

FRIENDS OF THE EAU CLAIRE LAKES AREA (FOECLA)
Annual Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2025 Barnes Town Hall

Attendance: 75 people attended the business meeting.

The meeting opened at 9:00 AM with a welcome by board president Roger Martin. Martin introduced the current board of directors. Martin recognized and thanked outgoing board members Wayne Kolberg and Stephen Wilbers.

Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting:

The minutes of the July 20, 2024, annual meeting were available to attendees and posted to the FOECLA website. Motion by Kathy Stewart to approve the 2024 annual meeting minutes. Seconded by Jeri Knutson. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Kathy Stewart reviewed the Expenses and Revenues of the past year. FOECLA is in good shape financially, due to increased memberships which accounts for 79% of revenues. AIS remediation efforts represent 44% of expenses. Cash on hand as of July, 2025 was \$86,536 compared to \$73,936, on July 10, 2023. The current Financial Statement and 2025 Budget will be made available to attendees.

Membership Report:

Board member Marianne Paker reported that year to date we have 331 household memberships, compared with 341 household memberships at the end of 2024. The 350 members represent 200 property owners on Upper, Middle and Lower Eau Claire Lakes and 150 from the smaller area lakes. Renewal letters will be sent in November.

Report from the Board of Directors: PowerPoint slides were used for the following:

- **Water Quality Monitoring** – Board member Lee Wiesner reported on:
 1. Fireworks Perchlorate Testing - Wiesner conducted tests on Middle Eau Claire Lake over July 4, 2024 as part of a DNR initiative. The Perchlorate can get into ground water and affect the thyroid gland. There was none found in the samples taken.
 2. Wake Boat Legislation - FOECLA has worked to educate lake users about wake boat use in the last year. One of the concerns is that the ballast cannot be fully drained and can transfer AIS into other lakes. Other area municipalities and districts are passing legislation to limit or prohibit use of wake boats, which could cause more wake boat traffic to occur on the Eau Claire Lakes chain.
 3. Filamentous Algae Stages - In 2024 there was hot, sunny weather that may have caused a significant algae bloom on Lower Eau Claire Lake. This has happened in previous years with those weather conditions. It happened again in 2025 on Middle Eau Claire Lake near the boat landing. Wiesner explained and demonstrated the difference between Filamentous (harmless) and Blue-Green (may be Toxic) Algae.

Wiesner also recognized and thanked Mike and Jean Gottwald for their many years of conducting the water chemistry testing on Lower Eau Claire Lake.

- **Lake Ecology Education Program (LEEP)** – Board member Cris Neff shared that the program was started in 2009 to engage students in a hands-on experience with natural resources and a curriculum was developed to support the program. Neff reported that this year’s class consisted of 24 students. The mission of this program is to engage and launch young people on a lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship. This was evidenced by a 15 year old LEEP graduate who volunteered this summer on the BAISS boat. Susan Thurn was hired as the new LEEP Coordinator. She is a 4th grade teacher at the Drummond Schools and brings a strong environmental background to the program.
- **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Remediation Efforts** –
 1. **Shoreline Monitoring** Andy Teal, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for Bayfield County described efforts to monitor shorelines for invasive plants such as Eurasian milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, invasive yellow (vs. purple) iris, and wild radish and to contact the Town of Barnes AIS committee if possible invasives are identified. He noted that the Purple Loose Strife mitigation seems to be a success. He encouraged members to attend spring training to learn how to identify various invasive species.
 2. **Clean Boats Clean Waters** Cris Neff reported that the DNR funded CBCW continues to post volunteers and/or paid staff at area boat landings to inspect boats and trailers, hand out informational brochures and educate boaters on how to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Volunteers are needed throughout the week and interested people can contact the Town of Barnes AIS committee.
 3. **BAISS Boat** - Board member Cris Neff, AIS committee member and a diver for the Barnes Aquatic Invasive Species Sucker boat (BAISS) reported on the efforts this year beginning with Lower Eau Claire on May 12 and concluding with Upper for 4 weeks in June/July with 12 hour shifts. A no-wake zone was established on Upper to reduce the spread of AIS. There is a critical need for volunteers and interested individuals can sign-up online at townofbarneswi.gov under “Committees”. Neff also reported that Megan Sorenson was hired as the new grant writer, an essential role as the program is funded by various grants.
- **Student Scholarship Committee** – Board member Marty Olson announced the board approved a second year \$1,000 Student Scholarship for Sam Tuttle, who is a graduate of Drummond High School, and is a sophomore at Iowa State University, majoring in Soil Sciences/Agronomy with a Forestry minor.

Election of the Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors recommended the re-election of director Roger Martin for a 3-year term and the election of Dawn Martin and Ted Urban as new directors for 3-year terms on the board. There were no nominations from the floor. Motion by Bill Stewart to approve the re-election of the above four persons. Seconded by Kathy Stewart. Motion carried with no opposing votes.

Adjournment: Business meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Prepared by Barbara Cooper, Secretary

Educational Event following Annual Meeting: 92 people attended the presentation titled “Why Is There a Lake in My Backyard?” by Tom Fitz, PhD., who is on the faculty of the University of Minnesota Duluth’s Swenson College of Science and Engineering. This presentation described the geology, geologic history and hydrology of the Eau Claire Lakes region.