

# THE MUSEUM OF LAKE MINNETONKA



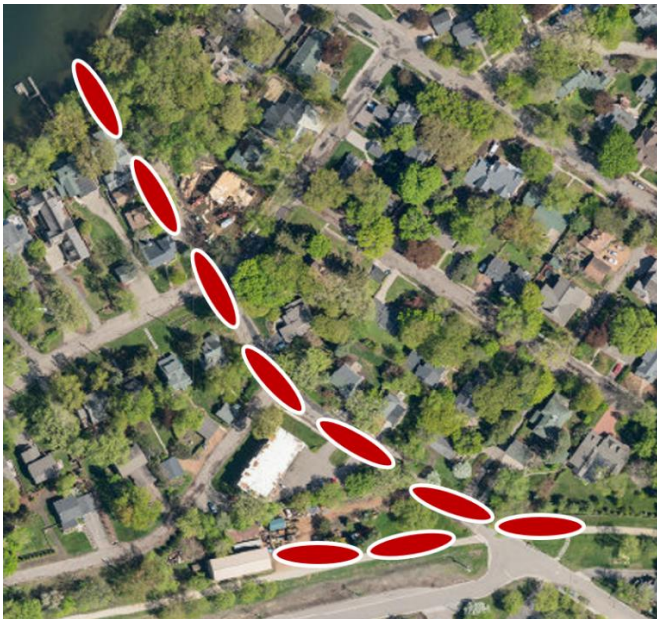
## June 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 Update from MLM's Board of Directors

### UPDATE ON THE SEARCH

The effort to find a new launch site began with a broad search of prospective sites around the lake. It then narrowed to a deep dive into three sites: Tonka Bay's Wekota Beach Park, the Lake Minnetonka Regional Park in Minnetrista, and the George Street fire lane in Excelsior. The deep dive was undertaken to thoroughly assess potential issues with each site and determine solutions for each.

Throughout this process, the Board has weighed the need for answers with the need to move expeditiously to get *Minnehaha* back in the water as quickly as possible. The Board wants to get this decision right – but it also recognizes it does not have the luxury of time. Our resources are limited and the longer it takes to engage the community, the more challenging this task will be.

This was the backdrop for the executive session held following the Board's general June session. After extensive discussion of the three sites, the Board concluded it was time to focus efforts moving forward on the George Street fire lane as the best available option.



George Street pathway from the current Barn to a potential new ramp at the fire lane

### Why George Street?

1. George Street is the only site that is not dependent on using the former launch site one last time. Despite the search committee's extensive investigation, no secondary means of launching the boat has been identified.
2. The George Street solution provides the quickest path to returning the boat to operation and is also financially the most realistic.
3. Excelsior has always been *Minnehaha's* home. The Excelsior community is deeply rooted in history and has always been supportive of the boat.
4. Choosing George Street does not rule out upgrading or replacing the current barn in the future. Built as a temporary structure 30 years ago, the barn's workspace is less than ideal for maintaining the boat. However, we can continue to make it work if we can get back in the water. Launch sites that require both a new ramp and a new barn only magnify our challenge in the short run.

### What challenges must be resolved?

1. First and foremost, it's incumbent on MLM to bring forward a fully vetted plan to the Excelsior community and City Council. MLM needs to demonstrate it is committed, has done its homework, and is prepared to meet what would be expected of any other developer.
2. Transporting the boat from the barn to the fire lane is the biggest hurdle to be overcome. While George Street was reconstructed in 2020, the slope of the roadbed remains a potential obstacle in moving the boat. The digital scanning of the boat will be invaluable to designing/analyzing potential modifications to the existing trailer, design of a new trailer, etc.
3. The site will require dredging the lake bottom. This will entail securing permits through the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and the Department of Natural Resources. MLM will need to show that George Street presents the least invasive solution.
4. A new ramp is a critical element, but so too is a home dock. Ideally *Minnehaha* would have a dedicated dock in the Port of Excelsior to berth the boat and from which all cruises – public and charters – would depart.
5. Fundraising – it will be incumbent on MLM to rally the community's financial support to make this vision a reality.

