

**MINUTES
MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THREE LAKES COUNCIL
DATE: September 20, 2012**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Three Lakes Council was held on September 20, 2012 at the home of Jack and Betsy Sinnott.

Present were: Jack Sinnott, President; Jan Andersen, Vice president; John Lemke, Treasurer; Jean Lewis, Secretary; Joe Tansey, Lake Oscaleta Association; Jane Peters, South Shore Association; Peter Gross, Two Lake Club; and Paul Lewis.

President Jack Sinnott called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM. Last Spring, after announcing his intention to step down as president, he asked Beth Llanos to serve as chair of a Nominating Committee, and she graciously agreed to do so. Beth asked Peter Beardsley (past president of the Council) and Jean Lewis to serve on the committee. Beth was unable to attend the meeting, so Jean Lewis presented the Nominating Committee report.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Before presenting the proposed slate of officers, which was distributed to Board members in advance of the meeting, Jean recalled some of the many important initiatives Jack brought to fruition during his 7-year presidency (2005-2012).

1. OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

- Upon becoming President, Jack established an active Executive Committee that worked with him throughout the year to define priorities & plans for carrying them out, and conduct the day-to-day business of the Council.
- Insurance costs and local taxes were lowered.
- Ineffective aerators were turned off in 2005, eliminating high electricity costs.
- As stewardship efforts increased, fundraising appeals became very successful, especially in regard to funding the BEEP effort

2. INCREASED PARTICIPATION

- Membership increased from fewer than 90 in 2005 to over 250 in 2011.
- Board attendance and involvement increased.

3. EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION

- A membership survey was conducted in 2006 and had an over 50% response rate. The input drove such initiatives as goose control (egg oiling).
- The Website was redesigned and made more "user friendly." More content was posted, and visitation increased.

- Educational seminars began in 2005 with a Septic Tank seminar.
- The 2009 Newsletter received an Award of Excellence for Large Associations from the New York State Federation of Lake Associations.
- Postcards were mailed to watershed residents on topics of environmental importance.
- A Google email communication group was established to disseminate information pertinent to the three lakes.
- The database was expanded and improved to keep track of membership contact information and contributions.

4. BY-LAWS REVISION

- A Committee was appointed to study current By-Laws and recommend updates. The membership approved the revisions in 2007.

5. LAKE MANAGEMENT

Background: At the time Jack became President, we received a report from our lake manager, Cedar Eden, which diagnosed stresses on the lakes and suggested a plan for addressing them. Under Jack's leadership, we began implementing the suggested lake preservation plans.

- We contracted with a new lake manager, Allied Biological Inc. (ABI).
- ABI mapped aquatic plants to quantify diversity and density and identify any invasive plants.
This resulted in discovery of Brazilian Elodea and our BEEP effort was begun. Thanks to early detection and intervention, we believe we have eradicated ED, but monitoring is on-going.
- To better understand the food web of our lakes - phytoplankton and zooplankton ("goop and zoop") are being studied by ABI.
- CSLAP testing (a NYS DEC lake assessment program) was resumed. Sampling is done by a team of trained 3LC volunteers.

6. WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP

- A policy was developed regarding communication with Town and County officials: "We will continue to advocate for stringent laws and decisions that protect the water quality and environment of our lakes."
(Source: 10-10-05 Exec. Committee Minutes)

- Letters were written to Town of Lewisboro officials stating environmental concerns regarding the development of 5 properties within the Three Lake Watershed.
- Regarding proposed changes to the County Septic Code, a letter was written encouraging the County to mandate that all septic systems and holding tanks be cleaned and inspected on a regular schedule, based on tank size and usage, and to require proof of compliance.
- We worked in cooperation with Nature Conservancy and, more recently, Westchester Land Trust to protect Long Pond Preserve at the western end of Waccabuc and prevent unauthorized use of the beach there.
- We planted and maintained trees provided NYS DEC Trees for Tribes Initiative to prevent erosion and silting where Waccabuc Creek enters Lake Waccabuc.
- We appointed a committee to study and recommend actions regarding the presence of beavers in the Oscaleta-Waccabuc channel.

With those accomplishments in mind, the Nominating Committee met several times over the summer months to come up with a slate of officers we considered best able to carry forward the momentum of Jack's presidency.

