

## **BRAINERD LAKERS UNITED FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (BLUE) October 13<sup>th</sup> MEETING MINUTES**

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE) held our monthly meeting on Thursday, October 13 at 6 p.m. The meeting took place in the Brainerd United Church of Christ (UCC) upstairs library. Pat Scott, Doug Olson, and Brainerd Lakes Area Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) co-chair Julius Kapushinski joined the BLUE meeting. Before the BLUE meeting took place, BLUE held a Climate Justice/Water Protectors Solidarity vigil. The vigil took place at the intersection of Sixth and Washington Streets, Brainerd, across from the historic Brainerd water tower. The vigil began at 5 p.m. and lasted until shortly before the BLUE meeting began at 6 p.m. Pat, Doug, and Julius joined the vigil. The vigil received a mostly positive response from passing motorists. Vigil participants felt good about protesting Line 3 again. The last Stop Line 3 vigil took place on October 2, 2021. BLUE is committed to demanding Line 3 be decommissioned and shut down. BLUE supports dropping criminal charges against Water Protectors who peacefully resisted Line 3 construction. BLUE supports shutting down the Dakota Access pipeline and Line 5. BLUE rejects possible projects like copper/nickel mining near the Boundary Waters, manganese/nickel mining near Tamarack (a small town east of McGregor), and the construction of a plywood plant near Cohasset and the Leech Lake Reservation that would damage the environment. The vigil rejected all of these environmentally damaging potential projects in favor of a just and rapid transition to renewable energy.

Pat is receiving help from tax attorney William Klein on the IRS issues BLUE has. Klein recommends Pat continue communication with the IRS, so the IRS knows BLUE wants to resolve the issues. Klein encouraged Pat to contact our Congressional representatives to inform them about the issues BLUE has with the IRS. Klein said many non-profits are having similar issues. BLUE meeting participants agreed Senator Tina Smith, the former head of Planned Parenthood of Minnesota and the Dakotas, might be the best representative to contact. As the former head of a non-profit, Senator Smith might be very empathetic to the issues BLUE is having with the IRS. She might be able to offer helpful advice. Pat received a letter from the IRS about a late fee BLUE owes for the late filing of a 990 form. The late fee is \$17.50. Meeting participants agreed BLUE should pay the fee. Pat and Doug will ask BLUE chair Dean Borgeson if he agrees BLUE should pay the fee. [Dean agreed BLUE should pay the fee. Pat mailed a check to the IRS with the fee amount.]

Pat gave a treasurer's report to the BLUE meeting. The BLUE treasury has \$352. This amount has not changed since July.

The Fall Brainerd Area Coalition for Peace (BACP) Adopt a Highway cleanup is scheduled to be held on Saturday, October 15. Cleanup volunteers will meet in the parking lot of the 'Knotty's on 371' restaurant (the former Cabin Fever) at 11 a.m. to plan the cleanup. Knotty's on 371 is located off Highway 76, north of Little Falls. The cleanups usually take a few hours. If bad weather forces the cleanup to be cancelled, the cleanup will be held on Saturday, October 22. [The Fall BACP Adopt a Highway cleanup took place on Saturday, October 15. Dean, Doug, BACP/BLUE members Judi and Richard Schiller, and Doug's dad Joe Olson joined the cleanup. Cleanup volunteers used 12 bags for litter.]

BLUE will try to host a film presentation of the 2019 documentary "The Story of Plastic" next spring, around Earth Day (April 22). The presentation could be held in Central Lakes College (CLC) or the Brainerd public library.

Julius mentioned DSA's campaign to significantly improve Brainerd's public transportation system. Brainerd relies on Dial-A-Ride, a bus company, for public transportation. The goal of the DSA campaign is to make it much easier for people to use Dial-A-Ride by establishing regular bus routes, introducing renewable cards for bus riders, and forming partnerships with area businesses and CLC to promote public transportation. Julius asked if BLUE would support DSA's public transportation campaign. Pat and Doug said BLUE would be very sympathetic to the campaign because public transportation helps the environment. BLUE members can make an official decision about supporting the DSA campaign once DSA begins working on the campaign earnestly in 2023. DSA would form a broad coalition to try to convince the Brainerd city council to implement the changes in public transportation the campaign wants.

BLUE's next monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, November 10 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 November BLUE meeting will be sent out in the meeting notice.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m. BLUE Meeting Minutes Submitted by Doug Olson

## **BRAINERD LAKERS UNITED FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (BLUE) October 13th<sup>TH</sup> MEETING AGENDA**

The October monthly meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the First Congregational United Church of Christ immediately across the street to the west of Gregory Park. The meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday following the 5:00 p.m. vigil being held at 6<sup>th</sup> & Washington. Please reply to the cover email if you wish to have any questions or anything to add to or change in the agenda.

### **CURRENT BUSINESS:**

- Discussion of the night's 5:00 p.m. Water Protectors Solidarity vigil in Brainerd.
  
- Discuss any further IRS communications on non-profit status.
  
- Discuss this month's Saturday October 15<sup>th</sup> 'Highway Cleanup Project'.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Discussion to identify possible future BLUE events or actions.
  
- Treasure's report