

Seymour Lake Association Board Meeting May 28, 2013

Present: Lyman McWain, Ron Kolar (via Skype), Janet Selby, Jean McKenny, Tim Buzzell, Peggy Barter, Ted Jewett, Bruce Barter, Steve Massicotte, Susan Davis, Erik Lessing (via Skype), Frank Antonelli, Allan Wooley (ex-officio), Chuck Nichols, and Candy Moot.

Unable to be Present: Linda Broadwater

The meeting was called to order by Lyman at 4:02 pm.

The **Secretary's Report** from the 2/15/13 board meeting was approved.

The **Treasurers Report** was given by Jan. She distributed a handout showing the balances in accounts as of this date \$17,588.05 (checking), \$41,164.53 (CD #1), \$12,144.19 (CD #2), and \$10,080.95 (CD #3). She has received the milfoil grant notification for this season of \$7,800.00. This is a reduction of \$2,230.00 from last year. This information started a discussion about how the expenses for the milfoil program will be divided with the town. Normally the grant is subtracted from the total cost of the program and then the Town of Morgan and the Seymour Lake Association each pay one-half of the remaining expense. If the town only budgeted a fixed amount for their share then the SLA could need to pay more than one-half. As water quality is the main goal of the association it was the general consensus of the group that SLA would make that commitment. The report also included a listing of anticipated large bills for the remainder of this year. The total of these expenses is \$17,949.00.

Among those items were two (quarterly) amounts for unemployment insurance. These anticipated expenses triggered a long discussion about unemployment insurance costs. Because of the number of hours that the greeters work in the summer, they are eligible for unemployment compensation. The greeters are employees of the town. When they became eligible for this benefit the town was required to pay for unemployment insurance. When this large new expense was brought to the attention of the SLA, the SLA board felt that it should pay one-half of it. As the cost is considerable the board has been and continues to seek information about how other sites avoid this expense and comply with the law. It appears that various sites do different things. Some sites use students as greeters. As students go back to school in the fall they are not eligible for unemployment compensation. The board values the services of the current greeters and would not choose to change from an adult to a student model. Hiring more workers to reduce the number of hours that each worker would perform appears to be another option. Many other thoughts were discussed relating to this expense. The board authorized Jan to speak with the current greeters to inform them of the concerns being expressed at SLA board meetings. Even though the greeters are employees of the town the board felt that they should be aware of SLA concerns about these costs. It is hoped that this conversation (Jan, Reed and Bud) could possibly lead to some solution. **A motion was made by Steve to pay one-half of the unemployment expenses for those two and plan by September 30 as to how to resolve this problem. Peggy seconded the motion. The motion passed.** Bruce wondered if we should have a committee to work on this and report back. Agreeing to serve on this committee were Steve, Jan, and Chuck.

Old Business:

The **Dam Actions & Water Levels Strategy with DEC** report was given by Tim. In August of 2012 the Dam Committee met with members of the state at Ron's place. The SLA committee gave state thoughts on high water in the spring and suggested solutions. The committee also stressed why the high water level is important and outlined the problems that could result from the high water levels. The representatives from the state said that they would study the situation and get back to us. Having

heard nothing from the state by March, 2013, Tim Buzzell wrote to Peter Laflamme (WMDD) again expressing the SLA concerns. In this letter Tim suggested a pilot study for a year lowering the lake level in the fall to allow the lake to better cope with spring runoff and prevent ice damage to properties over the winter. Finally about mid-May again having heard nothing from the state Tim called Peter three times. Each of those calls met with an answering machine. When Brian (not Peter) called Tim back a heated discussions (which was going nowhere) ensued. Tim demanded a call from Peter and finally, not getting a call, e-mailed him last week and asked for a response (from Peter) prior to this May 28th meeting. Tim received an e-mail this past Friday, May 24th. The e-mail from Peter said that the state would not allow a pilot study and was not going to allow manipulation of the dam. Peter stated that "it is state policy that we don't do this." Then Peter called him on Saturday, May 25th at camp, concerned that Tim might not have received the e-mail. Tim suggested that Candy and Chuck come to the board meeting today and share any thoughts that they might have with the board. Tim reported that the state is studying the construction of the dam this year. He mentioned that downstream the left "abutment" is lower than the high water levels so that water can get around the dam and go downstream. Tim said that the day before yesterday water was within 6" of going over. A great deal of discussion followed. The discussion included brainstorming strategies for proceeding, reports of damage done by high water and winter ice, possible faulty construction of the dam, the lack of responsiveness by the state, the state being in violation of a state supreme court ruling, and frustration that the state won't listen to the voices of the associations who are in a position to know what is happening at the local level. Ron and Tim will draft a letter to answer the state. The SLA does not want to accept a "no" in answer to requests for a trial period. The letter will include a request for a meeting with Deb Markowitz.