The slate we propose is:
President – Janet Andersen
Vice President – Peter Gross
Treasurer – John Lemke
Secretary – Jean Lewis

(End of report)

Jack Sinnott opened the floor to additional nominations. As there were none, Joe Tansey moved acceptance of the proposed slate of officers. John Lemke seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

The Board praised and thanked Jack for his organizational and leadership skills, noting their importance in moving forward the Council's lake preservation efforts during his 7-year presidency. Jack credited much success to membership "hands and feet" that worked together to implement stewardship initiatives. He also expressed appreciation for the generous donations from the membership that financed those initiatives.

Jan Andersen, our newly elected president, thanked Jack for his many contributions, and thanked the nominating committee and the board for their confidence in her. She and Jack both expressed pleasure in welcoming a new officer with fresh ideas (Peter Gross), and appreciation for the continuity provided by the treasurer and secretary who will continue to serve.

According to the By-Laws, the Council can have two at-large directors. Upon a motion made by Jean Lewis and seconded by Peter Gross, Jack Sinnott was appointed as an at-large director, subject to approval by the membership at the annual meeting. Jack will serve as chairman of the Membership Committee.

Jan expressed interest in learning more about membership concerns and ideas. She would like each Board member to report on lake observations and issues of importance within their associations.

Board members who were present at the meeting discussed some of their issues and ideas:

- Issues surrounding Long Pond Preserve - neighbor's complaints regarding parking on Mead Street, and the degree to which we should police unauthorized use of the beach.
- A suggestion to issue new boat stickers to replace worn ones, and to collect fresh data regarding boat ownership. A Boat Sticker Committee should be formed to assist Alayne Vlachos by distributing new application forms within the various lake associations, and delivering stickers (only) to those who fill out the form. The possibility of on-line boat registration should be considered. With a goal of improving the Council's ability to return stray boats, a new and easily accessible data base should be built using the newly collected boat ownership information.

(Jane Peter reported that there is a stray canoe at her dock with sticker #440 on it. She hopes the owner can be identified so the boat can be retrieved).

- Consider issuing embossed metal name plates for floats, similar to boat stickers, to assist in their return when they go astray.
- Concern about the upward trend of aquatic vegetation (pond lilies and milfoil), especially at the ends of the lakes where some homeowners find it difficult to canoe through it to get to open water. The growth has become too dense to hand pull. The Council is monitoring the grown trend and is aware of some contributing factors, including warmer temperatures and ongoing nutrient loading. However, we have not yet found a solution for removal of the vegetation.
- Consider hiring a consultant to assess the condition of the Waccabuc outlet structure (dam). If it should fail, lake levels in all three lakes and all lakefront homeowners would be seriously affected. Peter Gross volunteered to research and report to the Board on the legal setting for this issue.
- Consider what, if anything, the Council should do regarding clogging of the channels by lilies, which is making boat passage difficult.
- Consider a May seminar, possibly on aquatic birds or animals.

TOPIC FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

At the next meeting, Board members will be asked to report on items of concern within their associations, and to help prioritize initiatives.

ILLEGAL HORSEPOWER REPORTS

The Council received reports of a large whaler with an approximately 70 horsepower motor on Lake Waccabuc. The horsepower exceeds that which is permitted by Town Law. Jack Sinnott will call the owner, relay the complaints, and ask that the boat not be brought back to the lake.

FISH COMMITTEE

Joe Tansey reported great fishing over the summer. The fish stocking went well and, while doing the stocking, he and John Lemke were treated to the sight of a young mink scurrying across a dock.

During the Fall, Joe would like to stock crayfish which are reported to consume algae and provide food for bass. The Board's opinion was that research must precede any stocking to ensure that only native crayfish are stocked (not one of the invasive species), and to ensure that they aren't vectors for any invasive species.

COMMUNICATIONS

Jack Sinnott praised Joe Tansey for his effective use of the Google group to share photos of interesting wildlife present on our lakes. To further encourage sharing among the community, Jan Andersen would like to have a member with IT skills establish a Three Lakes Council Facebook page.

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Lemke reported to date we have received donations from 178 families. There is \$26,500 in the BEEP bank account, and \$93,500 in the general account.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Joe Tansey, seconded by Jack Sinnott, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Lewis, secretary