Advocates for the Knife River Watershed (AKRW)
5-16-22, 2022 , Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Shary Zoff - Chair, Julie Johnson – Secretary, Mark Osadjan, Rodney Johnson, Paul Trygstad, Peg Zahorik – recorder
Also present: Barb Omarzu

Treasurer resignation/New Treasurer
Shary announced that Corlis West has chosen to resign from the board.
Corlis gave Shary updated treasurer information for today's meeting. When asked if Corlis provided a reason for his resignation Shary reported that, in general, it was a choice he felt he needed to make at this time. Shary did not report any specific reason for his resignation. A concern was raised regarding accountability that we (board members) may or may not have regarding his resignation and if there are ways we could improve.

The need to fill the office of treasurer was discussed. Mark Osadjan stated his willingness to fulfill treasurer responsibilities for AKRW. A motion was made for Mark to be appointed as treasurer. Rodney 1st, Paul 2nd, the board voted unanimously to approve Mark Osadjan as our new board treasurer.

The need to transfer banking rights to Mark in a way that will assure his access to the AKRW account at Two Harbors Credit Union was discussed. Mark will check on requirements with Two Harbors Credit Union.

Gratitude for Corlis's contributions as a board member was noted by all. Board members discussed a thank you card including a gift of acknowledgement from individual board members (personal, not AKRW funds).

Treasurer Report
Shary reported treasurer info which Corlis gave to her.
As of April 22, 2022 AKRW had a checking account balance of $2,476.05, a savings account balance of $55.44, and 2 outstanding checks ($175.20 and $34). We have 33 paid members. Notices have been sent to 10 members that their dues are now due.

Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (LCSWCD) – Barb Omarzu (our LCSWCD board rep)
Julie proposed that, prior to the secretary report, we allow Barb Omarzu to present information she asked to report to us. All board members agreed. Barb provided the following information.

Emily Nelson is leaving LCSWCD in September. She will be in the office until June 24th after which she will be remote. Mackezie Hogfeld is no longer employed with LCSWCD. Barb asked if there was anything Mackenzie was working on that they should now follow up with. We reported issues including buckthorn removal in the watershed, ed-maps, and other invasive removal. In addition we reported that Mackenzie had been looking at a grant for this work as well as possible training.

Barb informed us about a podcast, "Be Nature", which focuses on pollinators. She also reported that David Abaz still has trees from the assisted migration program. They are available for planting. We should call him if interested.
Barb requested the email from Tara which was sent in the February 3rd minutes.
We again inquired about the possibility of adding a light weight buckthorn remover to the equipment which LCSWCD loans out to those doing removal work.

Secretary Report
Draft minutes from April 2022 were reviewed by the board and were unanimously approved.

Julie J. reported sending email correspondence to Julie Etterson after her request to learn more about AKRW. She explained that we supported research projects in the Knife River watershed and share information that relates to our watershed. Julie Etterson said she'd pass this information on to other researchers and citizenry with concerns in the watershed. Julie J. sent a hand written thank you to her for her participation.

Julie reported that Jo Thompson is no longer our Duluth Town Hall equipment person. Our new contact is now Nicole Chatterson, Duluth Township Clerk. Nicole will now be notified about town hall reservations. She will send Julie the code for entering the town hall on the day of any/all future presentations and will put out equipment on the day of the presentation.

Old Business

SWCD - lighter equipment for buckthorn
It was again discussed that the availability of the buckthorn removal equipment at LCSWCD is greatly appreciated it is getting a bit too heavy for some of us. The request to consider purchase of a lighter weight buckthorn remover was again proposed (also refer to info from Barb Omarzu, above)

Karen Gran/Josh Dumke presentation
The board discussed many details about this upcoming presentation including:

- Zoom - Mark is managing this for both zooming the meeting and handling two presenters (one live, one zoom). Rod and Julie will facilitate allowing people into the meeting who are using zoom.
- Presentation details - Julie will welcome live and zoom audience, read mission statement, and will introduce guest speakers
- Hall management- equipment, code for door, etc, food and beverages, time to help set up, food/beverages

KRRC spring walk
Rod, Julie and Peg met with KRRC board about teaming on a spring walk. All KRRC board members were receptive to this idea. Steve Betzler and Anne Skadberg will be our contacts for specific date determination. The board seemed cooperative and open to doing more in the future.

Poster laminating
Gail stated that she can call UMD about poster laminating for our mission statement, etc. She also recommended a vinyl banner which can be rolled into a 24 by 48 size. Pros and cons of these ideas were discussed. Prices will be investigated.

Printed brochures
Shary will check with Corlis to verify the number of brochures needed and to attain the addresses of those with property along the Knife River.

Mailing brochures – Our mailing will include 1 CISMA buckthorn paper, cover letter, and our brochure. The Board discussed various ideas as to where to have the CISMA buckthorn information printed. Shary will send board members a sample of buckthorn info. Tara Solem will be contacted to see if LCSWCD could print these for use in our mailing.

George Host/John Duplies fall presentation – Tabled, Rodney reported him to be a good resource.
Jerry Neimi was also suggested as future presenter.

New Business

Communication/decision making via e-mail

The board discussed our recent practice of sending emails to communicate item(s) of importance and/or which need a quorum for decision making. After discussion it was determined that waiting until we meet to decide on important issues is preferred. It was also determined that at times there are issues which require immediate attention.

After further discussion the board determined that, in the future, when there is a decision of importance sent through email, and if there is a board member who has not been heard from after all others have reported in, that the board member not heard from will be called to assure he/she received the correspondence and is able to respond. It was additionally noted that, given many emails and some internet issues, calling any board member not heard from will help to improve our communication and will help assure all board members are informed of important issues needed to be determined.

CISMA meeting report

Mark noted that he was unable to attend the CISMA meeting.

Duluth News Tribune/follow up letter to Deserae Hendrickson (regional fisheries manager/DNR)

Rodney noted a recent Duluth News Tribune article in which Deserae Hendrickson stated basing her beaver management practices on research based information. Rodney stated his intention to send Deserae a letter to inquire about what specific research she was referring to in this Tribune article.

Next Meeting:

It was determined that we will, as tradition holds, take the summer off. Shary volunteered to email us with a few possible September meeting dates. She will send this email to board members toward the end of August.