**Big Fish Lake Association Annual Meeting Minutes**

**June 11, 2022; 8:30 a.m., Collegeville Township Hall**

1. Call to order, 8:37 a.m. Kit Ferber

Board members in attendance: Kit Ferber, Mark Backes, John Ronning, Megan Johnson, Doug Adamek, Matt Peters, Hailey Bayer, and Bill Unger. Allen Schmitz, **Paul Steil** and Jim Sand were also present as board advisors.

1. Treasurer’s Report – Matt Peters

As of May 31, 2022 the current BFLA balance is $47,572.79

1. Membership Drive – Kit Ferber
   1. Membership: Out of 200 homeowners we had 173 members who contributed $35,766, an 87% participation rate!
   2. Business members: 16 members contributed $2,500
   3. Collegeville Township: $3,500 received on June 4, **2022**
   4. Stearns Electric: Have applied for a $1,000 grant from their Operation Round-Up program
2. Legacy Campaign Update – Kit Ferber

As of April 30, 2022, BFLA has raised a total of $259,894.94 for the Legacy Campaign. The funds are managed professionally by the Initiative Foundation. The Emergency Fund, which can be used immediately, has $147,093.88, and the Conservancy/Legacy Fund, which is a more long-term investment fund, has $112,801.06. The goal of the campaign is to raise $500,000 to have the resources available to combat starry stonewart or other AIS should it be found on our lake and to protect **the quality of BFL as well as** property values.

1. Lake research – Matt Peters
   1. The BFLA research fund balance from extra member donations is currently $5,316. In the past, the association has donated to the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) and the Minnesota Lakes and Rivers organization.
   2. Matt Peters led a discussion about the possibility of donating some research funds to local universities interested in doing aquatic research on Big Fish Lake.
   3. Matt Peters also shared the results of the Blue Water Science tests on the lake from last fall – no Starry Stonewart or Eurasian Milfoil were found. Several association members asked about the possibility of testing the lake for AIS more often and the board will look into whether or not it makes sense to test more since Starry Stonewart is not usually active until the fall.
2. 2021 Boat Inspections Report – Mark

2021 was the second year the association has kept track of statistics from the lake access. There are four times more boaters coming to Big Fish compared to any other lake in the county. Out of 5204 inspections last year, some type of organic matter was found on 30 boats. The busiest times on the lake were holiday weekends, the busiest day was 75 inspections on July 3.

Total monthly inspections are: (includes enter & exit inspection)

May = 698

June = 1130

July = 1501

Aug = 881

Sept = 546

Oct = 229

1. Lake Service Providers – Kit

The Stearns County AIS Committee is encouraging lake associations join the Five Star Program to promote lake service providers who use specific AIS prevention safeguards. The program is voluntary and free for both lake associations and service providers. The BFLA board voted to join the initiative at their last board meeting in April.

1. Stearns County AIS Committee Grant – Kit
   1. Total boat inspection project cost: $48,739; our match from the county is 50% at $24,369.50 which is based on an estimated 2,074 hours in 2022. This year the rate went up to $23.50 per hour.
   2. Due to unavailability of staff, hours were cut in 2021 and BFLA was refunded $1,785.86.
2. Elections for new Board members: President and four others – Kit
   1. Kit, Josh, Doug, Bill and Megan (team 1) are up for re-election to the board. Kit is resigning as President, but will remain on the Board as the Past President to serve for another two years in that capacity as well as serve as the board’s membership chair.
   2. Positions are open to all paid BFLA members. No new nominations for board members were made.
   3. Mark Backes who previously served as the board’s vice president was unanimously approved to step in as the association president. Team 1 was also approved to serve another two years on the board.
   4. **The Association Board position of Vice President remains open at this time, filling the position will be on the agenda for the next Board meeting in September.**
3. Loon Update – Matt

There are **three** nests put out on the lake this year, plus one extra **(for a total of 4)** across Highway 50 on Hermit Lake, and there was a total of 8 loonlets this year.

1. Jim and Rose Sand have agreed to take over the water testing for BFLA. A huge thank you to them!

Water testing looks for phosphorus and chlorophyl and algae levels and determines the health of the lake water. Over time, the lake water on Big Fish has improved mostly due to less farming nearby. This year there was 31 ½ feet of water clarity.

1. 4th of July boat parade discussion

Doris Westra volunteered to lead the organization of a new boat parade and 4th of July flag raising gathering on the lake.

1. Annual BFLA Picnic

Hidden Cove Orchard has agreed to host the association picnic again after two years without a picnic due to the Covid pandemic. Nancy Fandel agreed to organize the picnic which will be held on Thursday, August 18, 2022.

1. Lights at the Boat access – Matt

Residents have noticed activity and cars at the boat access late at night. There is a security light at the landing but it’s not on due to broken electrical wires. Could take up to a month to be restored.

1. Hamann property has been paid for their first year – Allen

BFLA has had a contract with the Hamann family in the past and recently renewed the contract for another 10 years so they agree to not farm their land near the lake. Allen has the CRP agreement drafted by Paul Steil.

1. Lake signs for members – Neil Fandel

Other lakes in the area have lake association signs for their docks or boats and members would like to do something similar for Big Fish Lake.

***John Ronning moved to have Neil organize a proposal for the signs. Matt Peters seconded the motion and it was approved.***

1. Motion to adjourn by Matt Peters, John Ronning seconded – passed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Minutes written by BFLA Secretary, Megan Johnson.