

Lake Raponda Association  
Draft Minutes of the July 12, 2020, Stated Meeting

On July 12, 2020, 36 masked and socially distanced members gathered in the driveway at 264 Lake Raponda Road for the LRA's 2020 Stated Meeting. President Will Melton called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m., announcing plans for the Annual Meeting on August 8 at 4:00 p.m. A member suggested that we conduct the meeting both in person and by Zoom, but we have not found a place on the lake that can accommodate both a socially distanced gathering and a Zoom broadcast. Because of these logistical problems, the Stated Meeting was videotaped, including the program presentation. These will be posted on our website, [raponda.org](http://raponda.org), as soon as possible. The location, format, and agenda for the Annual Meeting will be announced by August 1 and also posted on the website.

Treasurer's Report. Current LRA bank account balance is \$14,696. Last year, at the time of the Stated Meeting, 80 percent of the members had paid their dues; this year the percentage is 90 percent. Please pay your dues if you are among those who have not yet done so, as the Association's income is exclusively from dues. With reduced expenses on social events this year, our finances are sound. During the past year, LRA has made gifts to three local organizations, a total of \$300, and the Association has contributed \$1000 toward the cost of greeters, an amount \$1500 less than last year.

Clerk's Report. The minutes for the August 2019 meeting, as posted on the Association website, were accepted.

President's Report.

1. *LRA Membership List.* Social committee member Andrea Glenn is compiling a roster of dues-paying members, complete with contact information, to be distributed to active members.
2. *Follow-up to the 2019 Watershed Assessment.* In response to a \$3000 grant from the Vermont State Division of Fisheries, we completed a detailed review of conditions in our watershed last September. We did a terrific job meeting the terms of the grant, with nearly one-half of member families volunteering as part of this assessment. What did we learn? Raponda is a 120-acre lake with a watershed of 615 acres, a compact area to monitor. Ours is a seep lake, with water coming from springs around the lake. Because it is not stream-fed, we don't have to worry about people upriver. The downside is that what flows into our watershed is here to stay: if there were a leaky heating oil tank, or a failed septic system in the watershed, its

effect could not be rinsed away as in a river's watershed. State agencies have categorized the lake's water quality as "stressed" and its watershed as "moderately disturbed." Our conservation efforts are intended to improve on these readings. In the state's recently released tactical plan for the Deerfield Valley basin, Lake Raponda Association is highlighted as an active and effective conservation resource for the region. Next step: members' review of the first draft of a Lake Raponda watershed conservation plan, prepared from the findings of the 2019 Watershed Assessment.

3. *Members discussion of the Watershed Assessment.* Several current and former trustees responded to the question "Why is our water quality graded 'stressed.'" Carol Bois noted that acid rain and phosphorous runoff from lawns, whether fertilized or not, challenge water quality. Randy Knaggs commented that the water action from high-speed boats churn the lake bottom and disturb the sediment layer, especially in a lake as shallow as Raponda. The watershed's "moderately disturbed" category results from the level of development around the lake and the vehicular traffic along Lake Raponda Road.
4. *FOVLAP*, an organization representing the best organized among Vermont's 800 lakes and ponds, has asked two lake associations, Lake Raponda and Lake Echo in the Northeast Kingdom, to report on recently completed watershed assessments. The FOVLAP (Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds) meeting will be broadcast on July 27, with Will Melton and Jack Widness reporting for LRA. The public is invited to join the broadcast. Jack Widness will send instructions for registering and accessing the Microsoft Team meeting.
5. *LRA Centennial.* The LRA, founded in 1921, will mark its centennial next year. How should we celebrate? Please send ideas to Will or to Beth Brody, chair of Social Committee.

Greeter Program. Bob Bois reported on the Greeter Program, now in its fourth year. The county now operates the greeter programs, with financial support from the town and LRA. We have been able to fund our share of this program thanks to donations to the newly established Lake Raponda Environmental Foundation. We have paid greeters on duty Thur afternoon to Mon morning, plus some volunteers who cover for other day. We need volunteers for the remaining time slots. Talk to Bob to learn more.

Lake Raponda Environmental Foundation. John Meyer reported on this foundation, a recently launched 501(c)3 charitable organization. Its purpose is to encourage donations that can support immediate needs, such as expanding coverage of our

Greeter Program, or be invested to provide funds that we can draw on in the future to respond to unexpected threats. To make contributions or for more information, contact John. A link will be posted on the website.

#### New Business:

1. Several members reported trespassing problems caused, in part, by ignorance of property boundaries and laws of land ownership. In response, an effort is underway to organize a workshop to advise members of our rights and discuss strategies to tackle the problem.
2. The Waters and Boating Committee will be asked to address problems caused by the proliferation of watercraft left on the dam without permission.

At 10:45 Will turned the meeting over to *Mike Clough of the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum* for a demonstration workshop on watershed ecology. Mike brought with him samples of invasive terrestrial plants--Japanese knotweed, purple loosestrife, phragmites, buckthorn, and winged euonymus--and introduced two critters regularly found in our watershed, the red-eared slider turtle (an invasive) and Artemis, a barred owl.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

#### Upcoming LRA Activities

**July 21:** Amy Picotte, Lakeshore Manager for Vermont's Department of Environmental Conservation, has scheduled several surveys of individual lakeside properties to qualify for Lake Wise awards based on planting and runoff control criteria. LRA's aim is to achieve "gold" lake category, awarded when 15 percent of the properties on the lake are declared "lake wise."

**August 8 (9:30 am, leaving from Widness dock):** Aquatic Plant Lake Paddle led by Jack Widness, to help residents identify the flora of Lake Raponda and to become iNaturalists.

**August 8 (4 p.m.):** LRA Annual Meeting (location to be announced)

**September** (date to be announced) Charlie Hohn, a wetlands scientist in Vermont has agreed to advise LRA about the condition of Lake Raponda's wetlands, a most critical resource for a seepage lake. Members will be invited to a brief introduction of the topic during Charlie's visit to Raponda.

**Other:** Beth Brody will be posting on our website ideas for kid-related activities including a family bingo game and two scavenger hunts, one for younger children and another for teens.

Respectively submitted by Eliza Childs, Clerk