

BRAINERD LAKERS UNITED FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (BLUE) FEBRUARY 9TH, 2023, MEETING MINUTES

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE) held our monthly meeting on Thursday, February 9th, 2023, at 7 p.m. The meeting took place online via the Zoom website. Dean Borgeson, Pat Scott, Judi and Richard Schiller, Bill Haugan, and Doug Olson joined the online BLUE meeting. BLUE meeting participants approved the Thursday, January 12th BLUE meeting minutes.

Doug informed BLUE meeting participants Honor the Earth has not responded to an email Doug sent on Monday, January 23rd asking if Honor the Earth could accept the money from BLUE's treasury as a donation. Doug explained to Honor the Earth BLUE is in the process of legally dissolving and would like to donate the money in our treasury to Honor the Earth to help further their environmental activism. [Doug sent a follow up email to Honor the Earth on Monday, February 13th but has not received a response yet. The follow up email clarified BLUE is no longer in danger of being fined by the IRS as an IRS employee informed Pat on Friday, February 10th the IRS cancelled the \$5,000 fine against BLUE. BLUE no longer possibly owing money to the IRS should make it easier for Honor the Earth to accept the funds from BLUE's treasury. Doug will inform fellow BLUE members if Honor the Earth responds to the follow up email.] If Honor the Earth does not accept the funds from BLUE's treasury, the Brainerd First Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC) will be asked if it can accept the funds from BLUE's treasury. The Brainerd UCC provides BLUE a meeting place in the UCC Fellowship Hall. Brainerd UCC Pastor Leslie Moughty supports BLUE's environmental activism. Both Honor the Earth and the Brainerd UCC are listed as recipients of BLUE's treasury funds in the Notice of Dissolution. Honor the Earth is listed as the primary recipient with the Brainerd UCC being listed as receiving any assets (i.e. money from BLUE's treasury) Honor the Earth does not accept.

Dean, Pat, and Doug signed the Notice of Dissolution papers at Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union in Brainerd on Wednesday, February 8th in their capacity as BLUE officers. A copy of the Notice of Dissolution documents is attached in the BLUE meeting minutes. BLUE meeting participants discussed legally changing BLUE's name. BLUE can longer use the name Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment as Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment will legally dissolve. Using a variation of the BLUE name is legally acceptable. Meeting participants agreed the new name for the organization could be **Brainerd Lakes United Environmentalists (BLUE)**. The new name will let the group keep the BLUE acronym. If you have an idea for a new name for the organization, please contact BLUE chairman Dean Borgeson at brainerdblue@gmail.com to suggest a new name for the group. The name of the organization will be officially changed at the Thursday, March 9 BLUE meeting. **[On Friday, February 10, Pat called the IRS to receive an update on the status of the IRS case on BLUE. The IRS employee Pat spoke with informed her the IRS cancelled the \$5,000 fine against BLUE. The IRS no longer has a case on BLUE. This is great news as it means BLUE can proceed with our legal dissolution without worrying about possibly owing the IRS money. This should make it easier for Honor the Earth or the Brainerd UCC to accept BLUE's treasury funds as BLUE will be without debt.]**

Pat discussed the environmental organization Third Act's Stop Dirty Banks Day of Action planned for Tuesday, March 21st. The Day of Action will demand banks like Citibank, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and Chase stop investing in fossil fuels and support renewable energy projects instead. Protests and vigils will be held outside of banks supporting fossil fuels projects throughout the nation. More information about Third Act's Stop Dirty Banks Day of Action can be found at thirdact.org/national-day-of-action/. Pat suggested BLUE hold a vigil in solidarity with Third Act's Stop Dirty Banks Day of Action. BLUE meeting participants agreed BLUE would hold a vigil outside of the Brainerd Wells Fargo bank on Tuesday, March 21st to support the Day of Action. The vigil will be held from 4 to 5 p.m. The Brainerd Wells Fargo bank is located at 424 W. Washington Street, Brainerd near 'Burritos California'. Signs will be available, or vigil participants can bring signs to the vigil. Dean plans to make posters for the vigil. Pat could make a JPEG Doug could use for the Facebook Event Invite on the BLUE Facebook page. Doug will send a notice to the *Brainerd Dispatch* about the vigil. More plans for the vigil will be made at the Thursday, March 9th BLUE meeting. Doug will ask Brainerd Lakes Area Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) at the Monday, February 13 DSA meeting if DSA would like to be listed as co-host of the vigil. [DSA members at the meeting said DSA would co-host the vigil. Doug will keep DSA members informed about the vigil and discuss the vigil further at the Tuesday, March 14th DSA meeting.]

Earth Day (April 22nd) will be on a Saturday this year. Dean will email Destiny Mankowski of Pheasants Forever, who organized the Brainerd Community Earth Day event at Kiwanis Park BLUE tabled at last year, to ask if she plans to hold an Earth Day event this year. If there is a 2023 Brainerd Community Earth Day event, BLUE would like to host a table again.

Honor the Earth, Indigenous Environmental Network, and RISE Coalition are holding a rally outside the Aitkin County Courthouse on Friday, February 24th to support Water Protectors Winona LaDuke, co-founder and Executive Director of Honor the Earth, and Dawn Goodwin (Gaagigeyaashiik) who will be at the Aitkin County Courthouse for in-person hearings to face charges for peacefully resisting Line 3 construction. The vigil is scheduled to last from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. The Aitkin County Courthouse is located at 209 2nd Street NW, Aitkin. More information about the rally can be found at the Honor the Earth Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1360734601329280>

BLUE's next monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, March 9th at 7 p.m. The BLUE meeting will be held online via the Zoom website. The BLUE meeting will last 40 minutes, the maximum amount of time Zoom allots for free meetings. BLUE meetings will be held online through at least April. A link to the March BLUE meeting will be sent out in the meeting notice. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

BLUE Meeting Minutes Submitted by Doug Olson