

HUBBARD COUNTY COLA

Board Meeting Minutes

September 29, 2016

Website: www.hubbardcolamn.org

*“Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations is the Leader
in Protecting Hubbard County Lakes and Rivers.”*

Thank you for tonight’s meeting hosts: Belle Taine, Plantagenet, and Twin Lakes.

1. **Call to Order** at 6:30 pm by President, Sharon Natzel. Pass-the-microphone introductions of lake association presidents, representatives, and guests were made.

Representatives:

Bad Axe: Sue Pickus

Belle Taine: Tom Wenner, Lee Hammer

Big Mantrap: Burney Fischer

Big Sand: Barb Kimer, Irene Weis,

Blue: Peter Tuomisto

Boulder: Steve Hall

Lower (1-4) Crow Wing:

Middle (5-7) CrowWing: Becky Romans

8th & 9th Crow Wing: Julie Kingsley

10th & 11th Crow Wing:

Duck:

Eagle-Island: Charlene Christenson

Fish Hook: Jan Rumpza, Don Rumpza

Gilmore:

Ham:

Hinds: Steve Hall

Kabekona: Rolf Smeby

Little Sand: Dan Kittilson

Long: Carolynne C. White, Sharon Natzel,
Monika Wilkins

Palmer:

Peysenske: Jeff Mosner, Nancy Gibbs

Plantagenet: Alan Colliander

Portage: Jerry Knoblich, Charlie Pieper

Potato: Ken Grob

Spider: Hillary Stoltz

Stony: Mike Glynn, Sara Rowe

Tripp: Theora Goodrich, Lynn Goodrich

Twin Lakes: Kari Tomperi, Chuck Tritz,

Guests: Doug Kingsley, DNR Fisheries; Julie Kingsley, HC SWCD; Bill DonCarlos, HC AIS Program Coordinator; Dan Carroll, MN DNR, Firewise Specialist; Carrie Hitchcock, Northwoods Press; Char Christenson, HC Commissioner.

Host Lakes Thank you Appreciation to: **Belle Taine**, Lee Hammer and Tom Wenner; **Plantagenet**, Alan Colliander; and **Twin Lake**, Kari Tomperi, Chuck Tritz, plus Rose Ragole, who was not able to attend.

Post-its: for ideas are at each table. On the check-in table is a basket with a fish on it, COLA is fishing for ideas. Please put your Post-it ideas in the fish basket.

2. **Speaker Dan Carroll, MN DNR, Firewise Specialist**, “Wildfire, Beware, and Prepare” with an introduction by COLA Past President, Lynn Goodrich.
 - A. **Introduction:** **Dan Carroll** is with the MN DNR. He is the Northwest Region Firewise Specialist and the Air Tactical Group Supervisor. As the supervisor, Dan directs fire activity and personnel. Half of his time he is working with property and lakeshore owners to maximize the ability to suppress fires. Dan also works with the local fire departments.
 - B. **Dan Carroll:** I do Hazard Mitigation at the homeowner, cabin owner, and property owner and lake association level. Federal money is available for hazard mitigation, vegetation type management, for both property owners and homeowners.
 - C. **What is Firewise:** Intelligence and information about fire and vegetation management around structures and infrastructure around house and in property.

