

# THE MUSEUM OF LAKE MINNETONKA



News Between Newsletters: April 2023

## LAKE MINNETONKA HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS PROPOSED CONSOLIDATION UPDATE

In March, the boards of the Museum of Lake Minnetonka, Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society, Wayzata Historical Society and Westonka Historical Society each voted unanimously to approve the Plan of Consolidation and to send the plan to their memberships for their approval. Current MLM members will receive an official notice of a Special Membership Meeting with full information about the proposed consolidation in mid-April.

Members are encouraged to attend one of the **Consolidation Framework Presentations** to learn more *and* to attend the **MLM Special Membership Meeting on May 22nd** to vote on the proposed consolidation.

**SAVE THESE DATES...Official Notice Coming Soon!**

### CONSOLIDATION FRAMEWORK PRESENTATIONS:

<b>Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm</b> Wayzata Community Room Wayzata City Hall 600 Rice St E, Wayzata	<b>Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> 11:00am</b> Lake Minnetonka Shores 4515 Shoreline Drive, Spring Park	<b>Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm</b> Mount Calvary Lutheran Church Sanctuary 301 County Rd 19, Excelsior
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### MLM SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

**Monday, May 22, 7pm**  
Pique Event Center, 306 Water Street, Excelsior

## MAINTENANCE vs. PRESERVATION

Yes, you read that correctly. The work our engineers and volunteers have performed through the years has generally labeled 'maintenance.' Moving forward, we are going to adopt the term 'preservation' when discussing all the work that goes into keeping *Minnehaha* shipshape. *Minnehaha's* addition to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) qualifies her to apply for preservation funds. However there are restrictions on what qualifies for funding, and one of the lessons learned from our first grant application is that maintenance is not considered preservation (i.e., any activity labeled as maintenance is a red flag to grant reviewers). Lesson learned!

## PRESERVATION UPDATE

Since the boat's Condition and Value Survey was updated in 2022, MLM's *preservation* team has worked to address several items that were called out for attention. Nearly all of these stemmed from updated regulations (electrical and others) adopted by the American Boat & Yacht Council in the years since *Minnehaha's* restoration was completed. Keeping the boat compliant with current ABYC codes is important to ensure insurance premiums are minimized.

The major work remaining to be addressed is the replacement of several ribs/planks and to refinish the anti-fouling bottom paint on the hull (below the waterline). While it may sound ominous that timbers need replacing, all wooden hull vessels need to have timbers replaced over time. In fact, these will not be the first replacements made to *Minnehaha's* hull.

St. Paul Shipwrights (who handled the prior replacements) has inspected the boat and will handle the structural work. Projects like these are precisely why having access to preservation grant monies will be so beneficial!

The bottom paint is chemically formulated to deteriorate over the course of a season's use and then a new coat applied prior to the boat going back in the water. However, not all the paint deteriorates...and when a new coat is applied, layers of paint can result in small pockets where water is retained, potentially leading to rot. Recognizing that sanding and scraping the hull's undulating curves is a laborious task that few volunteers are eager to take on, the Board developed a plan to apply to the MN Historical Society for a Small Heritage Grant of \$10,000 to remove the existing bottom paint and prep the hull for painting, and a Large Grant (\$10,000+) for the timber replacements.



***Current state of the old bottom paint tht needs to be removed***



***One of the cracked ribs needing replacement***

Large grants are available only once a year with funds not available until January 1<sup>st</sup>, whereas the Small Grants may be applied for quarterly. Against this backdrop, Liz Vandam, MLM director & lead grant writer, consulted with MNHS on our proposed approach. She also previewed the 49-page application with a member of MNHS' grant team prior to being formally submitted. Regrettably, the MNHS grants committee denied our request citing: (1) they believe both projects should be funded as part of a single grant, and (2) they fund preservation projects, not maintenance work. So in this case, semantics ruled even though the grant committee was aware of the need to address the hull's condition and had led us to believe the grant would be approved. On the plus side, having only one grant to administer will make life easier.

The Board gleaned a lot from this first foray into applying for preservation grants, and we will be more successful on our next application. Clearly the effort involved in writing the grant application has to be weighed against the urgency of the work to be completed (as well as the magnitude of the project's expense). The next window for a Large Grant (\$10,000+) is fast approaching. The pre-application deadline is July 21<sup>st</sup> with the final submission due Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board had already planned to submit a Large Grant application for the timber work, so adding the refinishing component (which is already written) should be straightforward.

#### **UPDATE ON SEARCH FOR A NEW LAUNCH SITE**

The Board continues to actively work on developing a formal plan for a new launch site. Previously, the Board had stated that it had identified the George Street Fire Lane in Excelsior as the site for a new ramp. Recently, a new site option surfaced (one without some of George Street's logistical challenges). The Board is currently working to assess its viability and hopes to be able to share additional information as part of an update at the Special Membership Meeting on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **LAKE MINNETONKA MAGAZINE**

To kick off the summer boating season, *Lake Minnetonka Magazine's* May issue will feature a story on *Minnehaha*! If you're not a subscriber, we'll post links to the issue on our website & Facebook page in early May.

#### **IN THE WORKS...**

A book project about Express Boat *Minnehaha*! The book will include the history of the Express Boats, as well as the salvage and restoration of *Minnehaha*. If you have photos and stories to share about *Minnehaha's* early life on the Lake Minnetonka (1906-1926), her salvage and/or restoration, please send emails to [lizvandam5@gmail.com](mailto:lizvandam5@gmail.com). Interviews will be conducted with those who want to share their memories. Get out your family scrapbooks and help to highlight *Minnehaha's* life on Lake Minnetonka.

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