

BRAINERD LAKERS UNITED FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (BLUE) May 11TH MEETING MINUTES

Brainerd Lakes United Environmentalists (BLUE) held our monthly meeting on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 7 p.m. The meeting took place in Gregory Park. Dean Borgeson, Donna Bowen, Judi and Richard Schiller, and Doug Olson joined the BLUE meeting. BLUE meeting participants approved the Thursday, April 13 BLUE meeting minutes.

Meeting participants reviewed the BLUE Earth Day film presentation held on Saturday, April 22 in the Brainerd public library's large conference room. The BLUE Earth Day film presentation went well. 13 people joined the film presentation, including BLUE members Dean, Doug, Richard, Judi, Pat Scott, Isaiah Oleson, Larry Fisk, Gayle Nielsen, and John Reynolds. Unfortunately, the 2019 documentary *The Story of Plastic* couldn't be shown due to technical issues. The 2016 Leonardo DiCaprio documentary *Before the Flood*, provided by Larry and Gayle, was shown instead.

Meeting participants reviewed the Brainerd May Day March held on Saturday, April 29. The Brainerd May Day March is an annual pro-union march advocating workers' rights and economic justice. Brainerd Lakes Area Democratic Socialists of America (BLA DSA) and Brainerd Trades and Labor hosted the Brainerd May Day March. BLUE endorsed the Brainerd May Day March. The Brainerd May Day March goes from the Brainerd AFL-CIO headquarters, located at 804 Laurel Street, Brainerd to Brainerd city hall, located at 501 Laurel Street. This year's Brainerd May Day March supported proposed legislation in the Minnesota legislature providing workers earned paid sick time and family leave. [The legislature passed, and Governor Walz signed the earned paid sick time and family leave bill. The earned paid sick time and family leave law goes into effect on January 1, 2026.]. The Brainerd May Day March went very well. 13 people joined the march, including BLUE members Pat, Doug, and Isaiah. The march received a mostly positive response from passing motorists. March participants enjoyed an excellent potluck dinner, prepared by local labor leader Wayne Fleischhaker, after the march.

Doug, Richard, and Judi discussed how the Brainerd Area Coalition for Peace (BACP) Spring Adopt a Highway cleanup on Saturday, May 6 went. The Spring BACP Adopt a Highway cleanup went well. Doug, Richard, Judi, Isaiah, and Doug's dad Joe Olson joined the cleanup. Cleanup volunteers used 13 garbage bags for the cleanup. Cleanup volunteers found some large pieces of garbage along the cleanup route, which Doug mentioned in his cleanup report to the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The weather cooperated until the end of the cleanup went it started to rain. Cleanup volunteers had a good time.

BLUE participation in Arts in the Park is pending. The 2023 Arts in the Park event will be held on Saturday, July 2 in Gregory Park from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. More volunteers are needed to staff a table if BLUE hosts a table at Arts in the Park. (BLUE hosted a table at Arts in the Park in 2021 and 2022.) Dean and Donna can volunteer for the BLUE table. Doug won't be able to volunteer due to work and Pat will be out-of-town. Judi and Richard aren't sure if they can volunteer because their family may visit them the weekend Arts in the Park is held. A few more volunteers, in addition to Dean and Donna, would make it possible for BLUE to staff our table at Arts in the Park. Dean will send a request to the BLUE listserv asking if more fellow BLUE members can volunteer for the BLUE table at Arts in the Park. [Dean sent requests for volunteers for the BLUE table at Arts in the Park to the BLUE listserv. If anyone is interested in volunteering at the BLUE table, please contact Dean at dborgeson@crosslake.net]

BACP plans to march in the Brainerd Fourth of July parade. The Brainerd Fourth of July parade will be held on Tuesday, July 4. The parade begins at 6 p.m. The parade route will be the same as last year's. A map of the Brainerd Fourth of July parade can be found at: <https://brainerdcommunityaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Parade-Route-Map-scaled.jpg> BLUE meeting participants agreed BLUE would endorse the BACP parade unit.

Meeting participants discussed an idea BLUE treasurer Pat had about depositing donations for BLUE in the BACP treasury account, with BACP's permission. Pat believed the funds could be kept separate through careful bookkeeping. Doug expressed concerns about the possibility of funds being mixed up, despite good bookkeeping. Doug believed BLUE should set up an account under an individual BLUE member's name. Meeting participants decided to postpone making a decision about how to deposit BLUE funds pending further discussions at future BLUE meetings. BLUE has \$119 in funds. The money comes from donations BLUE received at the BLUE Earth Day film presentation and money Pat and Doug donated to help pay for the BLUE table at Arts in the Park.

Meeting participants discussed the possibility of BLUE and BACP merging in the future. BLUE and BACP are close allies. The two organizations have co-hosted many events. There is a lot of convergence between BLUE and BACP membership. Any possible merger between BLUE and BACP would need to be approved by both groups. The discussion about possibly merging BLUE and BACP will continue at the June BLUE meeting.

BLUE's next monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, June 8 at 7 p.m. The BLUE meeting will be held in Gregory Park. Gregory Park is located at 511 North Fifth Street, Brainerd. BLUE meeting participants will meet in an available picnic table across from the Brainerd United Church of Christ (UCC). The Brainerd UCC is located at 415 Juniper Street, Brainerd. If bad weather prevents a meeting in Gregory Park, the BLUE meeting will be held in the Brainerd UCC Fellowship Hall. The Fellowship Hall is located in the downstairs section of the Brainerd UCC.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

BLUE Meeting Minutes Submitted by Doug Olson

BRAINERD LAKERS UNITED FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (BLUE) May 11TH MEETING AGENDA

The May monthly meeting will be held in the SW quadrant of Gregory Park (weather permitting). As usual the meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. on the 2rd Thursday of the month. If necessary, we will meet across the street in the First Congregational United Church of Christ at 415 Juniper Street Brainerd, MN 56401. Please reply to the cover email if you have any questions or anything you wish to add to or change in the agenda.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

Approve last month's minutes.

Report on the Group's Earth Day (Saturday, April 22, 2023) event at the Brainerd Public Library.

Report on the Saturday, April 29 DSA 'May Day' march in Brainerd.

Report on the Saturday, May 6 Spring Brainerd Area Coalition for Peace (BACP) Adopt a Highway cleanup.

Discussion of BLUE's participation in the Brainerd Community Action 'Arts in the Park' festival on Sunday, July 2nd this year.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion to identify possible future events or actions for the group.

Treasure's report