### What are the next steps?

In the Board's eyes, there are four main focuses moving forward:



Prior to presenting a proposal to the City Council, the Board is planning to host a community input session with the residents of George Street in early July. The goal is to listen to those who would be impacted twice a year by transporting the boat through the neighborhood. The more responsive we are to their input, the better likely the residents are to support use of the fire lane.

The next step will be a formal presentation to the City Council. It is the Board's intention to lay out a comprehensive vision – a new ramp, transporting the boat to & from the barn, and a new home dock. If the Council is receptive, the Board will promptly engage the LMCD regarding the ramp portion of the project.

Finally, we'll need to engage with the entire Lake Minnetonka community...to enlist their support to return *Minnehaha* to active service on the lake.

As this effort moves forward, we will enlist the MLM membership in an all hands on deck effort to rally the community and make the vision a reality. We intend to share updates as events unfold.

#### Wouldn't the Commons be a better solution in Excelsior?

From all of MLM's previous interactions with the Excelsior Council, it has been concluded there is no prospect for a launch site in the Commons.

### STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP EXPLORATION

As shared at our Annual Membership Meeting last August and updated in newsletters since, MLM is one of six lake-area historical organizations exploring the potential of a strategic partnership to address long-term sustainability issues facing each of the organizations. This initiative began in 2020 when the group was awarded a \$52,000 grant by the Minnesota Historical Society to cover the costs of hiring a professional consultant to guide the partner organizations through this journey.

#### Original Partner Organizations:



The Joint Committee overseeing the project has now submitted its Final Report to the partner Boards recommending the organizations adopt an approach entitled "Consolidation on an Incremental Basis." Under this proposal, a new Lake Minnetonka historical entity would be formed. All of the existing museums/displays would continue to serve their individual communities and programs. This new entity would also assume operation of *Minnehaha* should it be able to return to active operation.

The Joint Committee is proposing it undertake the development of a framework for the new organization's governance and operations. Specifically, the framework would define how the Board of Directors

would be selected, how the entity would be staffed, how the Articles and Bylaws would be structured, and how the individual museums, etc. would operate. The committee believes this framework, together with the committee's Final Report, will give members a better understanding of the benefits and implications of the proposal.

Since this step was not part of the committee's original purview, each of the Boards was presented with a resolution authorizing this additional step. The resolution is non-binding on the partner org's and in no way commits the partner Boards to adopt the committee's recommendation of consolidation. Once the framework is finalized, both it and the Final Report will be shared with the memberships. If approved by the Boards, the memberships of each organization would then vote to approve or deny the proposed consolidation.

MLM chose to participate in this strategic exploration believing that anything that could help get *Minnehaha* back operating should be considered. Through the Joint Committee's journey, we have been encouraged by each organization's support for *Minnehaha* and their shared commitment to assist us in any way possible. All the partner org's believe *Minnehaha* is a critical piece to this proposal especially given its ability to connect all of the lake's communities and historical organizations.

The MLM Board took this proposed resolution under consideration at its June meeting. Recognizing that it was non-binding and would only further inform the MLM membership as to what was ultimately being proposed, the Board approved the resolution on a 5-0 vote. A final decision on the resolution is pending the actions of the other partner Boards. Should the resolution be fully adopted, the Joint Committee will then have six months to develop the framework.

The following footnotes are worthy of calling attention to:

- Minnetonka Historical Society concluded this was not the right time for MHS to move forward and withdrew from the project. In doing so, MHS expressed its continued support for the project's goals and their desire to collaborate with the partners on individual programs moving forward (ala PastPort, etc.).
- Deephaven Historical Society, which faced serious sustainability issues, voted to dissolve and is working to donate its historical collection to the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society, (which has long included Deephaven in its area of purview).
- MLM has been well represented on the Joint Committee from day one. Besides Tom McCarthy (MLM's official delegate), also serving on the Joint Committee are Aaron Person (representing Wayzata Historical Society), Scott McGinnis (representing Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society), and Liz Vandam (representing Westonka Historical Society).