1. **Goal** for homeowners and landowners is to do protection around their homes long before a fire gets there.
 - a. **Take-home handouts, sheets and pamphlets:** the assessment sheets “Will your home survive a wildfire?”, “Wildfire...Beware & Prepare”, and three pamphlets: “Will Your Home Survive?”, “Creating a Firewise Property”, and Protect your waterfront property from wildfires”. Dan encouraged the assessment sheets be done at home.
 - b. **Questions:** Why is wildfire a problem? Why the need to do mitigation? Do we have a good chance or a bad chance to save the house?
 - c. **Hubbard County Wildfires:** average 30-40, some years there were 200-300, in 2012 there were over 300 in the county, and the DNR expects that number to rise.
 - d. In the **2013 Green Valley Fire**, which was tremendously devastating, 42 structures were burned, 14 of those were homes.
 - e. **Mitigations:** a 30’ defensible space zone around home. 7 out of 10 homes are lost by ember showers or embers, 3 out of 10 home are lost by a big flame front.
 - f. **Things to do:** move firewood piles, clean gutters, rake pine needles in fall and again in the spring, and keep grass mowed short and watered. Pine trees need to be 6’ clear of branches. More preparation information is available on the Wildfire...Beware & Prepare sheet.
 - g. **Video:** Big wall of fire, 45’ away, didn’t burn the home. No damage, didn’t even burn shingles, even though there was a massive amount of heat. The homeowners worked and cleared a defensible space in that 30’ area.
 - h. The worst building materials can withstand 200 times the radiant heat than can human skin.
 - i. **Annually we spend** 500 million to suppress fires. We’re up over a billion now. Insurance companies are tired of paying-out for fires. One big insurance company built a Ember Shower Generator testing facility in Boise, Idaho, where they throw embers at a house collecting data on materials and rate of burn. Wood shakes on a house are about the worst; composite shingles are better. Pine needles on the roof, in the valley, gutters and sharp angles can burn a house down. Clean those gutters. Some properties have 2-3’ of pea gravel around and out from the house.
 - j. **Long Lake** is priority 1 for Park Rapids. It’s populated and dense with trees. On Long Lake’s west side from Hubbard to Hafner’s Greenhouse on 170th Street and the entire area east of County Highway 6, there are 1200 structures/buildings. Long Lake is 9 miles long; the Green Valley fire was 9 miles long. The Green Valley fire had 30-40 mph winds behind the fire from the West and Northwest, which is unusual. Fire typically feeds on south or southwest wind. “Homeowners, you can do things before fire starts to give us (the fire fighters) a better chance to help you when it does.”
 - k. Spring 2016, **Kaywood Addition fire** near WalMart: The DNR First Resource Person was Tom Stursa at the Green Valley, 4100+ acres fire and at the Kaywood Addition, 4 acre fire.
 - l. Debris burners: started on a weekend, not out when folks leave, can start up again later, which can take a house out.
 - m. Dan’s been working with **Township Planning and Zoning** to get driveways wide enough for emergency vehicles.
 - n. **At the Lake Association level**, how to get the word out on mitigation? Suggestions: word of mouth, email, pass out brochures, and put Firewise information in newsletters.
 - o. To **widen driveways:** Limb-up trees and put at the end of the driveway. We, the DNR, can come along with chipper trucks to chip it and carry it out using Federal Cost-Share money.
 - p. **Dan:** “We are a large community of townships and counties and live in big fire country and small fire county. There’s lots that we can do together. Let me help you do that.”
 - q. **Dan Carroll, DNR, Firewise Specialist**, and Firewise Advocate for homeowners, cabin owners and property owners. For assessment assistance or questions, **contact Dan** at **218-732-3309**, the local DNR forestry office.

3. Break

4. **Bill DonCarlos, AIS Program Coordinator**

- A. Bill hopes to attend the AIS Summit II in early October. At the October HC COLA Board Meeting he'll have an end of the season report for 2016, then planning for 2017.
- B. **Timeline Change:** There will be a change for next season with supplemental hours and the timeline. Due to the growth of the AIS program and the other AIS programs in the area and to give the employees a better idea what the season will look like, the county and staffing would like firm dates to make things more efficient with planning and hours and for county and staffing meetings.
Timeline:
 - a. Lake Association verbal partner fund commitment - **January 31, 2017**
Once the verbal commitment is made, the staff can form individual lake and employee schedules.
 - b. Lake Association payment deadline – **March 1, 2017**
Ken: It's the same process as before, they just want the money earlier.
 - c. Township payment deadline – **April 30, 2017**
 - d. Bill: need to work with townships to get the ball rolling.
- C. **Discussion:** Charlene Christenson, recommended attorney Troy Gilchrist, who for several years was the attorney for MAT, MN Association of Townships and is currently the attorney for Arago Township. Attorney Gilchrist understands township issues and can define to townships why AIS Funding does not have to be considered a 'donation' but rather a 'payment for services'. This continues to be a sticking point for some townships and interferes with AIS Funding.
- D. **Question:** We are a lake situated within two townships and we have to approach each township. We are a lake with 1000 hours of inspections. When will we know how much the state and county will be paying, so we know how much to ask the townships for? Bill: I'm hoping the information will be ready for the Oct. 27th COLA meeting. Bill: If you want to do some preliminary planning, it will very closely resemble the last two years. We'll have exact amount on Oct. 27th at the COLA meeting.
- E. **Information to lakes associations:** Sharon to work on contact list and email it to Bill. Bill will get information out to the associations.

5. **HC COLA Online Survey: Dan Kittilson**

- A. A link to the online survey has been sent out 3 times with email.
- B. Thank you for those who have completed and responded to our survey.
- C. There are 29 Lake Associations and 30 lakes in the survey. 100 emails were sent, so far we have 34 replies. We need more replies.
- D. 15 lake associations out of 29 have responded. You can still check your lakes, docks, rocks and shorelines.
- E. Goal is to reach 100% return. These are your lakes; we need your help to monitor our lakes for early detection.
- F. The big focus of the survey is on zebra mussels. Goal is 100% return, unusual for surveys, but I think we can do that.

