

Seymour Lake Association Annual Meeting Minutes July 24, 2010

The meeting was **called to order** by the President, Lyman McWain at 9:09 am. He pointed out materials displayed on tables and the walls for the membership to view. Lyman said that the materials contain some good news and some bad news. Some of the materials support the SLA Boards' concern regarding a deterioration of the water quality in the lake. Development and property management are key factors relating to lake quality. He then **introduced Dayna Cole, the speaker for the meeting.**

Dayna Cole works for the Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District (OCNRCD). She told the association members present about a grant that she has been able to obtain each year. The **grant supports native plant “buffering” on lake front properties. She is available to give advice and possible financial support for planting buffers.** She made available print materials (and web resources) such as the Agency of Natural Resources publication “Go Wild” which supports good property management. She also pointed out some materials, regarding programs that she has access to, that were included in each “renewal letter” sent to the SLA membership this spring. Dayna, through the grant, was able to fund six planting sites on the lake in each of 2008 and 2009. These were funded through cost sharing with the grant paying 80% and the land owner paying 20%. In addition to the grant program she holds an annual “tree” sale where people place orders in February. The tree sale is not a cost sharing program. This program carefully selects plants that will be successful growing in this area. In response to audience questions Dayna pointed out other ways that she is involved in projects that help to maintain the quality of the lake. Some programs are available from the Center for Clean and Clear (where there is currently a waiting list). Dayna works with stream buffering and outreach projects also. An example is that she was involved with the work that Shawn Austin has done on Sugarbush Road (the OCCD Gully Project). She continues to be involved with programs to help maintain lake quality. In response to a question about lake property “compliance” or “non-compliance” she made clear that she is not a regulator. Lyman McWain stated that he feels most people will “do the right thing” if they know what to do. Ron Kolar added that the SLA provides educational materials to the Zoning Board to give to people planning new development. Discussion continued and involved topics including the importance of education, topics related to retaining walls, using angular stones and naturalizing banks, SLA and Morgan Town linkages, SLA as a “voice”, Vermont land use rules, the fish and game parking lot and how it is graded, the possibility of planting a demonstration rain garden at the access area, and some concerns were expressed about the development at Wolf's Point. Lyman pointed out the many linkages that the SLA has. We often talk with various people from the state. Richard Miller, a Morgan Selectman, is Ex-Officio on the SLA Board and attends SLA meetings. Ron has been working with the Morgan Zoning Board. In short, the SLA is very involved with all of the parties that have an influence on lake quality. Lyman thanked Dayna for her fine presentation and sharing her time with us as well as the work that she has done for the lake.

The formal **Annual Meeting** commenced at 9:52 am.

On a motion made by Don Kidder and seconded by Ted Jewett the **Secretary's Report** from the 7/25/09 Annual Meeting was unanimously approved. Jean McKenny stated the meeting minutes are posted on the SLA website for anyone wanting to read them.

On a motion made by Ted Jewett and seconded by Bruce Barter the **Treasurer's Report** was unanimously approved. In her report Jan Selby stated that the current balance in the checking account is \$14,830.28 and the balance in the “reserve fund” in a CD is \$40,000. SLA is building up this reserve fund so that money would be available if the lake were ever to become infested. With so many lakes in Vermont having milfoil infestations, this is a real concern. Jan anticipates that the remaining bills for this year will be approximately \$8,000.

New Business

Ron Kolar presented the **Nominating Committee** report. He read the committee guidelines suggesting that persons interested in serving on the SLA board become familiar with the work of the organization by first

servicing on and working with one of the committees of the association. He listed the directors continuing in their terms and the three directors whose terms are expiring (Tim Buzzell, Linda Broadwater and Peggy Barter). Each of the three have agreed to serve for another three year term. He stated that the officers (Lyman McWain, Ron Kolar, Janet Selby and Jean McKenny) are also willing to serve another year. A motion made by Ted Jewett and seconded by Bruce Barter moved to accept the Nominating Committee report. Lyman asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Ted Jewett made a motion and Bruce Barter seconded it to have nominations close. Lyman then asked for a vote to close nominations and elect the persons recommended by the nominating committee. The motion carried.

