

**MINUTES  
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
THREE LAKES COUNCIL  
August 11, 2012**

The Annual Meeting of the membership of the Three Lakes Council at was held on August 11, 2012. Due to the threat of rain, the event was held at the Waccabuc Country Club Carriage House. Approximately 60 people attended.

**Welcome And Thanks**

Janet Andersen, Three Lakes Council Vice President, chaired the meeting at the request of President Jack Sinnott who was traveling. Jan welcomed everyone and thanked our members who have made it possible for us to be working on lake conservation for 42 years! She gave special thanks to the people who made this annual meeting possible:

- John Assumma of the Waccabuc Country Club for providing the use of their facility and many services that support us all year.
- The Picnic Committee helpers: Kathy Rothfeld, Liz Lemke, and Jean Lewis and John Lemke who greeted members as they arrived.
- Joe Tansey, head chef, and his cooking and carving crew: Gene Tedaldi, Ron Tetelman, Robby Rothfeld and Paul Lewis.

Jan also like acknowledged and thanked members of the Board and Executive Committee for their on-going efforts on behalf of the Three Lakes Council. The Members of the Executive Committee are Jack Sinnott, president; Jan Andersen, vice president; John Lemke, treasurer; and Jean Lewis, secretary.

Board members, representing each lake association, are:

- Lake Oscaleta Association – Joe Tansey
- Lake Waccabuc Association – Doug Housman
- Lakeside Association – Beth and Paul Llanos
- Perch Bay Association – David Eggers
- South Shore Association – Alayne Vlachos
- Two Lake Club – Peter Gross
- Waccabuc Landowners – Jim Henry
- Waccabuc Country Club – John Grimm

A special welcome was extended to three new board members – Doug Housman, Peter Gross, and Jim Henry.

**Key Initiatives and Mission**

Jan stated our goal as continuing to protect and preserve the watershed of our three lakes. We do this through education and information, research and monitoring water quality, studying issues that may affect our lakes, and taking action when needed.

Our initiatives are focused on:

- Safeguarding water quality.
- Conducting scientific studies.
- Encouraging good lake management practices.
- Addressing issues and coordinating community action when needed.

## **Report on Activities since the 2011 Annual Meeting**

### **Fall/Winter**

- During the Fall and Winter months the Three Lakes Council plans for the upcoming year: budget planning, revenue projections, prioritizing of initiatives. This work depends on successful year-end fundraising, and Jan thanked every contributor for their generosity and support.
- We planned for effective use of our Lake Manager's expertise, and developed a contract.
- Winter generally gives us a chance to update and refresh our website pages. These pages were viewed 6424 times in 2011, up 165% from the prior year, and the website has already had more views this year than in all of 2011.
- There are also 325 people on our Google email communication group. Anyone who isn't on this list and wishes to be should contact Jan Andersen.

### **Spring**

- In February, a Beaver Committee was appointed to assess whether and how the Three Lakes Council should take action with regard to beavers that established a lodge on Lake Oscaleta and had been actively building a dam in the culvert between Oscaleta and Waccabuc. Peter Gross chaired the committee and prepared a comprehensive report to the board. In March, the board met and established a plan that identified criteria for removing beavers from the lakes. The major criteria involve blocking the channel for boat traffic and water flow. The Beaver Plan, which contains the details of the criteria, is available on our website. Many volunteers, coordinated by Joe Tansey, have worked all year to keep the channel clear of debris.
- In March, we started water sampling activity (in conjunction with NYS DEC's CSLAP program). Because of the warm winter, we started earlier than last year. Last year we began on April 22 and continued until November 26<sup>th</sup>. There were 14 outings on each lake for 42 sampling sessions in 2011.
- In April, we began geese population management. Five or six egg oiling trips were made by Betsy and Jack Sinnott, and Lyn and Peter Beardsley. Although there have been a few goslings each year, their work really makes a difference in the amount of geese on these lakes during the summer. Joe Tansey, Paul Lewis, and Lou Feeney all help patrol the other lakes, but Waccabuc seems to have the most nesting activity. Over the past six springs, 467 geese eggs were oiled. This year we oiled 39 eggs in 11 nests.
- In May, we started our annual membership drive. So far, we have about 160 members this year.
- In June, Joe Tansey and his fish committee stocked trout in Waccabuc and Oscaleta. The fish committee has been active this year. Anyone interested in joining should contact Joe or John Lemke.
- In June, our annual Newsletter was planned, written, formatted, printed, and mailed. Thanks to Stephanie Harding who did the layout and handled production and delivery. We sent out 475 newsletters to our community at the start of July.