6. **Restore the Shore, Theora Goodrich**

- A. Each person received forms for Restore the Shore. The yellow sheet is the coordinator; the green sheets are for the lake owners. Trees are ordered now and will be available in early May, May 5th, 6th, & 7th weather permitting.
- B. Available are: trees, native seed packets, berries and shrubs.
- C. Julie Kingsley, SWCD: New this year are rain garden plants and woodland plants.
- D. Lake association members are fortunate that we can order a minimum of 5 plants, rather than a bulk of 250.
- E. Lakeshore property owners, make your check payable to 'your lake association'.
- F. All green forms need to be returned to the Lake Coordinator.
- G. Return the yellow form to Theora with one (1) check for the full amount, from your lake association treasurer, made out to HC COLA with the memo line reading "Restore the Shore".

- H. Orders for 2017 delivery are due by November 1st.
- I. The green order form will be posted on the COLA website.
- J. A listing of the plants and seed packets will be on the SWCD website.

7. **Consent Agenda:**

A. The Secretary's Minutes, Nancy Gibbs, and the Treasurer's report, Steve Hall, were presented for questions. Sharon: A couple of item amounts were for the Chamber of Commerce. Steve: Correct, the \$302 was for a spot in the Discovery Guide distributed by the Chamber and the \$221.70 amount was for copies AIS and Treasurer's report, about \$95 for AIS and the rest for the Treasurer's reports. No motion needed for a consent agenda.

B. **Treasurer Steve:** Water testing invoices were due Sept. 15th. There are two outstanding invoices: Lower Crow Wing and 8th & 9th Crow Wing.

Membership Dues are not due until November 1st. Those who are still outstanding are: Lower Crow Wing, Middle Crow Wing, 8th & 9th Crow Wing, 10th & 11th Crow Wing, Gilmore, Kabakona, Peysenske, Plantagenet, South Island, and Spider.

8. **COLA Committee Reports:**

A. **Sharon: AIS conference coming up.** One in LaCrosse, WI and one in St. Cloud. A show of hands for those who are going to the St. Cloud conference (**AIS Summit II**, St. Cloud, Oct. 5-6): Ken Grob, Dan Kittilson, Lynn Goodrich, Theora Goodrich, Sharon Natzel, and Irene Weis indicates 2 Big Sand individuals attending.

B. **Education, Sharon Natzel:** We're thinking of a vegetation identification program for next spring. Let me know if your lake wants to be involved. Hopefully, the program will be planned with Sally Shearer, MN Extension Service.

C. **Membership:** Sharon: Perhaps a focus meeting where non-member lake associations are invited to learn information about the benefits of a lake association and how to start one will be a spring topic.

Ken Grob: Bill DonCarlos mentioned to me that Garfield Lake is looking to create a lake association with Steamboat Lake. Julie Kingsley, SWCD, and Doug and Julie Kingsley, DNR Fisheries, went to a Garfield/Steamboat meeting where 45 people were present. Julie: We brainstormed questions with them. It was an excellent initial meeting with good questions. Garfield/Steamboat will meet again in another 6-8 weeks.

D. **Water Quality Monitoring, Sharon:** We're going to look at the entire process of water monitoring from sampling to the lab. Two of our samples arrived at the lab warm. We're going to look at ways to improve. Peter Tuomisto, Sharon Natzel, Steve Hall, and Jerry Knoblich will be meeting.

9. **Feed back on Post-it notes from August Board Meeting:** See handout sheet. One idea was implemented at the meeting, the use of the microphone. Each meeting Post-it notes will be available for ideas.

10. **What's Happening on Your Lake**

A. **Big Sand Lake, Irene Weis:** Big Sand took possession of 20 AIS samplers. They're being place around on Big Sand and there's one for Emma Lake and one for Lake Ida. Introduction of Barb Kimer, Lake Association co-president this year.

B. **Schweitzer Lake, Sharon Natzel:** Sharon and Betty, a Long Lake Board member, are exploring the Long Lake Minor Watershed by kayak.

11. **Nifty Nine Hosts, Twin Lake, Kari Tomperi:** There was a good article in the paper (Park Rapids Enterprise) on the young Eagle. The meeting yesterday was to encourage putting bends back in the Fish Hook River. The bends were taken out of the river when the river was used to send logs down Twin Lake to Staples. Among those who attended the meeting were a hydrologist and HC Commissioners Chairman, Vern Massie.

12. Other:

- A. **Lynn Goodrich:** HC SWCD has updated the Hubbard County plat book. Copies are available at Citizens Bank and the Courthouse. The cost is \$35.00.
- B. **Jeff Mosner:** On the table as you enter there are hand-outs from Friends of the Headwaters regarding Line 3 and what's being proposed about replacing line 3 in a new proposed corridor.
- C. **Sharon Natzel:** Does the timelines on the agenda hinder the meeting? There were no objections, the timelines will continue on future agendas.

13. Lake Hosts for the October meeting: Kabekona, Spider, and Gilmore.

14. Motion to adjourn: made by Lynn and seconded by Kari Tomperi. Motion passed by acclamation at 8:15 pm.