

BLAI ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday, August 4, 2020
Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order and Introduction of Board Members** – The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by David Edsall, President. David thanked Maine Lakes Society and Susan Gallo, Executive Director, for their assistance in running our first Annual Meeting via Zoom. David introduced the following members of the Board:

Officers:

President – David Edsall
Vice President – Chris Warack
Secretary – Melanie Joy
Treasurer – Holly Griffin

Directors-At-Large:

Pam Dodge
Patricia Edsall
Kelly Maltz
Chad Doebler
Rand Griffin, Immediate Past President
Alan Stinchfield

- II. Roll Call of Roads Represented** – The approximate number of people present from each Road was as follows:
Branchview Drive - 5
Branchview Drive North - 5
Cove Way - 3
Phillips Beach Road - 10
Sargent Drive - 6
Walls Farm Way - 4
All other Roads – 4

There were 39 participants representing 63 voting members. It was determined that a quorum was present to conduct the business of the meeting.

- III. Approval of Minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting** – The Minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting held on August 1, 2019 were presented. Following a vote, the Minutes were approved.
- IV. Comments from BLAI President – David Edsall** – David stated that BLAI exists for primarily two reasons: 1) Invasive plant patrol and 2) Non-Point Source Pollution. The reports from these two committees are available for members to review on the BLAI website at www.branchpondme.com. He presented the accomplishments of BLAI from 2013 – 2020 which includes: expanded board meetings, expanded emails and news

letters, did a tax assessment survey for accuracy, started annual meetings with Ellsworth officials, expanded the loon count and invasive plant patrol surveys. Pat Edsall presented the loon count which was 18 adults and no chicks. This is an increase of 5 loons from last year. David presented the BLAI “To Do” list which includes: a watershed survey, expansion of LakeSmart, and water testing.

- V. **Approval of By-Laws** – Holly Griffin presented the proposed revisions to the By-Laws. The last update to the By-Laws was in 2015. The key changes were the introduction of a Vision Statement of “Clean, clear water in Branch Lake.” Our Mission Statement has been revised to “Protecting the water quality of the Branch Lake Watershed located in Ellsworth, Maine; thereby enhancing property values and recreational enjoyment.” The remaining items were housekeeping items: Added Director-At-Large positions, clarified how vacant positions would be handled, defined duties for each of the officers, clearly outlined committee structure, eliminated Public Relations and Membership committees, revised our nomination process and clarified the approval process for the election of Officers and Directors. Following a vote, the proposed revisions to the By-Laws were approved.

- VI. **Guest Speaker – Steven Norton, “The Ancient History of Branch Lake and the Down East Ice Age Trail”** – David Edsall introduced the guest speaker, Steven Norton, Professor Emeritus, School of Earth and Climate Sciences at the University of Maine, who is internationally known for his soil sediment studies. Prof. Norton presented the Down East Ice Age Trail, which was authored by Hal Borns who passed away this spring. The Down East Ice Age Trail comprises 150 miles end to end from Ellsworth to Calais along the Maine Coast and highlights 46 stops that illustrate how the glacial ice moved and the moraines, deltas and eskers that remain. He invited everyone to check out the trail maps at www.iceagetrail.umaine.edu.

Prof. Norton presented a history of Branch Lake. The bedrock of Branch Lake is Lucerne granite, and like every other lake with granite bedrock, is oriented in a NW to SE direction as a result of the glacial ice that moved across Maine. About 14,000 years ago, the marine limit (shoreline) near Branch Lake was 310 feet above current the sea level. Branch Lake itself was 236 feet above sea level. Four different continental ice sheets impacted Branch Lake, and Prof. Norton believes there are remnants of two moraines at Branch Lake. Striations on granite outcrops surrounding Branch Lake provide evidence of the flow direction of the ice. Marine clay is located in the NE area of the lake. It is very erodible and contains the mineral apatite. Apatite is high in phosphorus, but our lake has only a small amount of marine clay, so Prof. Norton says the phosphorus from this should not be a problem for us.

