

Three Lakes Council Annual Meeting Minutes August 10, 2019

The Annual Meeting of the membership of the Three Lakes Council was held on August 10, 2019, at the Waccabuc Country Club's lakeside facility. About 90 people attended. This is the 49th year anniversary of the founding of the Three Lakes Council.

WELCOME & THANKS

Janet Andersen, President of the Three Lakes Council welcomed everyone to the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Three Lakes Council. She began her remarks by thanking the following team of volunteers who make this Annual Meeting/Potluck event possible:

- The Waccabuc Country Club for providing their facility and making so many special arrangements for us;
- The Potluck Coordinators and helpers, including Kelley Housman, who was unable to attend tonight, but continues as organizer for this event;
- Kathy Rothfeld who stepped up to coordinate in Kelley's absence;
- Jean Lewis and John Lemke at the check in table;
- Peter Gross who provided the sound system and music;
- The cooking and carving crew: Ron Tetelman, Robby Rothfeld, Gene Tedaldi, Paul Lewis, Lou Feeney;
- And all attendees who brought delicious contributions to our shared meal, adding an important sense of community to the event.

BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Jan also acknowledged and thanked the members of the Board and Executive Committee for their continuing efforts in carrying out the work of the Council.

Executive Committee:

Jan Andersen, President

Peter Gross, vice president

John Lemke, treasurer

Jean Lewis, secretary.

Board of Directors: (*appointed by each association*)

Lake Osaleta Association – Kevin Karl

Lake Waccabuc Association – Doug Housman

Lakeside Association – Ron Tetelman

Perch Bay Association – Ellen Bailey

South Shore Association – Jonathan Peter / Tim Kennedy

Two Lake Club – Peter Gross

Waccabuc Landowners Council – Randy Gladding

Waccabuc Country Club - Darrell Alfieri

Jan also thanked Paul Lewis, chair of the Lake Preservation and a priceless resource on ecology.

Election Of At-Large Directors

Jan prefaced the election of at-large directors by explaining that in addition to those directors appointed by the organizations, the members can also elect at-large directors. The Board nominated and recommended that the membership re-appoint our at-large directors, Fred Cowles and Jean Lewis. There was no discussion, and the nomination of Fred Cowles and Jean Lewis as at-large directors was approved by a show of hands.

Jan announced that John Lemke plans to retire as our treasurer and has asked her start to search for his successor. She thanked John, and encouraged anyone interested in this Board position to contact her.

She emphasized that the work of the Three Lakes Council couldn't be carried out without the strong financial support of its members and its large team of volunteers and thanked all for their continued membership and participation.

APPROVAL OF BY-LAWS CHANGE

The Board of Directors recommends membership approval of an update to the By-laws. The change was explained in the Three Lakes Council Newsletter that was mailed to everyone in advance of this Annual Meeting. Jan thanked Peter Gross for providing the official wording and read it before taking a vote:

RESOLVED that Section 6.1 of the By-Laws of the Three Lakes Council, Inc. be and is hereby amended in its entirety to read:

Section 6.1 Officers, Term, and Election.

The officers of the Council shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, all of whom shall be elected by the Board of Directors for terms of two years. There shall be no limit on the number of terms the Board of Directors may elect a person to serve in any office.

Explanation: While we believe it is useful for an organization such as Three Lakes Council to encourage and install new people as leaders and officers (which we should continue to do,) we also recognize that the number of people wishing to serve as officers is limited, that the experience of those willing to continue to serve is often of immense value to the Council, and that the existing limitation of three two-year terms, being neither practical nor in the best interests of the Council, should therefore be eliminated.

Approval: By show of hands, those present approved the change to the by-laws.

Newsletter award. At a NYS Federation of Lake Associations Conference attended by Jan, our 2018 Three Lake Council Newspaper received a prestigious first place award in the large association category. This was especially impressive since the large association category includes lakes with full time paid staff such as Lake George, Sleepy Hollow, and the Finger Lakes.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON OUR 2019 ACTIVITIES

Jan prefaced her report by saying, "As you know, the Three Lake Council's goal is to protect and preserve the waters of our three lakes using science-based approaches. We focus on actions that affect the watershed because the waters in our lakes truly reflect what happens in the watershed."

FALL & WINTER

"Behind the scenes, in the fall and winter, the board reviews actions of the prior year, plans for new activities, and reviews top issues. We file taxes, establish budgets, make revenue projections, prioritize initiatives, and contract with our lake manager."

This year:

- Discussions were held regarding a new, updated Lake Management Plan being prepared by Cedar Eden Environmental.
- Compliance items were addressed, such as conflict of interest policy signatures and reviewing annual documents.
- We discussed how to manage the new path cut through Long Pond Preserve.
- We continued to refresh our website, a good first place to look for information about the lakes and one of our main methods of outreach.
- We also communicated to the membership via our Three Lakes Council Facebook page and through our Google Group email distribution

SPRING

- April brought our 13th annual adventure in geese population stabilization. Peter and Lyn Beardsley, and J Durst oiled 35 eggs in 6 nests. If geese have goslings, they stay on the lakes during the summer. Oiling eggs clearly reduces the number of geese who hang around and results in fewer geese leaving "calling cards" on our

docks and lawns. Jan thanked Peter and Lyn and others who brave the spring weather and the squawking geese.

