

MINUTES
MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THREE LAKES COUNCIL
DATE: June 23, 2010

The Board of Directors of the Three Lakes Council met at 7:00 PM on June 23, 2010 at the home of Betsy and Jack Sinnott.

Present were:

Jack Sinnott, President
Jan Andersen, Vice president
John Lemke, Treasurer
Jean Lewis, Secretary

Representing the lake associations were:

Joe Tansey, Lake Oscaleta Assoc.; John Lemke and Regina Anderson, Lake Waccabuc Assoc.; Beth Llanos, Lakeside Association; David Eggers, Perch Bay Assoc.; Alayne Vlachos, South Shore Assoc.; Jan Andersen, Two Lake Club; Dan Kleinman, Waccabuc Landowners; Darrell Alfieri, Waccabuc Country Club.

President Jack Sinnott opened the meeting by introducing David Eggers, a new Board member representing Perch Bay, and Darrell Alfieri, who represented the Waccabuc Country Club.

He explained that the Three Lakes Council Board is comprised of a representative and alternate from all the lake associations plus the Waccabuc Country Club. It works to preserve and protect the three lakes through scientific research and educating residents about best practices and lake stewardship.

HANDS AND FEET

Jack asked the Board to recruit more "hands and feet" to accomplish the work of the Council - a theme that recurred throughout the meeting. He feels that more people need to take a leadership role in key areas of Council activities. This subject was discussed further at the end of the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Jack Sinnott applauded an outstanding early response to our Membership flyer that was mailed earlier this month. Several members responded with extremely generous contributions of between \$350 to \$1,000.

John Lemke reported that, as of this date, members have already contributed \$10,599 to the General Fund. We generally receive an average of \$25,000/year for that fund.

We have two separate bank accounts - the General Fund, and a BEEP Fund for money contributed for our Brazilian Elodea eradication effort.

Balances for those two accounts are:

General Fund: \$47,790.02 as of 5/31/10

BEEP Fund: \$38,062.68 as of 6/2/10

John explained that our budget is divided into two categories of expenditures - Firm or contracted items (such as taxes, insurance, lake consultant, water quality initiatives) and Soft Items to be managed dependent on interest and volunteers (such as fish stocking, and educational seminars). For 2010, the Board budgeted \$17,950 for Firm items and \$7,000 for Soft items. The budget also has \$15,000 for continued BEEP actions.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Jack Sinnott announced that he and Betsy wish to retire as co-chairs of the Membership Committee. The Board needs to find someone to chair the Membership Committee and seek others to serve on the committee.

Regina Anderson asked if the BEEP effort increased membership. Jack estimated that it attracted approximately 25 new members. He estimates that slightly over 50% of eligible members have financially supported the Council. The membership roll has significantly increased in recent years, but Jack expressed his frustration that almost half of the people who live on the lakes and enjoy lake rights still have not joined. He feels that all who enjoy the recreational and financial benefits offered by our lakes should be supporting our efforts to preserve and protect them by becoming members. He added that the membership contribution is very low, so that should not be an issue.

SHORELINE LANDSCAPING

Joe Tansey discussed the importance of having a buffer of shoreline vegetation along the lakes. Trees provide wildlife habitat and prevent erosion, and natural shoreline vegetation improve water quality by absorbing nutrients.

LAKE WATER TESTING

Jan Andersen explained that volunteers take water samples on all three lakes 8 times during the summer. The protocol is established by CSLAP (Citizens' Statewide Assessment Program). Samples are sent to a NYS DEC laboratory where they are analyzed for water quality and chemistry (including phosphates, nitrates, dissolved oxygen, alkalinity, etc.). We pay a small annual membership fee to FOLA, and in return the DEC performs all the lab work at little or no cost to us. A great value!

"GOOP AND ZOOP"

In 2003 our first lake manager studied the algae (goop") and zooplankton ("zoop") in our lakes. Sampling done by our current lake manager in 2008 seems to indicate changes in those populations. We don't know whether this can be attributed to different sampling techniques, or to a change in lake conditions.

A healthy lake is efficient at keeping in balance all elements of the food web, from algae and zooplankton on up to the fish, birds and reptiles. At this point in time, Rippowam appears to be inefficient. Waccabuc is moderately efficient, and Oscaleta is the most efficient.

In order to better understand the variation in efficiency, our lake manager, Chris Doyle of Allied Biological, would like to do more "goop and zoop" sampling. Jan suggested that it be done at the same time that testing is done by the NYS Dept. of Health (in conjunction with CSLAP testing). Jan said that while she supports the additional sampling, she would respect any reasons Board members might have for not doing it.

Joe Tansey supported going forth with a "goop and zoop" study this year. He noted what he considers to be a significant reduction in the number of insects and invertebrates in and on the lakes and a corresponding reduction in the number of fish, bats and tree swallows that feed on the insects. He wondered if changes at the lower end of the food chain have affected these decreases.

John Lemke said this would add \$4,000 to the previously approved budget, but there are sufficient funds to cover that expense if the Board is interested in contracting for it.

Jack said that since 2003, when our first lake studies were done, we have gained a better understanding of algae. Some types are just a nuisance, and others pose a potential health hazard. The one thing we can be certain of is that it is always in our lakes, and some years we have a more significant algae bloom than others. He supported learning more about it and its role in the food web.

Jan would like more information about controlling algae by fish stocking. For example, are there species of fish that, if added, would improve water quality?

Jack feels that our lake water studies have been a good investment, and we should continue on this track of learning more about the science of our lakes.

Since all comments supported carrying out "goop and zoop" studies this summer, a motion was made to add \$4,000 to the current budget for this purpose. The motion received unanimous approval.

