

MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
THREE LAKES COUNCIL
July 27, 2013

The Annual Meeting of the membership of the Three Lakes Council at was held on July 27, 2013 at the Waccabuc Country Club Beachfront. Approximately 110 people attended.

Janet Andersen, President of the Three Lakes Council, welcomed everyone to the 2013 annual meeting. She thanked all of the members who made it possible for the Three Lakes Council to work on lake conservation for 43 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 supporting us all year.
- The Picnic Coordinators and helpers: Kelley Housman who took over coordination this year, the helper in chief Kathy Rothfeld, and Liz Lemke, and John Lemke, who greeted members as they arrived.
- The cooking and carving crew: Ron Tetelman, Robby Rothfeld, Gene Tedaldi, and Lou Feeney.

Jan also acknowledged and thanked members of the Board and Executive Committee for continuing efforts on behalf of the Three Lakes Council. The members of the Executive Committee are Peter Gross, vice president, John Lemke, treasurer, and Jean Lewis, secretary. She also thanked Paul Lewis who serves as the chair of the Lake Preservation Committee and is always helpful in lake biology discussions.

Board members, representing each lake association, are:

- Lake Oscaleta Association – Joe Tansey
- Lake Waccabuc Association – Doug Housman
- Lakeside Association – Beth Llanos
- Perch Bay Association – David Eggers
- South Shore Association – Alayne Vlachos
- Two Lake Club –Peter Gross
- Waccabuc Landowners Council – Seth Christian
- Waccabuc Country Club - Peter Bysshe

Jan also expressed her appreciation to Jack Sinnott, who stepped down after seven years of leading the Three Lakes Council, and reviewed some of his accomplishments, which were also highlighted in our newsletter. The Three Lakes Council also nominated Jack for a statewide Lake Steward award from the NYSFOLA, and will present Jack with that award when he returns from his travels.

Key Initiatives and mission of the Three Lakes Council.

The Three Lakes Council goals, as described by Jan, continue to be to protect and preserve the waters and the watershed of our three lakes. She reminded members that lake waters truly are a reflection of all of our actions in the watershed. The 3LC acts on our mission through education and information, research and monitoring water quality, studying issues that may affect our lakes, and taking action when needed.

The initiatives are focused on:

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

Jan reported on the activities since our meeting last year:

- Last summer's plant survey of Lake Waccabuc found a rare plant found for the first time in Westchester County growing in Lake Waccabuc: Jan reminded us that our lakes are special!

Fall/Winter

- During the Fall and Winter months we planned for the upcoming year: budget planning, revenue projections, prioritize and staff initiatives. This work depends on a successful year end fundraising, and Jan thanked contributors for their generosity and support.
- We planned and developed a contract for effective use of our Lake Manager's expertise.
- Winter gives us a chance to update and refresh our website pages. These pages were viewed 14,258 times in 2012, about three times more than during the prior year. Jan encouraged members to use the website as a good first place to look for information.
- Jan reported that about 325 people are on our Google email communication group.
- The 3LC wrote two letters to the Town's Planning Board, expressing concerns about a proposed new house to be built by filling in a wetland on Oscaleta Road. We continue to stay involved.

Spring

- Jan reminded members that beavers have established lodges at the east and west ends of Lake Oscaleta. In the spring, members of the Beaver Committee, led by Peter Gross, revisited the criteria that we established for taking action on the beavers. The committee confirmed that the criteria continued to be appropriate. The beaver plan and the details of the criteria are available on our website. We paid for a new gate at the culvert to help access the materials, and the Town highway department continues to pick up debris. Many volunteers, coordinated by Joe Tansey, have worked all year to keep the channel clear of debris at multiple spots.
- In April, it was again time for geese population management. Betsy and Jack Sinnott, and Lyn and Peter Beardsley oiled eggs for the seventh spring. Although there have been some goslings each year, their work really makes a difference in the amount of geese that stay on these lakes during the summer. This year we oiled 21 eggs in 7 nests. This effort has slowed the growth in the number of geese who call our lakes home.
- In May, we started our annual membership drive. So far we have about 160 members. Jan thanked the members again and reminded everyone that having a substantial number of members from the community really amplifies our voice.
- In June, Joe Tansey and his fish committee stocked 500 trout in Waccabuc and Oscaleta. Joe leads an active fishing committee and can be contacted for more information.

- In June, our annual newsletter was planned, written, formatted, printed, and mailed. Jan thanked to Stephanie Harding who did the layout and handled production. We sent out 475 newsletters to our community at the end of June, and provided about 100 more to WCC members.

