suggested resorts on the lake. The first two surveys resulted in no sightings of the Starry Stonewort plants. The third and final survey will be done in September.

He did the Spiny Water Flea survey in July for which he took three samples of lake water at the designated locations and delivered those. The most recent monthly water samples were taken on 8/14. The secchi disc reading was 12 feet. That day it was and had been windy affecting the water clarity.

For those who want to know what the lake level readings translate to they can go to the MN lake finder website, locate Lake Edward and there will be an historic chart that shows the level translated to sea level.

Ditch 13 –

Lynn Hansch reported the beavers have been persistent at a location approximately 300 L.F southwest of the weir. Four beavers have been trapped here recently for a total of 9 for the season. This activity and the trapping process have interfered with the flow of the ditch. Unfortunately, the lake level remains above the ordinary high water mark and is approximately 1207.52 ft. above sea level. It was anticipated that the contractor would be clearing out the dam and debris allowing the flow of the ditch to be restored by the end of the week.

There has been a change in county supervision of the ditch. Jory Danielson has been promoted to another position with the county, Jeff Warzecha currently is the supervisor of the ditch maintenance. Jeff says they are looking into replacing two culverts: one at Dale Elyea's property and one near the powerlines. One of the existing culverts is pitched in the opposite direction. New culverts should improve the flow of the ditch.

Fisheries / Zebra Mussel Study -

Paul McCullough has been working with Mike Knapp, DNR, and presented a written report.

In 2022 The DNR began a formal 10-year study of the impact of zebra mussels on the walleye fisheries across the state. There are approximately 60 lakes participating in the study. 13 of the lakes are monitored by the Brainerd DNR Fisheries Office.

The basis of the study is to monitor walleye survival for the fry that are stocked by the DNR each spring. Zebra mussels eat phytoplankton and to a lesser extent zooplankton. Zooplankton also eat phytoplankton. Zebra mussels being very efficient filters of water remove the lowest level of the food chain, which happens to be the same food consumed by fry walleye, fry perch, fry crappie and Northern Pike.

A second component of the study beyond Young of the Year (fry) survival is to see if the competition for food also slows down the growth of walleye beyond the fingerling stage.

The study is just beginning, and the results will take longer than a decade for the DNR to compile and then publish. In the meantime, it means that Lake Edward will have gill net surveys every 3 years as opposed to every 6 years and that each fall the DNR will also complete an electro fishing survey, looking at just the recently stocked Young of the Year Walleye (fry).

The study was commissioned by the DNR because they were anecdotally seeing the fry stocking survival rates drop in lakes that had zebra mussels. Poor fry stocking results have been seen by several area lakes (Pelican for one). However, in the past three years Lake Edward has seen some of the best fry survival rates in its history and certainly much better than other area lakes. The DNR is uncertain as to why Lake Edward is seeing strong results from the spring fry stocking and perhaps this study will shine some light on the reason why. For now, it's great news for the Lake Edward fishing community.

Newsletter –

Ron continues to work on the newsletter, and he included a notice for dues in the last issue that resulted in several corrections. Nancy will receive any email and address changes, instead of Lori Nelson.

Fall Social –

LEEC held a Potluck Picnic on 8/17/24 at Lions Park in Merrifield, with LECC providing the Burgers, Brats and Buns. There were over twenty residents in attendance, and everyone who attended said it was great food and a good way to meet some new neighbors.

Website Update –

A brief discussion was held regarding looking at new technology to manage our LECC data, to collect dues, and for members to have access to information. It is possible that we could get free hosting and electronic storage of our information. (i.e. newsletters, Lake data, DNR updates, etc.) This will be the Board's winter project, and Nancy and Wendy will work on updating member data.

The next Board Annual Meeting will be held in May of 2025 – time and location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am.

Submitted by Nancy Fischer, Secretary