

## **Seymour Lake Association Board Meeting July 2, 2013**

**Present:** Lyman McWain, Ron Kolar, Jan Selby, Jean McKenny, Tim Buzzell, Peggy Barter, Ted Jewett, Bruce Barter, Steve Massicotte, Susan Davis, Erik Lessing, Frank Antonelli, Allan Wooley (ex-officio), Jim McWain, and Dick Colby.

**Unable to be Present:** Linda Broadwater,

The meeting was called to order by Lyman at 9:05.

The **Secretary's Report** from the 5/28/13 meeting was presented. It was approved.

The **Treasurer's Report** was given by Jan. She distributed a report dated 7/1/13. It stated the balances in the accounts and anticipated expenses. The growth is eaten up this year by the unemployment insurance. We have just one liability insurance policy now. She would like to make the milfoil payment to the town prior to the annual meeting. Jan reported that last year we gave \$100 to the Memphremagog Watershed Association. The board felt that we should again contribute \$100. This report dated 7/1/13 included only items over \$100. She asked the board what type of report is appropriate for the annual meeting. In prior years she just gives the balances at that time not a detailed report. The details will be available if anyone asks for a more complete report. Some members of the board feel that dues and donations reports should be given at the annual meeting. That thought was approved. Lyman feels that we need to thank people for their donations and remind the members of the association for the reason for the account. We are reaching our goal and we have a continuing need should be our approach to explaining the accounts. A reserve fund of \$75,000 was the goal so that we would be able to react quickly if we got an infestation of milfoil or other aquatic nuisance. Costs are going up so we might need more than that amount in the future. A suggestion was made that we could raise money in addition to asking for donations.

The report from the **Unemployment Compensation Committee** was given by Jan. Jan met with the two greeters. The unemployment compensation committee also met. She contacted nine different programs to see how other lakes or ponds are compensating (or not) greeters. There is a mix of what is being done. Echo was interesting. Northwoods does the payroll and collects 15% of the payroll as an administrative fee. Salem has 3-4 employees and one collects unemployment but the Town of Derby has more employees than Morgan reducing the impact of the unemployment insurance costs. How many seasonal employees the town has is the issue. Jan told Bud and Reed that we were going to have make some changes. The Town of Morgan is not willing to pay unemployment insurance costs. There will have to be some changes. Taylor Moore is working up a proposal and, together with Jan, filled out the form to hire the employees as independent contractors. If they are hired as independent contractors the employees would have to carry their own insurance. We cannot raise their salaries to offset the increased insurance costs to them as they are at the \$12 an hour maximum allowed by the grant. Possibly we could give them a bonus. Maybe Morgan would pay the amount for the insurance. Morgan would give them a 1099 if they were employed as independent contractors. It is felt that hiring them as independent contractors would be less costly than having to pay unemployment insurance costs. If we were to make these changes eventually the unemployment rate to the town would go down. It was suggested that they could resign to make the change over to independent contractors. Chuck talked with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and got information about these issues. Some feeling was expressed that we are obligated for 2013 at least. As there has been some confusion about what we owe (or do not owe) the Town needs to ask the insurer what we actually owe. The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter payment was \$2319 and there may be the potential for another bill. Tammy can call the

unemployment program in the state. Chuck will talk with Tammy to try to sort this out. Consequently, the report of the committee is that they are still working on it. Jan will ask Chuck to talk to Tammy and Allan will go with them. Jan mentioned that we would need four people working 40 hours a week to replace the two people working 80 a week to change the unemployment compensation. She did feel that maybe we could cut back on October hours. Lyman stated that he supports going the 1099 route (independent contractors). He stated that even though it is still under investigation he thinks that over time we should go to contract employees.

The **Outing Committee Update** was given by Frank. A suggestion was made to advertise an educational seminar at an adjacent time for those who want to attend (maybe prior to the social gathering). Some discussions were held about moving part of the agenda from the annual meeting to the outing time. Frank met with Eileen and Allan and is coordinating all of it for the outing at their property. He is checking with Jan for financial information and will check with Ted and Lyman as necessary for help with planning and serving tools. Jan will tell people not to bring serving utensils when she records donated food. Invitations will go out the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in July. Frank confirmed that we use the Morgan Store for food and the same tent people as last year as they are both good and convenient.

The **Annual Meeting Update** was given by Lyman. The timing is difficult because of family obligations. Should we try to stay to two hours? No speaker was suggested. As education is an important goal communication is important. The water quality committee report can fill the educational gap. Small snippets of a maximum of 15 minutes each was suggested. Funds, water quality, new directors, and open forum format is the plan for now and we will evaluate how this works. Speakers reporting back to the state that they presented to SLA is good for the association. Should we ask the members present how they feel about speakers or not and, if so, what would they like to hear about? Suggestions for a 1 ½ hour meeting were made. We will publish the agenda from 9:00 to 10:30 and hope to be out by 11:00. It was mentioned that the members may have come to expect food at the meeting so probably for this year we should have it again. Board members donate this food.

The **Boat Parade** and other activities update was presented by Tim. Saturday July 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm with a rain date of Sunday July 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. Was stated as the plan. The start is at Rossiter's Point. People can join as it goes by their properties or go to Rossiter's Point for the start. Colin is organizing it again this year. The question was asked as to whether or not we have SLA involvement with activities sponsored by Phil White this year. Dave Anderson is arranging for a few boats for one event. There are two swims this year. Another activity that we might need to mention in the annual meeting is the ice fishing. How do we get the ice fishermen into the communication process?. Should we go shanty to shanty in the winter? Should we try to get their e-mail address? Could we give them fliers? The state owns the parking lot behind the beach and one of the allowable uses is for ice fishermen to stage there prior to getting out on the lake. Mention of providing a dumpster for the use of ice fishermen was made. The general feeling of the board was that "carry in / carry out" is a better policy as having a dumpster causes other problems. Ted will try to design a statement to be included in the membership package advocating "carry in / carry out." It was mentioned that there are people who organize fishing tournaments and they would be good contact people to try to raise awareness of good lake management.