## **Summer**

- Water sampling/testing on Lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta and Rippowam continues as part of the NYS DEC CSLAP (Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment) program. Every two weeks we measure clarity, temperature, color, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, nitrates, chlorophyll, and calcium in our lakes. We are also participating in some state run harmful algal bloom (HAB) studies. Our volunteers on this work are Lou Feeney and Paul Lewis and Jan Andersen. Scorecards from 2011 for each of our lakes are on display on our website.
- Several residents participated in a "drop-a-block" project. Blocks or bricks are suspended from docks and checked regularly to monitor for zebra mussels which, fortunately, have not yet been found in our lakes.
- Lake water gauges are monitored, with the help of Bobbie and Lew Terman. In 2011, with storms Irene and Lee, there was a 33" swing in water levels. Just to show how little rain and snow we've had this year, so far this year the waters have had about a 6" swing from high to low. We also record rainfall amounts, all in the interest of better understanding the hydrology of the lakes.
- Long Pond Preserve Property at the western end of Lake Waccabuc, is owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), but is expected to transition to Westchester Land Trust ownership shortly. We have assisted TNC in stewardship activities such as erosion prevention and clean-up of the property. Although we don't own the property, and have limited control over its use, we have been working with WLT to find ways of halting access to the lake for unauthorized uses such as boating, fishing and swimming. We began an agreement with WLT whereby we will serve as preserve ambassadors. John Lemke organized a team of people who patrol the area, explaining why lake access is prohibited from the preserve, and discouraging rule breakers. We will continue to work with WLT to improve signage along the property.
- We've commissioned two plant surveys in Lake Waccabuc in July, an open lake rake toss survey, and a shoreline survey, to help us look for new invasive species and monitor plant diversity on the lake.
- BEEP – our Brazilian Elodea eradication project. This highly invasive aquatic plant was discovered by our Lake Manager in Waccabuc's north cove. It was probably brought here by someone dumping an aquarium into the lake. Most times, invasive aquatic plants are not eradicated – if anything they are controlled, often by herbicides. Instead, the Council decided upon eradication using suction harvesting and, what we didn't realize at the time, a lot of continued hand pulling. The Three Lakes Community showed an incredible amount of trust in us by investing funds for this work. As we learn more, we realize how rare it is that people actually set a goal of eradication – it is so rarely successful. We are pleased to announce that - so far - we seem to be exceptionally lucky. After eradication efforts in 2009, we found a small patch of Brazilian elodea in 2010, and thus far we haven't found any since. Our rare success against an invasive is something that we should all be proud of – we couldn't have even tried this without the support of the community. But we can't rest easy. Members are requested to report any unusual plant sightings to Jan Andersen.

## **Financial Report**

Treasurer John Lemke prepared the following summary:  
In 2011 we raised \$36,000 and spent \$24,000.

Thus far in 2012 approximately \$21,000 has been contributed by 160 members. After paying for the two surveys on Waccabuc this year, the BEEP fund has a balance of \$20,000. Membership generosity will fund on-going BEEP monitoring, continued CSLAP water testing and monitoring for harmful algae blooms (HABs), and hiring Lake Management Consultants to survey aquatic vegetation and carry out studies of phytoplankton and zooplankton in our lakes. These studies help us understand the food web in our lakes.

In her closing remarks, Jan pointed out that all our activities are dependent on participation by volunteers. We are grateful for the many people who help, and would welcome additional volunteers. She urged anyone interested in helping with any of our activities – from water monitoring to helping with future gatherings like the annual meeting - to let her know.

After Jan's closing remarks, Nadine Levy thanked Jan for her on-going dedication and hard work which prompted a round of applause from those present.

Questions:

Q: Are we oiling swan eggs?

A: No, just goose eggs. Although swan populations are an issue on the reservoirs, so far we have only one family on our lakes.

Q: Cormorants are a problem elsewhere in NYS. Are we doing anything to discourage them?

A: There are only a few on our lakes now. We will monitor the numbers. If a troublesome number appear, we will need to be very careful about how we address that issue so that we don't create an imbalance in the food web.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jean Lewis, Secretary