

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE) December Meeting Minutes

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE) held our monthly meeting on Thursday, December 9. The meeting took place online via the Zoom website. Dean Borgeson, Richard Schiller, Pat Scott, Donna Bowen, and Doug Olson joined the BLUE meeting.

Meeting participants discussed the Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting. Lakes Area Move to Amend (LAMTA), BLUE, Brainerd Area Coalition for Peace (BACP), Brainerd Lakes Area Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and Brainerd Lakes Pride will participate in the Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting. The Brainerd area AFL-CIO and Lakes Area Restorative Justice are invited to join the Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting. The Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 19 at 7 p.m. on the Zoom website. The Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting will discuss ways the participating organizations can get the word out to the Brainerd community about their work. The Meeting will also explore joint events the participating organizations could hold. Some of the participating organizations may be interested in holding a Shut Down Line 3 vigil or picketing pro-Line 3 politicians. LAMTA will do a dry run of the Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting at the Tuesday, December 28 LAMTA online monthly meeting. Invitations to join the Tuesday, December 28 LAMTA online meeting will be sent to the listservs of all the groups participating in the Brainerd Area Joint Democracy Meeting. [Dean and Doug joined the Tuesday, December 28 meeting as did DSA's Julius Kapushinski].

Doug asked if BLUE could start our monthly meetings at 7 p.m. Many groups, including BACP, DSA, and LAMTA, start their meetings at 7 p.m. Starting BLUE meetings at 7 p.m. would give people more time to have dinner before the meeting. Dean seconded the motion to start BLUE's monthly meetings at 7 p.m. The motion passed unanimously. BLUE will start our monthly meetings at 7 p.m. beginning with the Thursday, January 13 meeting.

Meeting participants discussed DSA's caravan to Camp Migizi on Saturday, December 4. Camp Migizi is a Water Protector camp located near Cloquet. Pat helped donate food, blankets, sleeping bags, and hand warmers to the DSA caravan. DSA's Basil Harrington and Holden Hollister drove the supplies to Camp Migizi. Twin Ports (Duluth/Superior) DSA members also held a caravan the same day to donate supplies to Camp Migizi. Basil would like to make the DSA caravans to Camp Migizi bi-monthly events. Many BLUE members are interested in supporting the DSA caravans to Camp Migizi. Water Protectors are staying at Camp Migizi to monitor Line 3 for leaks, support Water Protectors in Wisconsin and Michigan in their struggle against Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline and oppose a proposed logging project in the area.

Pat gave an update on the possibility of Brainerd area public schools holding plastic audits to raise awareness about plastic pollution and encourage students to use less plastic. Pat contacted the principals of Brainerd High School, Pequot Lakes High School, and Pine River-Backus High School but hasn't heard back from them. She will contact them again after New Year's. Pat plans to obtain a copy of *The Story of Plastic*, a 2019 documentary about plastic pollution. Central Lakes College (CLC) sociology professor Gary Payne is interested in showing *The Story of Plastic* at CLC. *The Story of Plastic* could also be shown at Brainerd area public schools and The Shop, a youth center in Brainerd.

Doug discussed fellow BLUE members Larry Fisk and Gayle Nielsen's experience visiting Nicaragua from Saturday, October 30 through Saturday, November 13. Larry and Gayle went to Nicaragua to observe the national elections held on Sunday, November 7. The elections were free and fair. Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega won re-election with over 75% of the vote. Nicaragua is making progress in many areas, including environmental protection. As of 2021, 75% of Nicaragua's energy comes from renewable energy sources. The Nicaraguan government's goal is for 100% of Nicaragua's energy to come from renewable energy sources by 2033. Nicaragua is producing many electric vehicles, especially buses.

Doug will invite 'The 100% Campaign's Chris Conry, Ollin Montes, and Aurora Vautrin to join the Thursday, January 13 BLUE meeting. All are interested in continuing the discussion began at the November BLUE meeting about 'The 100% Campaign's 2022 activities. The 100% Campaign is a Minnesota environmental organization committed to a just and rapid transition to renewable energy sources.

BLUE will hold our next monthly meeting on Thursday, January 13 online via Zoom. The BLUE meeting will begin at 7 p.m. and last 40 minutes, the maximum amount of time Zoom provides for free meetings. BLUE will continue to meet online until at least April. A link to the BLUE meeting on Zoom will be sent with the notice for the BLUE meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. BLUE Meeting Notes Submitted by Doug Olson