- In May we kicked off our annual membership drive. To date we have about 165 members. In addition to funding our actions, membership amplifies our voice with the town and state when we comment on proposed regulations.
- This spring we maintained the trees we planted to help stop erosion on Long Pond Preserve.
- Beginning in the spring, volunteers checked the Oscaleta-Waccabuc culvert each weekend to keep it clear of beaver debris. This spring we also hired a tree worker to remove debris in the channel left by the winter storms, and to clear out the beaver winter food caches. The beaver have also started to leave sticks in the Rippowam channel. We recognize the channels are a special part of our lakes and aim to keep them clear so people are able to paddle through them.
- In June we mailed our award winning annual newsletter to 435 residents, and we distributed more via the Waccabuc Country Club.
- In June, Jan ran a regional lakes management conference which some people from our lakes attended. Besides hearing from expert speakers, it was interesting to hear the problems other lakes have and what actions they take.

SUMMER

Long Pond Preserve: We have now had the Preserve for just over three years.

- **Education.** Jan Andersen and Paul Lewis led an ecological walk on the Preserve in June.
- **Trail maintenance.** Kevin Karl has continued to do an amazing job of keeping the trails on the preserve walkable and safe. He has also been diligent at going after the invasive phragmites in the wetlands on the edge of the lake, and it has not gone to seed since we took over the preserve.
- **Bio-control for mile-a-minute weed.** This year we released our third batch of weevils as a biocontrol. They only eat mile-a-minute and while they won't make it completely go away, they have really cut it back.
- **Trash pick-up.** Jan thanked volunteers who picked up the trash and around Lake Waccabuc, especially Judy Housman and Bob Reynolds.
- **Police patrols.** Police officers were again hired to patrol Mead Street and to discourage people from coming on to the preserve with boats and rafts. This is a big expense but the Board feels it is worthwhile. Jan thanked John Lemke who works closely with the town police to make this happen.

Boat sticker initiative. We have issued over 750 new boat stickers. They help us keep out transient boats that are potential vectors of invasive plants and animals. They also help us reunite lost owners with their boats.

Plant survey. This year's plant survey took place on Waccabuc at the end of July. The detailed results aren't available yet, but the invasive Brazilian elodea was not found, so BEEP (Brazilian Elodea Eradication Program) continues to be successful. In 2018 the amount of plants at nuisance densities was lower because the sunlight was blocked by the algal bloom. This year, we have clearer water, so when we see the data, denser plant growth can be expected. Plant surveys are taken at one point in the summer, so they don't reflect that the weeds seem to be starting earlier in the spring and staying later into the fall. Jan again urged residents to report any unusual plant or animal sightings to her.

Water sampling. We continue water quality sampling & testing on Lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta and Rippowam as part of a NYS DEC program, CSLAP. As in past years, Jan sends a report after every formal monitoring session, focused on the clarity of the lakes. These reports are not coming regularly every weekend now since we are trying to link our sampling dates with fly-overs of two specific satellites. Scientists hope to be able to use the satellite imagery to identify algal blooms and by taking our physical data we can ground truth the images, or serve as reference data. We looked at the satellite images

of Lake Waccabuc during last year's bloom, and the change is evident. In addition to clarity, we also measure temperature, color, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, nitrogen, chlorophyll, pH, conductivity, chloride, and calcium in our lakes. In 2018 we sampled 13 times starting in April and ending around Thanksgiving. Reports for each of our lakes in 2018 are on our website. Our research is helping us understand the normal variability for our lakes, how they compare to other lakes in our region, and should alert us quickly if we go off track.

Dead fish. A few dozen dead fish were found floating on Waccabuc over the last couple of weeks. These were not the dead trout we saw in 2018. They were warm water fish that live in the oxygenated upper layer. Our sampling showed that most parameters of our water hadn't gone outside the normal range. The one major change was much hotter surface water. After contacting experts from various governmental and lake agencies, our best guess remains that the fish kill was caused by thermal stress – either too much heat, or too much temperature change between different depths of our lake. Reports and photos from residents around the lake were very helpful as we tried to figure out what was happening.

Harmful algal blooms. We also continue our sampling on harmful algal blooms. We regularly sample our lakes for blue green algae whether we see any sign of a bloom or not, and we can send in special samples if we see discolored water. If high concentrations of blue-green algae are present, we then test for toxins. Not all blue green algae blooms produce toxins, but some do. Last year, Waccabuc's bloom had blue-green algae toxins in the first sample, but none the rest of the year. So far this year, no blooms and no toxins.

Lake Management Plan update. In 2004, Michael Martin of Cedar Eden prepared a management plan for the three lakes. We took some of the actions he suggested, including gathering more data. We asked him to update the plan. We expected a report in winter and a meeting with the lake residents in spring. We received a written plan earlier this week. It will take some time to digest the document. Some of the potential options are quite expensive. We feel strongly that Michael should present at a community meeting so that the community can have a voice in putting the plan together. We haven't set that meeting up but hope to do so soon. Discussing options from the management plan is likely to take up much of the board's time for the remainder of 2019.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Jan reported that we are in good financial shape. Treasurer John Lemke reported that in 2018 we raised about \$35,000 in contributions. Our expenses in 2018 were about \$36,400, since some 2017 bills rolled over into 2018. So far in 2019, 165 members have contributed about \$19,000. Our budget for this year shows that we will spend more than we will take in, but planned reserves will serve as a cushion. Our spending will be driven by decisions regarding actions to undertake when we receive the update on our lake management plan, and to prioritize actions on Long Pond Preserve. All actions will be dependent upon strong membership support.

Jan's Closing remarks:

"Next year the Three Lakes Council will turn 50. We've discussed how to celebrate and the board has suggested that we try to collect stories and pictures from the earlier days on the lakes. It's amazing how much has changed and how quickly we forget. Seemingly small things can bring back big memories. Please share some of your recollections with us."

The Annual Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Lewis, Secretary