Summer

- The Three Lakes Council continues water sampling and testing on Lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta and Rippowam 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, pH, conductivity, and calcium in our lakes. Last year we sampled 12 times from March to Thanksgiving. Our volunteers on this work are Lou Feeney, Jean and Paul Lewis, and Jan Andersen. Scorecards from the CSLAP reports for each of our lakes are on our website.
- Jan said that she serves on the board of the NYS Federation of Lake Associations, and as part of that, last week, she ran a regional conference for those interested in learning more about the science of lakes. Three Lakes Council members were among the 60 people gathered at a lake near Carmel, NY.
- Our lakes also are participating in sampling and research on harmful algal blooms. In early June, Waccabuc was pretty green, and samples indicated that blue green algae was present at somewhat elevated levels. Since then, our samples have been fine.
- Waccabuc is also one of only four lakes in the state that is being sampled for pesticides as part of a pilot study by Cornell. While the other lakes are near agricultural areas, Waccabuc was selected because it's a drinking water lake and our zip codes correspond to very high pesticide purchases. We won't get results on this until the fall or winter.
- Lake water gauges are monitored with the help of Bobbie and Lew Terman. In 2011, with the major storms Irene and Lee, there was a 33" swing in water levels. While for us the superstorm Sandy was mostly a wind event, the swing in high to low water in 2012 was about 11", and despite a rainy spring season that's about the variation that we've had so far in 2013.
- Long Pond Preserve Property at the western end of Lake Waccabuc is owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). 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 TNC to find ways of reducing access to the lake by unauthorized uses. We serve as preserve stewards and try to keep articles that could carry invasive species from entering the lake. John Lemke leads a team of people who patrol the area to discourage unruly behavior and rule breakers. We will continue to work with TNC to improve signage along the property and investigate other possible actions.
- We resumed our "goop and zoop" studies of the algae and zooplankton at the base of the food web in the three lakes, and took samples earlier this week.
- Jan stated that despite these lakes being connected, it's amazing to see their differences
- On Wednesday of this week, our lake manager performed the annual plant survey of Waccabuc. This survey searches for invasive species and monitors plant diversity on the lake. While we don't have a formal report yet, they confirmed what we've observed - that the plant growth in the lake is vigorous this year, and that Eurasian watermilfoil is especially prevalent.
- BEEP – Jan reviewed our Brazilian Elodea eradication project. This is the council's attempt to eradicate an invasive plant that probably arrived when someone dumped an aquarium into the lake. In 2008 the Three Lakes Council decided to aim for eradication using suction harvesting and, what we didn't realize at the time, a lot of continued hand pulling. All of 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. Most times, in most lakes, invasive plants are not eradicated – if anything they are controlled, usually by herbicides. Jan said she was very pleased to be able to report that so far – so far – our efforts seem to be the exception. After eradication efforts in 2009, we found a small patch of Brazilian elodea in 2010, and to date we haven't found any since, including this week's survey. Eradication is generally defined as three years of searching and not finding. So, it looks like we might be able to declare BE eradicated!! The 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. Jan told the gathered members that they should raise a glass and give themselves a toast! Jan said that of course, some small stand of the invasive plant could be out there somewhere. We need your eyes on the lakes. She asked members to report any unusual plant sightings. If you see anything that looks weird, please call, send an email or photo, or leave a sample for her.

Financial Report

Treasurer John Lemke provided a summary that in 2012 we raised \$32,000 and spent \$17,000. The expenses appear low because we didn't get billed for that year's lake plant survey until 2013, and because we didn't do "goop and zoop" testing in 2012, which we are doing this year.

Thus far in 2013 approximately \$18,000 has been contributed by 160 members, a little lower than last year's \$21,000 at the same time, but still incredibly good news. The BEEP fund will have a balance of about \$15,000. Jan reminded members that their generosity will fund on-going BEEP monitoring, continued CSLAP water testing and monitoring for HABs, goop and zoop research, and hiring Lake Management Consultants to survey aquatic vegetation and carry out studies.

Closing.

Jan reminded the members that all of our activities are dependent on participation by volunteers. She said that we're grateful for the many people who help, and asked for interested volunteers to contact her.

Jan then thanked the members for their attention, and offered to take questions. Discussion topics included people entering on Long Pond Preserve, grass carp, and how to keep invasive species out of the lake.

Respectfully submitted

Jan Andersen (in the absence of Jean Lewis, Secretary)

President, Three Lakes Council