The **e-mail blasts** report was given by Allan. The last blast was June 24<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that we probably will want another this summer that would include notices of events. Lyman made a suggestion for a **new idea** to begin to document where we are losing enjoyment of our properties. He suggested that we might do an **e-mail survey blast** for this purpose. It could include questions about

the loss of functionality at properties and even collect pictures of damage, high water, etc. A suggestion was made that Survey Monkey might be used to do such a survey. A link to the survey could be used to include pictures. Lyman's point is that we pay taxes to have functionality and lose out when there is loss of use such as high water causing a loss of beach, etc. He was asked if the draw down in the winter is a different issue and are we now asking for a draw down in a severe weather event. He explained that he feels that there are two separate positions at the state of Vermont and the lake level strategy doesn't agree with the water quality strategy. A board member mentioned a recent documentary stating that the "average of extremes is normal." Is that what we are now seeing with extremes? Through Citizens Utilities the SLA used to lower the lake when necessary. He feels that the survey should speak to both issues. Damage to shoreline, debris, then how is functionality being affected should both be included. Susan will try to develop the text for a survey and Bruce is willing to do the e-mail and the survey but doesn't want to do the text. Bruce reported that the last blast was opened by 67% of the 291 people who were sent it. Only nine e-mail addresses failed.

The **Dam Committee Meeting** report was given by Ron and Tim. This morning the water level is 3.5 inches above the high pin. This is a record for this time of year. Chuck talked to Jeb Spaulding, the Secretary of Administration yesterday and reported a good conversation. Jeb volunteered to set up a small meeting with Justin Johnson, Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources within the next two weeks. Ron, Tim and Chuck will go to that meeting. Ron, Lyman, and Tim will sit down with Chuck this week to work out the agenda and goals for the meeting. Additional information that Tim presented is that the Federal Environmental Regulatory Commission is coming to inspect the dam, that FERC is "all about safety", and that SLA should be a part of that meeting.

An **August 9 Meeting on the Shoreline Act** was noted and discussed. The Newport meeting is one of five regional meetings being held this summer in the state. This meeting is the appropriate time to have input on the legislation (originally Act 138). The state wants to hear what people like and do not like about the legislation. The state is interested in lake shore owners opinions to possibly counteract the dock company opposition. It is believed to be at 5:00 pm in the Hebard Building on the top floor. Allan will put the time and place on the next events e-mail blast. It was suggested that perhaps that forum would be an opportunity to ask if high lake levels are consistent with water quality. Some SLA board opinion is that there is a disagreement within the staffs at the state about whether or not science supports the positions some agencies are taking regarding lake levels.

The slate of **new officers and directors** was discussed in preparation for nominations at the annual meeting. Board members had sent suggestions to Ron for replacement people and the nomination slate is close to being finalized. Nominations from the floor are also welcome at the annual meeting.

The **Water Quality Committee** report was given by Peggy. She distributed an eight page information document about the Lake Wise Awards Program. We can aspire to become a Lake Wise lake. If 15% of the properties meet the standard and become certified we could be designated. Amy Picotte and Russ Ford are the contact people for the program from the state. A social marketing philosophy is behind the program thus the 15% requirement. A certified property will receive a sign displaying the certification. It is a state program and if we become a part of it an individual landowner could request that their property be evaluated and get free technical assistance. The advantage to the lake is the changes that are made to meet the criteria on the form. Certified properties are perceived as a group that follows good shoreline practices. Tracey and Peggy have visited 5 or 6 properties on the lake to get a feel for how it works. People feel enabled to do what they can. No funds are available under this program but Peggy has another program that can provide some funds. A driveway example was given by Peggy to explain how it works. Septics and pet waste are also considerations. The state is asking

lake associations to get behind this to promote it. We should get behind it and it is a way to get help from the state to do what we want to do anyway. If we promote this the state does the work and the property owner has three years of benefits. The SLA Board role would be to approve and endorse the program so as to benefit the membership. Ron moved and Jan seconded a **motion that we approve the Lake Wise Awards Program for Seymour Lake. The motion was approved.** The question was asked as to how do we promote it? The process is to contact “lake leaders” on each lake to ask for the preevaluation with the owner. If they are close to being certified then the state people come in to do the evaluation. If they are not close then the process stops for that property. Amy is in charge. Lyman will write to Amy and say that we are anxious to promote it on Seymour Lake. Peggy mentioned that signs are available to post to promote the program. Now that the SLA has approved it the board and others should work with Peggy and Tracey to promote it. FOVLAP is applying for grants to support this program. The Buffers For Blue Lakes program (used to be blueberries) was also described by Peggy. She distributed a one page description of the program and briefly spoke about it. Peggy asked if SLA would be willing to help with the monetary match for the bushes or is the property owner solely responsible for the match? In the pilot project the owner did not pay so this was not an issue. No SLA monetary match was suggested. Two pending grant program descriptions were included in this program description. It was suggested that we should wait and see if FOVLAP gets the grants. Peggy and Tracey need to write a memo describing these opportunities for lake front property owners and get it to Lyman. Then we will decide how to get it to every homeowner for their use. Sending a memo out with contact info for Peggy and Tracey is the Department of Environmental Conservation plan for going forward. Allan will place the form on the website. This will be an open process as we proceed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:22 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McKenny, Secretary