

Annual Meeting Minutes, 2024

Three Lakes Council Annual Meeting Minutes July 13, 2024

The Annual Meeting of the Three Lakes Council was held on July 13, 2024 at the Waccabuc Country Club Boat House deck. About 101 people attended on a beautiful evening.

Welcome and thanks: President Jan Andersen welcomed all to the Annual Meeting of the Three Lakes Council (3LC) in the Council's 54th year and thanked all the members and volunteers who make the work of the 3LC possible. The annual meeting is the opportunity to tell members about the state of the lakes, what the Council has been doing over the past year, and about plans for the rest of 2024.

Before getting into her report, Jan thanked all the volunteers who made this event possible:

- The Waccabuc Country Club which provided their facility for this event and is so helpful.
- The Potluck Coordinators and helpers: Kelley Housman and Kathy Rothfeld lead the coordination and set up and other helpers - Jean Lewis and Judy Hausman at our check in table, Renee Goldstein, Jill Kowal, Jordi Serra, Jane Balanoff, Susan Wick, Marianne Pei, Ellen Bailey, Liz Lemke, and all who helped with set up and clean up.
- Peter Gross for the sound system and music, as well as his weekly music on Lake Oscaleta.
- The cooking and carving crew: Ron Tetelman, Robby Rothfeld, Gene Tedaldi, Paul Lewis, Jean Emond, and Lou Feeney.
- And, of course, all of the members for their delicious contributions to the shared potluck.

As president, Jan acknowledged and thanked the other members of the 3LC Board for their continuing efforts, especially our officers. She explained that we had an officer transition this year, and so she thanked our outgoing officers: Jean Lewis, who has been secretary on and off for most of the entire history of our organization, Peter Gross, and Ellen Bailey. She then welcomed Ron Tetelman as VP, Nan Dale as Treasurer, and Judy Hausman as Secretary. Thanks to each of them.

Board members are appointed by each association around the lakes and are your voice to the council. Your board representatives are:

- Lake Oscaleta Association – T Rajwer.
- Lake Waccabuc Association – Doug Housman and John Lemke
- Lakeside Association – Ron Tetelman
- Perch Bay Association – Ellen Bailey & Bonnie Robins
- South Shore Association – Jonathan Peter
- Two Lake Club – Paul Lewis
- Waccabuc Landowners Council – Chris Hucke and Linda Broudy
- Waccabuc Country Club - Peter Hall

In addition to those appointed by the organizations, members can also elect at large directors, who serve for 2 years. Our at large directors Kevin Karl and Jean Lewis were elected last year.

Jan went on to review the Council's major initiatives. She began by summarizing the Council's mission: " As you know, the Three Lake Council's goal is to protect and preserve the waters of

our three lakes. We focus on research and actions that affect the watershed because the waters in our lakes truly reflect what happens in the watershed.”

FALL & WINTER

- The board continued to meet to keep the organization running and in compliance. We refreshed our **website** and added new reports. If you have questions about the lakes, our website is a good first place to look for information. Threelakescouncil.org . Our septic pages have info about septic pumpout vendors.
- **Communications** – Please like the Council on Facebook and join our Google group for emails because this is how we communicate important information, including about lake health.
- **Partnership**. Many of the people around the lakes also joined the informal **Lewisboro Lake Coalition** led by Sue Enos of Truesdale, which is working on issues common to Town lakes. Tara Owen has joined in the communications effort and has helped the Town update the lake and septic page on their website.

SPRING – Activities move outside.

- In April, Peter and Lyn Beardsley and J Durst carried out their 18th season of **geese population stabilization** by oiling 27 eggs in 6 nests. In addition, Chris and Rick Ferrarone oiled a goose nest on Rippowam. Thanks to these intrepid volunteers for their courage!
- Many lake residents participated in the **comprehensive plan** public input sessions, with a resounding theme to protect natural resources. Thank you all!
- Did you see the “get pumped” septic signs? Thanks to the Clarity Committee and Nan Dale and Renee Goldstein for continuing to remind us. If you don’t know when you last pumped your septic, it might be time to do so again. Although 2 to 3 years is preferable, it’s a law to pump at least once every 5 years. It will take time to see watershed changes show up in water sampling results. Nearby Peach Lake didn’t expect to see improved results for 20 years after their sewer system is installed. At 10 years, they have seen some improvement.
- Boat sticker demand picks up in the spring. They help keep out invasives and reunite boats and their owners. Get yours if you don’t have one!

SUMMER

- We’ve now owned **Long Pond Preserve** the preserve just over 8 years. Kevin Karl continues to do an amazing job of keeping the preserve trails safe and walkable, and he built bog bridges to cross wet areas. He’s also been diligently whacking back the invasive phragmites in the wetlands. We felled some dead ash trees in the Preserve. We budgeted to hire police to help manage the entrance to the preserve again this year if we see an issue with boats, trash, and behavior. John Lemke is our police liaison.
- We mailed out our **newsletter** in June, and left some for distribution to Waccabuc Country Club members. With more new people enjoying the lakes, it is especially important to introduce how to be a good lake steward and lake neighbor. Be sure to look for the beautiful wildlife photographs taken by Claudia Aronow.
- Our **plant survey** will take place in two weeks on Oscaleta and Rippowam. The major reason for our survey is to find new invasive species early enough to take actions. Our survey is also a systematic way to track the changes in plant growth over time. Global

warming provides a longer growing season and warmer lake waters, which leads to more plants and denser stands of plants. The report helps summarize the changes. As a reminder, if you see a strange plant, please take a photo and send it to Jan.