Ron Kolar presented information that he has gained through working on **zoning issues**. He stated that the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) has been very helpful and stated examples where they have been cooperative. He cited that the Westmore, Averill and the Unified Town and Gores (and their websites) provide examples of zoning regulations that other town have incorporated. These examples give the SLA and the Morgan Planning Commission possible models for action. While Ron was talking the letter (dated 7/24/10) to Steve Matson from the SLA and the Water Quality With Regard to Altering Setbacks in Morgan (DEC Presentation to SLA Board, February 2008) attachment were being passed out to the membership. After giving time for reading the documents Ron called the memberships' attention to the section of the letter where the State of Vermont advises increased "buffers" and increased "front" setbacks. He pointed out the portion of the letter in quotes **"The Seymour Lake Association recommends most strongly to the Planning Commission, that in the current revision process to Morgan's Zoning Bylaws, that in Section 204.01 that the Front Setback be changed from 20 feet to 30 feet, and the rear Setback be changed from 25 feet to 15 feet."** The membership was told that at the SLA Board Meeting prior to the start of the Annual Meeting the board voted to recommend to the membership that they make this recommendation to the Morgan Planning Commission. On a motion made by Ron Kolar and seconded by Kalman Samuels the **members unanimously agreed to this action**. Much discussion preceded and followed this vote. It would only apply to new buildings. It would not apply to rebuilt buildings utilizing the same footprint. Some people felt that this setback was not enough. It was pointed out that with 100' by 100' lot sizes allowed there is a physical limit to what the setback can be. A suggestion was made that with a 25 foot setback there should also be a requirement for a 10 foot buffer. Ron pointed out that Steve Massicotte has been very helpful with this zoning work and will continue to work on zoning issues. He also pointed out that some of the work that he has done with Government Relations will be continued with Lyman and Erik Lessing's involvement. State regulations regarding water and septic both on small lots were raised as an issue. Ron pointed out that every 5 years the Morgan Zoning is re-examined. Lyman views the action taken today as a "small step" in a process. Ron reinforced Lyman's belief that property owners are cooperative when they know the right thing to do and gave an example of when "just a phone call" (to the property owner) was needed to immediately correct a situation.

A New Issue From the Floor was raised. This concerned **much unhappiness with the state of the public beach, the parking lot and even onto Oxbow Road. Trash, underage drinking and lack of crowd management, thefts and break-ins, perceived threats to property owners, and parking problems were all cited as ongoing problems.** A great deal of discussion took place regarding this issue. One SLA member suggested that the association form a committee to look into this problem. Persons at the meeting seemed to feel that the parking lot is owned by VT Fish and Game and the beach is owned by the State of Vermont. That raised the issue of who has the authority to "police" or set ordinances for these areas. The current sign in the parking lot and a previous time when the town leased (for \$1.00) some of this property allowing the town to pass ordinances were both discussed. Richard Miller stated that at the last Selectboard meeting the Selectboard asked the Orleans County Sheriff Department to change the times of the patrols that they conduct in Morgan. Residents point out that the "problem times" are from 11 pm to 2 am so daytime patrols are not appropriate. Nights and weekends are viewed as more effective. Some people urged calling the state police when there are problems and cited that a "call history" will help to support state police patrols. It was pointed out that there are also some trash problems in the winter from ice fishing locations. Fines for bad behavior were mentioned as a deterrent. A question was also raised about whether or not portions of the lake watershed should be a "salt reduction" area in the wintertime. The SLA and the Town of Morgan will continue to monitor and learn more about these situations to see what role each might have in remedying them.

Committee Reports

Ron Kolar reporting for the **Dam/Lake Level Committee** stated that the lake is “a little lower” at 8 inches above the low pin at this time than last year. In July of 2009 it was 12 inches above the low pin.

The **Membership Committee** report was given by Ted Jewett and Bruce Barter. Ted reported that the committee consists of 10 people who meet 3-6 times a year. Their three year goal is to get 100% of all lake front properties into membership. The committee members make face to face contact with non-members. They present a packet of information to the prospective members. This includes a bumper sticker, bookmarks, the key chains for boats and other informational materials about the SLA. This March renewal letters were sent out to all members. In October a letter will be sent out to the 60 people who did not renew via the March invitation. The committee is considering an expansion of its membership goals this fall beyond just lake front properties. The membership fees received to date are \$803 with about \$1000 predicted. Bruce reported that as of 7/22/10 there are 274 members compared to 254 in 2009. He also reported that donations were received from 142 of those members compared to 109 in 2009. He feels that we are on track to beat last year's numbers with 227 (57%) of lake front properties compared to 205 (51%) last year at the same time. Last year the final percent at the end of the year was 66. Sixty-three percent of members have provided e-mail addresses.

