

Seymour Lake Association Board Meeting 8/20/11

Present: Lyman McWain, President; Ron Kolar, Vice-President; Janet Selby, Treasurer; Jean McKenny, Secretary; Ted Jewett, Alan Wooley, Steve Massicotte, Jim McWain, Erik Lessing, Kalman Samuels, Tim Buzzell, Linda Broadwater, Peggy Barter, Directors; and Bruce Barter, Membership Committee Member

The meeting was **called to order** at 9:10 am by Lyman.

He opened the meeting with a discussion about **zoning**, wanting clarity about SLA's role in zoning matters in the town. He feels that board members should continue to be proactive in the state and New England and beyond and be a conduit for zoning information to the SLA membership and others. Many zoning issues are parallel and consistent with SLA water quality goals. SLA's role should be an educational role. Through examining a list of voters it might be possible to identify some voters who could be a conduit for educational information to town selectmen, planning and zoning boards. Much discussion followed. Suggestions made included asking for an annual meeting with local select and planing boards, asking for time at town meeting, and press releases. The water quality members have developed a short presentation that they have made available to anyone wanting to listen and they found the select board very receptive when presenting to them. Attempts to clarify what information the state or the federation of lakes and ponds actually sends to towns were made. It is possible that SLA is the most important organization in this regard. It was pointed out that the Morgan select board meeting minutes are posted on the Morgan website so SLA members can read them and monitor what information is being provided to the select board. Information was shared that the Vermont Federation of Lakes and Ponds will make a concerted effort in the legislature to implement zoning changes in the next legislative session.

The **Secretary's Report** of the 7/23/11 board meeting was approved on a motion made by Ron and seconded by Jan.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Jan. She handed out a financial report dated August 18, 2011 summarizing the financial status of the organization. She listed the various interest rates available to her to reinvest the \$8,040.06 CD that just matured. The board agreed with her that she should invest that money (with an additional \$8,000) in a CD at People's Bank. She may add the amount to an existing CD (\$40,310.09) there or open up a separate CD. The balance in the checkbook is \$22,401.87 (which includes the money from the CD that just matured). Anticipated expenses for the remainder of the calendar year are approximately \$6,000. The income to date this year is \$17,575. The expenses to date are \$6,699.47. Jan explained that the amount of \$392.01 for milfoil expenses is money that is spent for the program for various items (buoys, laminating signs, etc.). SLA spends this money in addition to the amount that it contributes to salaries of the inspectors. Salaries are paid for by the grant with SLA and the Town of Morgan splitting salary expenses that the grant doesn't cover. Lyman asked Jan to send an e-mail to Robbie (a selectman) to compare her accounting with the town's numbers to be certain that all are in agreement. Lyman stated that the CDs will contain over \$56,000 and that we are "well on our way" to our goal of having an emergency

fund of \$75,000 in the event that the lake becomes infested with an invasive species. Jan called attention to the donations line in her report (\$8,935 to date this year compared to \$6,920 on 9/1/10). Not only are memberships in SLA up but donations have increased as well with 56% of members making a donation. These donations range in size from \$5 to \$500. Ted commented that when membership committee members make personal contacts with people they find many people willing to contribute if the lake ever becomes infested. Jan mentioned that she wants to be certain that the organization is not in violation of any tax requirements by keeping the “emergency” fund. This brought up a discussion of SLA role as a non-profit and the feelings of some board members that possibly the organization should be “giving back” to the town in some way. Possibly offering scholarships to Morgan students or gifts to charities was suggested. Other ideas were also suggested. Alan and Ron volunteered to look into possibilities for SLA to support Morgan. In response to a question Jan reported that four buoys had been purchased. Two of them have been placed and two more need to be put into place. Jan asked if SLA wanted to support the Morgan School Ski Program with a \$200 donation again this year. Following discussion, on a motion made by Ron and seconded by Peggy (\$200) and an amendment to the motion made by Jim and seconded by Erik (\$400) it was decided to donate \$400 to the ski program this year. On a motion made by Peggy and seconded by Jim the Treasurer's Report was approved.

Ted reported that the **Membership Committee** met on 8/19/11 with six members in attendance. He listed some changes in membership on the committee. He mentioned a suggestion by Erik to include an envelope for people to send in money to join so that they would not have to clip and mail in a coupon. The committee will probably meet next on the day before the next scheduled board meeting. Bruce reported on the current numbers for members. He said that only 8 had resulted from face to face contacts this year. As of 8/18/11 there are 311 membership units compared to 308 at this time last year and 329 at the end of last year. Donations are up with 173 people donating to date. At this time last year there were 154 and a total of 160 at the end of last year. Of the 311 membership units 25 are new and 43 did not renew from the previous year. The percentage of lake front owners joining SLA is 65.7% compared to 61.2% at this time last year and 69.8% at year's end. The percentage of members providing e-mail addresses is 70.0%. The number of members not owning on the lake is 46. The membership committee will try to increase this number in the future. Two letters are planned for this fall to increase membership. One is planned as a “market survey.” The other will ask the 43 former members why they did not renew and attempt to have them join again this year. Lyman complimented the committee for the work that they have done. He stated that everything that we do for exposure such as the newsletter and the boat parade are important to the membership. Alan stated that the website has received 14,000 hits.