BEEP

Jan Andersen reported that following the suction harvesting of Brazilian Elodea in Waccabuc's North Cove, she and Lou Feeney frequently monitored the cove for any reoccurrence of this highly invasive plant. Extensive monitoring took place from August through October, when the water became too cold for them to snorkel and dive.

Monitoring was resumed this Spring and a scuba divemaster has been hired to assist in the search at a modest cost of \$100/day. We allocated sufficient money in the budget to cover this expense. Monitoring by Jan, Lou and the diver will continue until the entire cove has been searched. Although aquatic plant growth has been vigorous, they are relieved to report that, so far, **NO BRAZILIAN ELODEA HAS BEEN FOUND**. There is some native elodea, which is a good plant to have. It takes a trained eye to tell the difference between the highly invasive Brazilian Elodea and native elodea, so Jan encourages everyone to call her if an unusual plant is spotted, and she will come identify it.

Regina Anderson suggested that we communicate the message that no Brazilian Elodea has yet been found to everyone on the cove, because news is spreading that BE is back. Jan has had personal conversations with three concerned residents to correct that mistaken impression, and will post another email soon. She will acknowledge heavy new growth, but emphasize that it is not Brazilian Elodea. She will also inform the community that we have hired a diver to assist in monitoring the situation.

In addition to hiring a diver, we have contracted with our Lake Manager to do rake tosses in other locations to make sure the Brazilian Elodea didn't escape the North Cove and take root elsewhere.

BOAT STICKERS

Alayne Vlachos mentioned the email discussion about providing bigger, bolder, easier to read boat stickers. Jack suggested that people who feel strongly about this should form a committee to discuss the problem, look at options, and come before the Board with recommendations.

EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

For the past several years we have sponsored an Educational Seminar in May that focuses on a lake-related topic. On May 21st our Lake Manager, Chris Doyle, presented a program on "Goop and Zoop" (phytoplankton and zooplankton) and their role in the food web. While the presentation was well done and informational, attendance was low.

Jack observed that the content of all the seminars has been very informative, but attendance has nevertheless been dwindling. The consensus was that it doesn't appear to be important enough people to fund it annually. We can arrange for future seminars when there is a topic that will attract enough people to justify the spending.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Jean Lewis listed the Three Lakes Council events scheduled for 2010.

The focus of all this year's activities is "40 Years of Stewardship"

May 21

- Educational Seminar
Speaker - Chris Doyle from Allied Biological (ABI)
Topic - goop (algae), zoop (zooplankton); their roles in the food web

June

- 2010 Membership flyer was mailed

July

- Picnic reminder will be mailed.
- Membership reminder will be mailed.
- Newsletter will be mailed.
- July 31 - Picnic/annual meeting

Time:

Place: WCC Beach

Alt. location in case of rain is the WCC

Carriage House

Head chef: Joe Tansey

Picnic set up: Barbara Posner

Annual meeting: Jack Sinnott

August

- A personalized letter will be mailed to residents who have not sent in membership donations. Starting this year, we will ask why they haven't yet joined (don't support our efforts? forgot?)

November

- An End of Year fundraising letter will be mailed.

NEWSLETTER

Judy Hausman and Stephanie Harding will once again edit and produce the Newsletter. Since this is the 40th year of the founding of the Council, historical information and a write-up of the accomplishments of the Council during those 40 years will be included. Articles should be given to Judy and Stephanie ASAP.

PICNIC/ANNUAL MEETING

The Waccabuc Country Beach has been reserved for our Picnic/Annual meeting which will be held on July 31. The Carriage House has been reserved in case of inclement weather. Joe Tansey and his crew will once again hold forth at the grill. Barbara Posner and her committee will arrange the table set-ups.

TREES FOR TRIBS

Trees For Tribs (tributaries) is a State DEC program that provides saplings for organizations that request them to plant along stream banks to halt erosion. The Council has participated in this program for over 2 years and planted saplings along Waccabuc Creek - at the west end of Lake Waccabuc. The first year, 200 shrubs and saplings were planted. There was some attrition due to deer browsing and other factors, so another 50-60 saplings were planted last year. Sleeves are placed around the trees to protect them and some need replacing.

The following volunteers have assisted with the planting: Jack and Betsy Sinnott, Jan Andersen, Paul Lewis, and members of the John Jay AP Environmental Science Class under the leadership of Dr. Linda Burke.

Jack would like a volunteer to serve as an overseer, to visit the site on a regular basis, replace tree sleeves if necessary, and check on the condition of the trees.

"HANDS AND FEET" REVISITED

Jack reiterated his gratitude for the increased number of people donating to the Council, and for the large amounts of money some of them are donating. However, he wishes to see more people assuming a leadership role in doing the work of the Council.

In addition to replacing Jack as chair of the Membership Committee, Board members suggested more community leaders to take responsibility for the following:

- Newcomer Outreach chair - (separate from membership committee) to update welcome packets, identify new residents and see that they receive the packets.
- Lake association outreach - someone to focus on the lake associations and develop methods to recruit more members into the Three Lakes Council.
- Storm drain Team Leader, to inspect all storm drains around the lakes.
- Aerator maintenance - someone to oversee our dormant aerators and compressor and make recommendations re the future use or disposal of this equipment.
- Trees for Tribs overseer
- Boat usage committee

Three current committee chair positions need to be filled:

Picnic - chefs (Joe Tansey is training two people to replace him).

Picnic - set-ups (Barbara Posner may retire)

Membership

Joe Tansey made the following suggestions:

1. The Executive Committee should list of 4-5 priority areas that need leadership.
2. The list should be given to Board Members who should be responsible for finding people to take leadership roles in those areas.

The Executive Committee should state expectations regarding the tasks involved, assign dates for completion of tasks, and assign dates for reporting back to the Board.

Upon a motion by Jan Andersen that was seconded by John Lemke, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Lewis, Secretary