Our lake chemistry is excellent. The Secchi Disk transparency has been improving since 1970, which is a wonderful trend. The reason is the soils and sediment in the lake retains phosphorus. But, the south basin may be showing a different trend, as it is shallower. Our phosphorus of 3.7 is very low. Water quality is very good, the color is low, the dissolved organic carbon is low, and alkalinity is low. Branch Lake is doing very well

right now. Prof. Norton recommends that Branch Lake Association should be doing the following:

1. Continue the temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles in the north basin, but normalize the timing of these samples,
2. Add the same profiles to the sampling point in the south basin (more important because this is the shallower part of the lake),
3. At a minimum, collect an epilimnetic water core in both basins, and at least once a year check pH, conductivity, and DO, in situ, and sample for total P, Fe, Al, Ca, Mg, Na, K, SO₄, Cl, and NO₃.
4. Collect past data on ice out,
5. Continue scrutiny of invasive plants, shore land activities, and land use within the watershed.

Prof. Norton says the one thing that is missing from the information on our lake is a sample of the uppermost sediment. We should request to be put on a list with Maine's DEP for sampling the uppermost sediment for sediment chemistry. Prof. Norton presented information on his talk on August 5th, and his fall semester course at Penobscot Valley Senior College for those who may be interested.

David thanked Prof. Norton for his informative presentation. David also noted that the south basin does have a testing spot, as well as in the Cove, which is a shallow part of our lake.

VII. Treasurer's Report – Holly Griffin – Holly presented the financial report for actual activity from January 1 – August 4, 2020. The entire report is on the website for all to view. She stated that dues revenue has decreased this year because of Covid-19 and the lack of in-person gatherings. We have divided our expenses into fixed versus variable expenses. We are keeping a close eye on the variable expenses and will only spend in this category depending on our revenue stream. All cash and investments total \$36,442. Following a vote, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

VIII. Business

a. Projects

- i. Road Grant Program – Rand Griffin** -- Rand presented the new Road Grant Program that will assist Road Associations with equity funds for solving road runoff issues. Once the Road Association has been approved by the City of Ellsworth for an Enviro-Grant, BLAI will contribute 50% of the required equity funds, up to \$2,500 per project. BLAI will allocate \$4,500 per year to this program and it will be funded on a first-come, first-served basis. More detail can be obtained from the Road Association Presidents or on the BLAI website.
- ii. LakeSmart Assessments – David Edsall** – David stated that the last LakeSmart Assessments were conducted in 2003-2007 in association with DEP. It has been restarted in association with Maine Lakes. Two people are certified and we are looking for others to volunteer. This is a

voluntary, confidential program that may help property owners with erosion issues, save money, and ultimately, will help the lake.

BranchSmart is similar to LakeSmart, but it is for those who do not qualify for the LakeSmart award.

iii. Watershed Survey Plan – David Edsall – David announced that we received approval from the City for \$8,000, and have received a grant from the Maine Community Foundation for \$4,000. With a \$4,000 contribution from BLAI, we now have the funds to begin the Watershed Survey currently scheduled for May 2021. We are seeking volunteers to be on the steering committee for this project. The City is also looking for a volunteer to be on their environmental granting committee. We will need about 30 volunteers to participate in conducting the survey.

b. Presentation of Slate and Election of 2020-21 BLAI Officers and Directors-At-Large, as approved by the BLAI Board – David Edsall presented the Slate of Officers and Directors-At-Large. Following a vote, the Slate of Officers and Directors-At-Large was approved. David welcomed Chad Doeblner as the new President of BLAI, and thanked The Triumvirate (Rand Griffin, Walt Jonsson, and David Edsall) in helping to bring BLAI to a new level.

IX. New President’s Comments – Chad Doeblner thanked David for his service for the last two years in monitoring the lake, reviving LakeSmart, creating BranchSmart, and leading the invasive plant patrol. He encouraged everyone to get a LakeSmart survey by contacting him or David Edsall.

X. Set date for next Annual Meeting – The date for the next Annual Meeting was set for August 5, 2021.

XI. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Melanie Joy

August 11, 2020

Approved