

RCCCLA Fall 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

9:00 a.m., Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Woodtick Inn

**Attendees:** Karen Albers, Steve, Earhart, Chris Emerson, Scott Haas, Ejie Hanson, Tom Hintz, Gayle Larson, Rad Royer, Melissa Stagman, Mike Stagman, Bob Stokes, Rick West, Jon Wittnebel, Jon Williams

**Agenda items**

**1. Membership direction**

- a. **Annual Dues Amount.** There was discussion regarding what amount that RCCCLA annual dues should be. Dues are currently \$30/year. The annual dues of nearby lakes are as follows: Serpent=\$35, Bay=\$30, Ossawinnamakee=\$30. There was lively discussion regarding what the annual dues amount should be from \$30 to \$50. The question at large became as follows: Do you increase dues, increase membership or both? There were various opinions supporting each of the three strategies. In discussion, it was brought up that a \$40 annual dues amount effective January 1, 2026, had been passed at the Spring 2025 Board Meeting. After that, no further discussion regarding annual dues amount was had.
- b. **Dues Invoice.** There was discussion regarding the Annual Dues Invoice. A motion was made by Steve Earhart for a separate invoice mailing including a RCCCLA self-addressed envelope. The motion was seconded and passed. Mike Stagman will draft the invoice and distribute for Board approval.

**2. 501c(3) – non-profit status**

- a. There was discussion that RCCCLA's current 501c(3) status does not allow for members to deduct dues and other contributions such as AIS treatment, Walleye stocking, or anything else, to be deductible by members for Federal Income Tax purposes. A motion was made by Jon Wittnebel, seconded by Scott Haas and passed for Treasurer, Melissa Stagman, to check into and complete the process for RCCCLA's status be changed to allow member Federal Tax deductibility for dues and contributions payments.

**3. Water testing for 2026**

- a. There was discussion initiated by Rad Royer regarding RCCCLA Lakes water testing that was last done approximately 5 years ago by A.W. Research Laboratories, Inc. of Brainerd, MN. The current quote received from A.W. Research was for \$1,700. Discussion included the quote cost and that water quality is one of the key initiatives that RCCCLA is responsible for. A motion was made by Karen Albers and seconded by Ejie Hanson for the Water Testing to be completed in 2026. The motion passed with one dissenting vote. Scott Haas and Rad Royer will lead this initiative.

#### 4. Shoreline safe wake boat areas

- a. Discussion was initiated by Rad Royer that wake boating is considered safe by the Minnesota DNR if wake boats are 200 feet from shore and in 20 feet of water or greater. No planned action was identified or motion was made as discussion ended.

#### 5. Walleye stocking

- a. Jon Williams talked with Mike Knapp, Minnesota DNR Brainerd Area Fisheries Supervisor about whether, or not, RCCCLA could legally stock walleyes in East and/or West Rabbit Lakes. The following is what was learned in summary:

**Walleye fingerlings are currently stocked in the Fall of odd years.**

**East Rabbit.** East is already at the DNR's allowed maximum of 2 lbs. (484 lbs. in total)/littoral acre.

**West Rabbit.** We could buy, and stock, another pound/littoral acre (165 lbs.) so we could buy up to 165 additional lbs. of fingerlings from a vendor and have them stocked in West Rabbit. RCCCLA stocking needs to be coordinated with, and happen at the same time as the Fall odd year DNR stocking.

- A permit is required from the DNR for this additional stocking at no cost.
- The DNR does not sell fish to stock so we would have to work with a private vendor. The costs of additional fish are approximately \$1/fish or \$20-\$25/lb. depending on the vendor according to Mike Knapp. So, if we stocked 165 lbs. of walleyes in the West Basin, it would cost \$3,300 to \$4,125 for one stocking. Private stocking by an Association like RCCCLA needs to be coordinated with and occur at the same time as the DNR's odd year stocking.
  - The perfect size fingerling for stocking is 15-25 fish per pound. Mike Knapp, DNR Brainerd Fisheries Supervisor, recommended not going any bigger than 10 fish/lb.
    - A lot of fish will be lost the first year. Some will just die and many will be lost to predation (e.g. Northerns).
- A motion was made by Steve Earhart, seconded by Jon Wittnebel and passed as follows: Increase walleye stocking in West Rabbit in the Fall of odd years to 2 lbs./littoral acre (a total of 330 lbs.). This stocking needs to be coordinated with the MN DNR. Jon Williams will lead this initiative. The motion also included putting a Walleye Stocking Donation line on the revised Dues Invoice that Mike Stagman will be drafting.

#### 6. Other.

- a. **Access Monitoring.** Rad Royer mentioned that current Crow Wing County monitoring hours may be cut to 400 hours. Rad mentioned that monitoring is

needed to ensure that other Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) do not get into RCCCLA lakes. A motion was made by Bob Stokes and seconded by Tom Hintz to use existing AIS funds to maintain the current 400 hours of access monitoring. The motion passed with one dissenting vote.

- b. Access signage.** There was discussion regarding Public Access signage. Jon Williams noted that the broken Aquatic Invasive Species signage is owned by, and must be fixed, by RCCCLA. Jon said he would contact the Crow Wing County Sheriff's office again regarding a new "No Wake" sign to replace the current damaged sign. Chris Emerson, Melissa and Mike Stagman will help Jon with installing/fixing the signs.