### PASTPORT REMINDER

As noted in the June newsletter, MLM is participating in the 2022 PastPort summer event with seven other lake-area organization. Although MLM cannot welcome visitors to the barn, we will participate in this year's PastPort effort. People will be invited to virtually visit MLM by watching a *Minnehaha* video. PastPorts with the correctly answered question about the video will earn a stamp to indicate their virtual attendance.

### WOODBURN MEMORIAL SERVICE



A memorial service has now been scheduled for *Minnehaha* Hall of Fame member Bob Woodburn and his wife Nan. Bob passed on April 10<sup>th</sup> followed by Nan on May 15<sup>th</sup>. **The service will be held on July 7, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary at Wayzata Community Church.**

**UPCOMING DATES TO NOTE**

<p><b>JULY BOARD MEETING</b></p>	<p><b>Tuesday, July 5<sup>th</sup> 6:00 PM</b> The meeting will be held in the Meeting Room at the Wayzata Public Library (620 Rice Street East)</p>
	<p><b>SAVE THE DATE!</b> <b>Gallery Talk Speaking Event</b> <b>Tuesday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 7:00 PM</b> Alexandria, MN</p>
<p><b>ELMHS TAPPING HISTORY CRUISE</b> <i>aboard Lady Of The Lake</i></p>	<p><b>Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup></b> <i>“In The Wake of Lake Minnetonka’s Express Boats”</i>  Tickets available at elmhs.org</p>
<p><b>Annual Member Meeting</b></p>	<p>Advance Notice of MLM’s Annual Meeting: <b>Wednesday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup></b> <b>6:00 – 6:30PM Social Time</b> <b>6:30PM Start of Business Mtg</b> Mound City Council Chambers Centennial Building 5341 Maywood Rd. <i>(A formal meeting notice will be sent to all Regular Members as the date approaches.)</i></p>

**FAVORITE PHOTO**



*Minnehaha* catches some final rays of sunlight as she’s eased back into the barn after being digitally scanned.



**THE MUSEUM OF LAKE MINNETONKA**

*Our Navigational Compass*

**Who We Are...** MLM is an all-volunteer membership-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2003.

**Who We Serve...** Just as the Express Boats were originally created to serve each of the communities on Lake Minnetonka, today we remain dedicated to serving the entire lake community.

**Our Vision...** A living future for the past

**Our Mission...** To inspire an enduring connection to Lake Minnetonka’s rich cultural heritage by preserving & operating the historic Steamboat *Minnehaha* as an authentic, living museum & community icon.

**Our Strategies...**

- ENGAGE** with passengers via narrated cruises focused on different aspects of the lake’s history.
- Welcome young & old into a **HANDS-ON** experience & learn about life in the early 1900’s.
- PARTNER** with local historical societies to host special educational history-themed events.
- Serve as a year-round interactive museum to **TRAIN & QUALIFY** volunteers on the care, maintenance & operation of a historic, authentic, wooden, steam-powered vessel.

**Our Core Values...**

- SAFETY-FIRST...** We place the safety of our passengers, volunteers, and community above all else.
- AUTHENTICITY...** We strive to be authentic in everything we do.
- INSPIRATIONAL...** We bring the history of Lake Minnetonka to life through compelling narratives -- providing pleasure and stimulating enthusiasm for learning.
- COMMUNITY-ORIENTED...** We unite all the communities of Lake Minnetonka through our shared resources -- the lake and its heritage.
- STEWARDSHIP...** We ensure *Minnehaha’s* future is as valuable as her past. We honor our founders by passing forward the heritage they passed to us.

**MLM BOARD OF DIRECTORS / OFFICERS:**

President/Secretary: Tom McCarthy  
Vice President/Treasurer: Scott McGinnis  
Members-at-Large: Aaron Person, Liz Vandam, Sue Paulson

**Published by THE MUSEUM OF LAKE MINNETONKA**

...a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation  
P.O. Box 178 | Excelsior, MN 55331

[mail@steamboatminnehaha.org](mailto:mail@steamboatminnehaha.org)

(952) 474-2115 (voice messages only)

**PASTPORT**



Get your PastPort now...

Link to the

**2022 PastPort program:**

<http://lkmtkahist.weebly.com>