

## **Seymour Lake Association Annual Meeting Minutes July 28, 2012**

The meeting was **called to order** by the President, Lyman McWain at 9:09 am. He voiced “thank you for coming” to the members present.

Amy Picotte from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation was introduced as the **Guest Speaker**. Amy and others from the state have provided us with great educational materials over time. She reported on the Seymour Lake Score Card. Amy said that the score card is a perfect way to combine all of the information available in the state. Three hundred seventy-five waters were scored. A long term data base on Seymour Lake exists thanks to lay monitors. Phosphorus levels are still low on Seymour but the trend is showing a rise (moderately significantly increasing). Chlorophyll levels are steady. The Atmospheric Deposition code for all but two lakes in Vermont is yellow indicating a concern. Shore land and lake habitat is where the red code is appearing for Seymour indicating a problem. Lawns down to the lake were found to be the probable cause, not agriculture as is sometimes believed. There are no regulation in Vermont state law covering this area. Only about 15% of towns have shoreline regulations. It is all voluntary in Vermont. Landowners need to restore the shore land over time. Signs will be available to lake front owners who do a good job of restoration. Seymour Water Quality is coded yellow due to Atmospheric Deposition. Seymour Phosphorus is also coded yellow. Seymour is still getting 7 meters of clarity but that is not as good as it used to be. The state website where the score card is located is also able to report the fish available in the lake as well as the plants. Amy mentioned Dayna Cole's program and the other partners that Seymour has. Amy mentioned various shore land restoration programs available. Amy encourages us to keep this conversation going and continue to respond to the needs of the lake. A question was asked about where we rank with respect to other lakes. Her answer was that we look good, but our trends are not good. If we can maintain and not allow any more jumps in the data we should be able to control potential problems for the lake. She mentioned that Tier 1 development and then Tier 2 development occurs. We need to be aware of total development not just the development on the lake shore. Amy related that efforts to understand why inappropriate development occurs comes down to a “Monkey See - Monkey Do” situation. It was mentioned that the beaver dam breach occurred in 2003. The April 27, 2011 wash out was also mentioned. Both of these events caused problems for the lake. All of this emphasizes that a strong vegetative shore line is very important.

The **Secretary's Report** from the Annual Meeting of July 23, 2011 was presented by Jean McKenny, Secretary. It was approved.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Janet Selby, Treasurer. It was approved. She reported the balances in the check book (\$3,881.40) and CDs (\$62,997.64). A question about the contingency fund was asked. The answer was that over the past few years SLA has been trying to build up a contingency fund so that money would be instantly available should the lake become infested with milfoil or a similar problem. Money from the state is slow in coming and it is felt that we need to have money available so that action could be taken quickly. Donations have added to the contingency fund with between \$4,000 and \$8,000 being given each year.

### **New Business:**

The **Nominating Committee Report** was presented by Ron Kolar. Ron encouraged anyone interested in serving on the board to get involved with the work of the board by serving on committees, etc. He thanked Jim McWain for his service on the board. The directors positions expiring are those held by

Jim McWain, and Erik Lessing. Kal Samuels position is vacant because of his death. The Nominating Committee requested that Erik Lessing stay on as a director and he has agreed to do so. Allan Wooley was elected in March as a Morgan Select Board member. Consequently, he is resigning his Director position on the SLA Board, but will continue to attend board meetings as an ex-officio Morgan Select Board member. Two years remain in Allan's term. Susan Davis is being nominated to be elected to a three year term. Frank Antonelli is being nominated to be elected for a three year term. Bruce Barter is being nominated to fill the remaining two years of Allan Wooley's position. The proposed new Directors introduced themselves and briefly talked about their interest in SLA. As usual, according to the by-laws, nominations from the floor will be entertained.

The **Election of Board Members** and the **Election of Officers** was conducted by Lyman McWain. There were no nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Jim McWain and seconded by Tim Buzzell that nominations cease. The proposed Directors and current Officers were elected.