Peggy reported for the **Water Quality Committee**. They will be meeting on Monday 8/22/11. They are looking for a new direction for their work.. She complimented Erik for the great report that he put together for the annual meeting. This committee has been doing presentations to “road association” and others and will continue to do so as the requests are made for information. She wondered if there is a good way to get information to people who purchase property on the lake as close to the time of purchase as possible. Good information about what is good (and not good) for the lake might help to prevent new owners from making

errors when planning changes to newly acquired property. Various suggestions were made about how this might be done. Some suggestions included getting monthly information about property transfers from the Town Clerk, working with the contractors who are most likely to do work in the area, and mailing a welcome package to new purchasers as soon as possible following a closing. Tracey Shadday has proposed that SLA do Shore Land Restoration Workshops and Linda wondered if SLA might incorporate these some how into other events in Morgan (Circle of Friends Bazaar, Morgan Meanderings, etc.). This discussion prompted Lyman to speak about Tracey's proposal to SLA for a Social Marketing Program. After Lyman has an opportunity to meet with Tracey and learn more about her proposal, he will share that information with the board. Peggy asked for suggestions for a person located on Seymour East to become involved in water quality work. Linda asked Jan a clarifying question about "time sheets" as Linda had volunteered to help with these. The sheets ultimately go to Jan as she writes the grant but can go to Linda and then be passed on to Jan. Linda will try to remind people of the importance of submitting these. The dates that count in this year's time sheets are January 1, 2011 to the fall when the grant is submitted. A person can estimate time spent and miles driven (to meetings, etc.) for the remainder of the year.

The **Dam/Lake Level** report was given by Ron and Tim. Since the Annual Meeting they have been drafting a letter to be sent to the state regarding the lake level and dam management. They have decided to defer discussion of lowering the lake prior to a large storm for the time being. They have decided to focus on two issues. The first is to request a "draw down" of the lake in the fall, winter and early spring to more closely duplicate what has been done historically. The second is to ask for an extension of the data gathering time by requesting that for a 2-3 year period the boards on top of the dam be removed to measure the lake level without them. The letter will mention the 1951 (Vermont Public Service Commission) and 1952 (Vermont Supreme Court) rulings requiring Citizens Utilities Company, and their successors, to maintain the Seymour Lake level between the two pins. A memo written by Tim will be included with the letter. Tim has calculated the effects of opening the gate from November 1st to May 15th to allow more water to flow out of Seymour during that period to "draw down" the lake. After May 15th he proposes that the gate be returned to the normal 4 cfs (cubic feet per second) flow. Members at the meeting asked questions about possible "political" solutions. Tim feels that technical answers are needed. He thinks that the gate would need to be monitored and opened different amounts at different times. Technical questions were asked about how this would be done. Steve questioned the appropriateness of doing two things at the same time (draw down and board removal) and asked if that would confuse the issue by not knowing which of the two actions was responsible for changes. This led to statements about the boards not having much effect in high water conditions. The state says that the lake has been higher in recent years. This could be caused by several factors including more precipitation, the boards and/or the new dam. Lyman stated that they would "clean up the letter" and then send it out to the state.

Discussion about a possible **outing** site of the Wooley's home took place. Changing the outing date from the Saturday after the Annual Meeting to the Saturday before the Annual Meeting was discussed.

Jan reported that the **ice out** only netted \$350 this past year. The reason for that may have been that the winter newsletter came out later than in some years. A suggestion was made that possibly if this situation presented itself again we could use e-mail to get ice out participation.

Jan also asked that the minutes indicate that she **did not receive \$150** from the Kingdom Triathlon as stated in the Newsletter. Evidently there was some confusion about whether or not SLA accepted a payment from IROC. SLA did not receive a payment for helping out with the swim portion of the meet. She also expressed concern that **SLA was not involved this year** in the same way that they were last year. There seemed to be confusion about who was notified and there was no law enforcement present at the site, no inspection of the kayaks entering the lake, an inadequate number of kayaks (1 for every 7 swimmers) and only one boat present for rescue purposes. Jan did not feel that we should be involved unless it is properly managed. Possibly Dave Anderson was involved in some way with the swim portion of the meet. Erik proposed that in the future possibly Dave could be “in charge” and ask SLA for what is needed to run the swim portion of the event and possibly SLA could give him advice about what is needed. Jan feels that there is a need for an **Activities Committee** of the SLA board. Various board members spoke to the need for other board committees. Others could possibly be Activities, Town Relations, and a Financial/Gifts Committees. Various board members volunteered to write a description of committee roles and responsibilities for specific proposed and existing committees. Also needed is an estimate of how many members each committee would need. The next board meeting will focus on this issue.

Erik asked the board for guidance for the **Newsletter Committee** which he has agreed to chair. He views that each newsletter would have certain “repetitive” articles and reports and in addition some unique articles on various topics. He asked for suggestions that people might have for interesting articles. Those suggestions can be sent to him at eriklessing@comcast.net. The number of newsletters per year as well as the costs and the mailing lists were discussed. The appropriate role of e-mails was also discussed. The general consensus seemed to be for two newsletters per year supplemented by the use of e-mails when a specific topic needs to be conveyed to the membership quickly. The group seemed to feel that mailing to a broader group than just the SLA membership is advised.

The **next board meeting** was set for February 18, 2012.

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

Submitted by,

Jean L. McKenny, Secretary