The **Swim Program** report was given by Janet Selby. This is the second year that the program has been held at IROC. Responses from parents and grandparents have been positive. It was held the two weeks after the 4th of July. This year 25 children were enrolled (up from 18 last year). The children must have parents or grandparents who are SLA members or Morgan residents or Morgan property owners. Morgan donates \$500 and the Circle of Friends donates \$200 to the program.

The **Milfoil Committee** Report was given by Janet Selby. Jan stated that the lake is still milfoil free thanks to the two workers at the access and the 25-30 volunteers who work on the program. She read the names of the persons involved and asked them to stand and be recognized for their efforts. The state grant this year was \$9030 (\$2131 more than last year). Access greeters worked 1840 hours and volunteers and board members 896 hours that were documented as milfoil related. This year Jan would like to target private ramp access areas on the lake. She has signs available that can be posted at private ramps. She would also encourage all to use the public access so that thorough inspections can be made. This is especially important if the watercraft has been in other area lakes prior to entering Seymour.

The **Boating Committee Report** was given by Erik Lessing and Tim Buzzell. On August 7th the swim portion of a triathlon will take place in Seymour. Some Seymour boats will be helping out with this event. On July 4th an impromptu “boat parade” was held on the lake at approximately 11 am. It is estimated that about 25-33 boats were involved by the end of the parade route. It is suspected that this might become an annual event.

Ron Frascoia reported for the **Fishing Committee**. He had spoken with Len Girard the State Biologist and was given information about fishing on the lake. About 4,000 lake trout and 2,000 salmon (no brook trout) are currently being added to the lake each year. About 90% of the fish being caught are native fish. Ron says that is a “good” thing for the lake. The state has a special boat that goes out at night to find out what fish are in the lake. When asked if fishing had deteriorated in the lake, he stated that it is “spotty.” There is a new 1 rod/1 laker (20” length) rule designed to improve fishing quality. It is too early to tell what the effect has been.

The **Loon Report** was given by Kal Samuels. He stated that there are six loon on the lake. Someone from the membership added that there are also two chicks this year.

The **Audit Report** was given by Steve Massicotte. He was very complimentary about how Jan keeps really good records.

The **Water Quality Report** was given by Peggy Barter who asked that the committee also stand with her and

participate in the report. Peggy called attention to the names of the milfoil and plant survey volunteer workers (posted in the room). The committee distributed a two page "fact sheet" that they had prepared to inform others about the state of water quality in the lake. She also pointed out that the SLA website contains water quality information. She mentioned algae in the lake and pointed out some areas where it can be found. The plant survey conducted recently found some new plants since the last data in 1985. She mentioned "lake friendly products" and that Vermont has recently banned the sale of cleaning products containing phosphates. In response to a member question she discussed whether (or not) septic systems are an issue with respect to lake quality. In response to another question, she discussed the runoff problem from streams and what can be done to stabilize those. She added that there is much information available for anyone wanting to help prevent a deterioration of the quality of the lake.

The **Ice Out Report** was given by Jan Selby. The receipts from the project were down this year with \$495 taken in (compared to about \$1000 in previous years). There was only \$145 profit after paying out the prize money. She suggested that a volunteer was needed to really push ticket sales. The ice went out early this year at 11:19 pm on April 2nd. The winners were 3rd place (\$50) Robert and Carol Stanley, 2nd place (\$100) the Sean Selby Family and 1st place (\$200) Elaine Holden. In response to her request for someone to sell tickets, the Membership Committee suggested that they could possibly add ticket sales into the spring renewal letter that they send out.

Richard and Rosemary Miller donated a year's subscription to Cabin Life for a **door prize drawing** and the winner was Fred Jackson.

The **President's Report** included a reminder of The SLA Outing scheduled for July 31st at the McWain/Colby properties. Lyman also stated that there is a thread in SLA of autonomous committee work with much being accomplished. He stated that he is very proud of all the industriousness that he witnesses.

The meeting **adjourned** at 11:42 am.

Respectfully submitted by Jean McKenny, Secretary