- We continue **water quality sampling** and testing on Lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta and Rippowam as part of a NYSDEC program, CSLAP. As in past years, Jan sends a report after every formal monitoring session, focused on the clarity of the lakes. Of course, we test more than clarity. We also measure temperature, color, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, nitrogen, chlorophyll, pH, conductivity, chloride, and calcium in our lakes. This long list combines to give a picture of lake conditions. In 2023 we sampled 12 times between April and December. The DEC 2023 reports for each of our lakes are on our website. Our research helps us understand the normal variability for our lakes and how they compare to other lakes in our region. This should alert us quickly if there's a troubling trend.
- Regarding **harmful algal blooms**, the DEC has moved to visual observations only. Our website has some sample photos to check if you are not sure if it's a HAB. Or, send Jan a photo! **If in doubt, stay out!**

BIG INITIATIVES

- **Oscaleta Road culvert.** This is not directly a 3LC matter, but it's important to our community. Jan reported last year that the Town was awarded the grant to replace the culvert that carries Oscaleta Road across the channel between Lakes Waccabuc and Oscaleta. Jan checks in monthly with the Town Supervisor to make sure that this work continues. Right now it's in the DOT's court, they need to prepare an agreement with the Town, and then a bid for engineering should go out. This will take a while.
- **Long Pond Preserve stormwater retrofit.** This project has been on our list for a long time, and has been recommended in multiple management plans. As you remember, the East of Hudson Watershed Corporation proposed Long Pond Preserve stream remediation of runoff into Lake Waccabuc. After a series of meetings with lawyers representing some of the residents on Tarry-a-bit Drive, EOHWC reduced the scope from three streams to the one stream closest to Mead Street. At their May meeting, the EOHWC moved this project from "in process" to their "postponed" list. We are disappointed. Jan continues to attend many of their meetings, and we hope that this project can be revived to address a major source of phosphorus pollution to our lakes.
- **Sewers.** Another big item is the Truesdale – Waccabuc wastewater solution project. Again, this is not just a 3LC project because it spans a larger area, but it's important for residents of our lakes community to understand. We sized a \$40M sewer plant to serve about 300 homes at the east end of Waccabuc, homes along Twin Lakes Road and North Lake Circle, and a portion of Truesdale. This sewage treatment plant will be built behind the Town House where the Town recycling center currently exists. Last July, the town submitted two grant applications and did not get them. This June we submitted them again. If successful, they will provide about 1/3 of the required \$40M. We've made progress with the Westchester Board of Legislatures who will vote whether to give about \$12M towards this project: Erika Pierce, who represents our district, has been very supportive. And finally, it looks likely that we will be able to get between \$12 and \$16M by the middle of next year from NYCDEP. So this project continues to move forward slowly. Here's why it's important to talk about. Nothing concrete will happen until the homes to be served by sewers vote to approve a tax district to pay for ongoing operations and maintenance. Current estimates are that it would cost about \$1500/year, or about \$125/month. It's a sizable amount, but you never have to worry about septic systems again, and the lakes should benefit. While Jan is not in the currently

proposed sewer district, she firmly supports it. We will start work to educate residents on the tax district later this year or early next year with a goal of a vote in June of 2025.

- **Septic repair.** For homes that are unlikely to be served by a sewer, we are also starting some work with the DOH to try to make it easier to **repair septic systems and to install enhanced treatment units.** Also, the County currently offers means tested help for septic repairs, and we are hoping to get income limits removed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Three Lakes Council is in good financial shape. We'd had a couple of years where we spent more than we took in. Last year was different. We had support of a generous donor in 2023, bringing our revenue to \$59,491. That means that although we spent more than typical for the year, and more than we typically bring in as revenue, \$35,215, we increased our cash reserves by \$24,276. Last year we had 215 members. So far this year, our 174 members, including another generous donation, contributed \$36,632. We have spent about \$13,126.

What will we do with any unspent funds? As you may recall, the 2019 lake management plan suggested that we consider nutrient reduction approaches for our lakes. If and when DEC allows this action, which is allowed in every other state, Jan hopes to see us consider this treatment on Waccabuc and then Oscaleta, so we've had some preliminary board discussions. Although the DEC has pilot projects on Peach and Mahopac lakes, so far this still hasn't been approved in NY. While we have some funds on hand, we will need to raise more to implement that recommendation. Also, we want to continue to explore ways to ease passage through the channels and the weeds that crowd them. We will likely spend money on the sewer initiative as we communicate with residents about the positives of that project.

FINAL ITEM

Plans are approved, and the **Waccabuc Country Club** is expected to start work on enhancing the beachfront facility later this summer. It's a major upgrade but not much of a change in footprint, and they intend to preserve the architectural aesthetics. The project includes the renovation of the Boathouse, replacement of the adjacent storage building with a covered outdoor area, and replacement of the snack bar. New bathrooms will be at the snack bar and in the boathouse, and they will be connected by accessible ramps. This work should reduce some of the runoff into the lake and improve their septic system. This plan is a statement of confidence in our ability to continue to protect and improve lake conditions.

Jan closed the meeting with additional thanks to members and volunteers, and attendees paid tribute Gene Tedaldi, who is 99 years old and was carving meat that night!

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Hausman, Secretary