The **Committee and Staff Changes** report was given by Lyman and Ron. Lyman, Ron and Jan have all asked to be replaced as officers. They will remain involved with the work of the association but wish to be replaced in the offices that they now hold. Jean has agreed to run for the Treasurer's position. So a replacement will be needed for Secretary. Tim, Linda and Peggy's Board of Director terms end this July. Tim and Peggy would be willing to continue serving. Consequently, persons are needed for President, Vice-president, Secretary, and 1 Director position. Several names of people who might be interested in serving were suggested. The names of people who might be interested should be sent to Ron as he will be proposing a slate of officers and the names of persons willing to serve as directors at the July Annual Meeting.

The **Membership Updates and 2013 Plans** report was given by Ted and Bruce. Bruce distributed a detailed report of membership and donations as of 5/27/13. Membership is up. Donations are up. The numbers speak for the fine work that this committee has done and continues to do.

SLA Swim Program Discussion was reported by Jan. IROC has closed and the general feeling is that we should not do a swim program this year. Lisa Jacobs who is a Red Cross (IROC) liaison has said that Island Pond will take any of our kids and we could pay for them. **A motion was made by Tim that because IROC is out of business that we do not sponsor a program this year. If parents want this service they can go to the Island Pond program and we would only provide the contact information for doing so. This motion was seconded by Allan and passed by the board. Peggy moved to repay money donated to SLA for providing a swim program. This motion was seconded by Frank and passed by the board.**

New Business:

The **VT Act 138 Update and FOVLAP** report was given by Bruce. A June 7th FOVLAP meeting was

announced and discussion took place about who would attend and how the SLA should approach trying to find out what other bodies of water do to deal with some of the problems that we have been having. The Shoreland Protection Committee is requiring information be given to them by June 15th. Peggy agreed to resend information out to the board about this, in case some members had missed it. Peggy briefly shared a "Phil White" brochure containing August 3rd and 13th planned events involving Seymour Lake.

The **Water Quality 2013 Projects** report was given by Peggy and others. Lyman reported on the boat ramp status. He said that Mike Ratowski said that it would be completed shortly after the 4th. Jan reported that she had obtained the permit for the building at the site and that she has to obtain this permit every year from the state.

The **Outing Committee** report was given by several board members. In response to popular demand, Allan and Ilene have generously agreed to host the Outing again this summer. The date is August 3rd. Frank agreed to chair the Outing Committee. Ted has "the book" that included guidance for this event and will pass it on to Frank. Lyman will pass on his notes to Frank and is willing to help. Several names of people who might be willing to serve on the committee were suggested. A planned e-mail blast including this date as well as other was discussed. The Boat Parade is possibly planned for the Saturday after the 4th.

The **Newsletter** report was given by Erik. Erik wanted to mention a couple of things. He expressed "thanks" to the people who helped with the content and especially to Bruce for getting them to the correct people. Erik is going to talk to a graphics person to gather ideas to visually improve the newsletters. He feels that the content is important and he has suggestions for about 25 different ideas. If others think of something that they think people would find interesting, send Erik an e-mail. Some of Erik's ideas include history and past presidents, where our water comes from and where it goes, navigation hazards, histories of lake areas such as Winape, Wayeeses, Rositor's Point, Wolf's Point, human interest stories, revisit our goals and what we stand for and financial issues such as fishing, the beach, businesses and septic socials.

Additional Discussions and Comments included...Jan reporting that she had filed our biannual report with the proper authorities giving us another two years of tax exempt status. Jan reporting that she had been asked by an individual for a copy of the SLA e-mail list. The board agreed with Jan's position that we do not give out our e-mail list. Steve wondering if we should try to do more board meetings using teleconferencing.

The **next board meeting** was set for Tuesday July 2, 2013 at Lyman's. The Board Meeting will start at 9 am with the Executive Committee Meeting at 8 am.

The meeting adjourned at 6:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McKenny, Secretary