A **Zoning Regulation Update** was given by Allan Wooley. The Zoning regulations are trying to be changed. In 2009 the town plan needed to be revised and renewed. That process was started and continues at this time. After 12 meetings the town is still working on it. What has been passed contains a foot note #5. The language in that footnote allows that some properties may elect to do only a 20 foot setback instead of the desired 30 feet. The plan has not been certified by the state yet. Allan discussed other zoning that the town is working on. They are opposed to industrial wind turbines which he referred to as "tilting against the windmills." The town officers "do not want any in Morgan." It is the State of Vermont who gets to approve or disapprove of windmills and not the town. The state PSB controls these decisions, but if in the town officially records an opinion, the town becomes a party and gets an official seat at any hearings. The town officers are also working on zoning regulations regarding garage sales or flea markets. They hope to be done the town plan by the end of the year (3 years late). In the meantime the current bylaws are still operative. The Select Board is concerned about flooding. There are 100 structures in the flood plain in Morgan. Individuals can't get flood insurance because the town is not part of the plan. If property owners are concerned or interested about this situation they should contact a select board member. The beach is also a concern to the town. The Select Board will produce a proposal regarding the beach. The town does not own the beach or the parking lot. The parking lot is owned by fish and wildlife. Allan stated that we can clean up the beach, put up signs, but we can't do anything about the ducks. The ducks evidently have protection from the state. Any efforts that the town makes to "control" activities at the beach brings up enforcement as the next issue. Some feel that a more targeted presence at the beach is needed. The SB is aware of the problems and SB and SLA are working on solutions. Lyman clarified that SLA is not involved with beach issues but will support a town proposal when the Select Board presents one. Jack Philbrick a SLA member who is a resident near the beach expressed that the beach situation is not getting better. He stated that it is a constant problem.

Lyman McWain asked if there were any **Issues From the Floor**. David Bullock a SLA member asked if it might be wise to restrict the times that certain noisy "wave runner type" watercraft can be on the lake. He stated that other lakes do this. Lyman responded that the board would be willing to consider this. Homer Selby stated that the current rules are "sunrise to sunset" and 200 feet from the shore and other boaters. Homer stated that if boaters are violating the rules to get the boat license number and call the state police and that will help. Bob Kern wants the issue of ice fishing addressed. People are out all night and running vehicles at high speeds on the ice. Also, Bob reported that trash is washing in from the ice fisherman. As far as the SLA members present know they concluded that "there is no law against the use of the ice in the winter." Lyman stated that SLA can't write regulations for the use of the lake and that SLA has discussed this many times. Suggestions were made to call the game warden

if shanties wash up that have names on them. There is a fine for not removing shanties by a certain date. Another concern was about “trailers full of jet skis” with renters coming onto the lake. A question about how to get information out to renters about restricted hours for personal watercraft was posed.

### **Committee Reports:**

The **Dam/Lake Level Report** was given by Ron Kolar. He stated that the State of Vermont needs to comply with state laws regarding erosion. This has been a hard working year for the committee. Two recent newsletter articles were published to help explain the situation. The lake was 7 ¾ inches above the low pin on July 24th. The lake is higher since the new dam was built in both summer and spring. Citizens Utilities used raise the gate in the dam slightly in the late fall to lower the lake level and increase storage capacity to accept spring runoff. The committee has tried repeatedly to communicate with the state. For the past three years the committee has sent letters, met and corresponded with VT ANR and DEC regarding gate management and the need to minimize flooding by keeping the lake between the two pins. Responses to the committee have not been satisfactory in the past two years. The state needs to comply with state law. In 1951-52 there was a Vermont Supreme Court ruling stating that the lake must be maintained between the two pins. The committee has had no response to letters that it has sent to the state. Deb Markowitz sent out an e-mail blast in November of 2011 saying that “we must do what we can now to prevent future economic harm, environmental damage and threats to public health from floods.” The committee picked up on that and wrote to her and requested a meeting. Again, there was no answer. The committee decided to involve Bob Lewis a local area representative to state government. With Bob's help the committee got DEC to respond. Pete La Flamme head of watershed management has been in contact with the committee and they are working on a date for a meeting. Great Bay Hydro will be there also. The intent of this meeting is to “discuss and identify some mutually satisfactory solutions.” Ron stated that we are fortunate to have Tim Buzzell serving on the committee as he has a degree in civil engineering and has been very active as a hydrology engineer. Ron also stated that NH and NY do manipulate lake levels. Willoughby has a board that residents remove, etc. to influence the lake level. Ron stated that we have the law on our side. A SLA member present asked why can't we just do it (manipulate the gate). Ron replied that we do not own the dam. GBH is willing to draw down the lake in the late fall but is controlled in their license by the state. If we can get VT permission then GBH would do it. Lyman added that even in winter the ice damage causes erosion and the natural stream controls the flow once the water level is over the dam. A SLA member asked about just showing up at their office in the state when they do not respond to attempts to contact them. The response was that we are talking with FOVLAP (the Federation of VT Lakes and Ponds) also. We have been told that there are lakes that are using a draw down strategy even though the state does not want Seymour to do so. A “run of river” policy in some departments of state government seems to have caused this conflict with in the state.

The **Membership Committee & Data Report** was given by Bruce Barter. Membership is important not just for the money but for the educational benefit as well. The SLA wants everyone to belong. Bruce presented a very detailed report. He stated that the committee is trying to get more lake front and off lake members. There were 333 membership units on 7/27/12. Last year there were 294 at the same time. There were 337 members at the end of last year. That compares very favorably with only 251 at the end of 2008. The percentage of lake front owners was 66% on 7/27/12. This compares to 62% at the same time last year. There were 70.6% at the end of 2011 compared to 50.5% at the end of 2008. The committee is looking to improve membership in the watershed. More in depth information is available from the committee if anyone is interested in more detail.

