

BMLAA and the Pandemic of 2020

When I first learned of the spreading coronavirus, the lake association was not on my mind, not at all. As we all know too well, in a relatively short space of time, every life, every family, every organization and every pattern we called “normal” was forced to change in response to the threat posed by the invisible virus. Uncertainty, frustration and a disorienting sense of loss have become our constant companions.

Here is a summary of how the Bad Medicine Lake Area Association is adjusting and adapting in order to conduct its business this summer:

1. BMLAA Annual Meeting: Ordinarily the Annual Meeting is held at the Town Hall on a Saturday morning in June when 60 or so members squeeze themselves in to chat, elect new board members and consider matters of interest and importance to the membership. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold a meeting of the usual kind this year. In its place, the board decided the next best option was to prepare an Annual Report that summarizes the essential business of the Association.
2. Election of New Directors: Due to the exceptional circumstances we are experiencing, four Directors whose terms expired in June this year agreed to remain on the Board until such time as an election can be held. Ordinarily, the election of Directors is held at the Annual Meeting in June as stipulated in the bylaws. The board is examining the possibility of holding an election by mail.
3. Revision of BMLAA bylaws: Our existing Association bylaws never imagined the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Consequently, they need to be amended to allow the board to meet and transact the necessary business of the Association. I’m sure the membership understands the need for the board to meet and act in the spirit of the bylaws while not by the letter of the bylaws. This should be a temporary situation that needs to be resolved with specific amendments to the bylaws as proposed in this Annual Report.
4. Special Meeting for the Final Report of the 2017-2019 Lake Study and Core Sample Findings: A Special Meeting of the Association had been planned for late July at which time Dr. Rick Koch of Bemidji State University was to present a final summary of the lake study findings for the membership. This event was cancelled due to delays in the sample preparation and data analysis caused when both BSU and the lab of the Minnesota Science Museum was shut down as a result of the coronavirus. A brief summary of findings is contained in the Annual Report. A more complete and “final” presentation is expected in 2021.
5. Board Meetings: The board voted in May to hold its monthly board meetings via Zoom, a video conferencing application that allows us to meet from home using a computer, tablet or smart phone. Zoom also allows members to participate in board meetings from their chosen locations. Although not as satisfying as in-person interaction, Zoom has obvious benefits in our present circumstances. Notice of board meetings is given by BMLAA email and members need to reply with a request for a Zoom invitation to be sent. The Zoom invitation has a link that provides access to the meeting.

6. Communication with members: The board will do its best to communicate in a timely and detailed way with the membership through the BMLAA website and by direct email. The membership is encouraged to contact board members with questions, concerns and suggestions and we will make certain they are brought to the attention of the full board.

These are exceptional and difficult times in so very many ways. While the impact on the Bad Medicine Lake Area Association is nowhere near the top of anyone's list in importance, we are required to adjust and adapt while hoping for a return to more "normal" Bad Medicine Lake.

Be healthy, stay safe and immerse yourself in the soothing powers of Bad Medicine Lake this summer.

Scott Bentson
BMLAA President