The **Swim Program Report** was given by Janet Selby. It was a big success and very well run by IROC. Thirty-one children participated this year compared to twenty-five last year. Nine were Morgan residents, and twenty-two were children or grandchildren of SLA members. The total cost was \$1,400. The funding came from the Town of Morgan \$500, Circle of Friends \$200, and SLA \$700.

The **Aquatic Nuisance Prevention (Milfoil) Program & Inspection Report** was given by Janet Selby. She reported that Bud and Reed are still doing an excellent job. To date this year 900 vessels have been inspected at the access with 44 cases of vegetation found and certain milfoil found in 13 of those. The cost of the inspection program is about \$22,000 a year. This is paid for by \$11,000 from a grant provided by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Town of Morgan and SLA splitting the rest at about \$5,500 each. Jan expressed thanks to all of the 24 lay lake monitors who search their assigned section of the lake twice a year (late July and late August) looking for milfoil. She asked the monitors to stand and be recognized for their good work as she introduced them.

The **Boating Safety Report** was given by Tim Buzzell. He reported that the third annual boat parade took place on July 8<sup>th</sup> with Colin Kwasnik again doing an excellent job of organizing it. An IROC swim tri-athlon requested boats provided by volunteers to monitor swimmers. Dave Anderson will outline what is needed for boats on Aug 7<sup>th</sup> at about 7 in the morning until about 10 am. Buoys will be put out. Power boats are needed as some canoes and kayaks have been volunteered. Boats should report to the fishing access after contacting Tim or David to say that you are going to help.

The **Fishing Report** was given by Homer Selby. He stated that he has only fished twice. The state is still doing shocking program (boat with bright lights shocks the fish and counts them and then they recover). He also reported that the stocking program still going on.

The **Audit Committee Report** was not given by Steve Massicotte as he was not able to be present.

The **Loon Report** was given by Dr. Charles Wood. He stated that there are 11 loon currently on the lake. Norton has 13. On June 14<sup>th</sup> two chicks were born on Seymour. He feels that the loon population on Seymour is pretty stable. A pair is nesting at Winape at the current time. They may add another nesting area platform in a secluded cove somewhere on the lake. He said that Jet skis or big boats confuse the loon parents who are very protective of the nest. There was a late nesting last year. Right after the boat parade Ron Frascoia and Frank Pinard rescued a loon tangled up in a balloon and ribbon decoration. As the decoration was not red, white and blue it may have come from elsewhere and not a boat decoration. A SLA member asked about loon swimming in a circle. The answer was that they sometimes congregate in a circle (like a street gang). Jan Selby reported seeing about 30 swimming in one group in June. She reported that research said that this is common in the great lakes but very unusual in Vermont.

The **Newsletter Report** was given by Erik Lessing. He asked to recognize his co-conspirators Maggie Griffith (reviews articles for correct English usage) and Bruce Barter (sent out over 850 mailings). May and November editions of the Newsletter are planned. The format is 8 pages. Erik expressed thanks to the many contributors who wrote articles. He also requested that any ideas for articles in the future should be sent to him as well as pictures.

**Old Business:**

The **Ice Contest Results & Awards Report** was given by Janet Selby. The ice went out on March 22

at 4:14 pm. A profit of \$210 was realized after the prizes were paid out. The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner of \$200 was William Holden. The 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner of \$100 was Don and Stacey Tynion. The 3<sup>rd</sup> place prize of \$50 was awarded to Steve Massicotte.

The **President's Report** was given by Lyman McWain. He expressed how all involved with SLA are missing Kal Samuels. Kal did amazing things for Seymour Lake including a huge public service announcement. Lyman asked for a moment of silence for Kal. Lyman also recognized Jim McWain for his service to the SLA. He said that the board is working on creating a Director Emeritus status for retired board members. Lyman recognized the Circle of Friends and the raffle that they have set up in the back of the hall. The Circle invited all to help set up Monday when they will be accepting donations for the bazaar and on Wednesday you can attend the bazaar and buy your donations back. The Morgan Historical society was noted also saying that the building is open on Wednesday mornings and Saturday afternoons. Lyman asked people to contact one of the officers if interested in participating in the work of SLA. Lyman also mentioned the need for the emergency funds in the event that the lake ever becomes infested.

A reminder was given that **The Outing** will be held on August 4, 2012 at 5 pm hosted by Ilene Douglas and Allan Wooley. Everyone is impressed by the wonderful site. People should make reservations with Janet Selby.

Lyman McWain thanked everyone for attending and for all of the good work that is done for Lake Seymour.

The meeting **Adjourned** at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McKenny, Secretary