

**Seymour Lake Association**  
**Annual Meeting Minutes July 27, 2024 - Community Meeting House**

Officers: Rhonda Shippee, President; Bruce Remick, Vice President (newly elected); Jean McKenny, Treasurer; Linda Buzzell, Secretary

Board of Directors: Bill Bilowus, Candy Moot, Denis Fortin, Tom Adams, Charles (Woody) Woods and Michael Tule, Bonnie McWain and Tracey Becken (newly elected)

Members: 63 members present (quorum of 20 met).

**1. Rhonda Shippee** - call to order 9:00 a.m. members present and signed in. She thanked the Board and committees for all the work they have done this year. Please join or renew your SLA membership! She mentioned maps for sale, the Circle of Friends Quilt raffle, and the wooden quilt squares to raise money for the Community Building renovation project. If you don't renew your membership as of today, you won't receive the newsletters or email blasts.

**2. Secretary's Report - Linda Buzzell** - A motion was made by Candy Moot and seconded by Bob Steenrod to accept the report, approved. Linda talked about our scholarship fund for the Green Mountain Conservation Camp. This year we did not have any youths apply for the camp. The Board has agreed to add the Northwoods Stewardship camp for next year up to \$400/ea for two children or \$250/ea for three children at the Green Mountain Conservation Camps.

**3. Treasurer's Report - Jean McKenny** - A report is attached to the Secretary's files. There was some explanation of the expense for the greeter program which we split with the town. A brief discussion of how the Milfoil Reserve Fund was started when Lyman McWain was president and he felt we needed to be ready in case milfoil was found in the lake. He suggested \$75,000; we now have two CD's with \$80,000/ea invested. Our other expenses include the newsletter, education programs. A motion to accept the report was made by Candy Moot, seconded by Sean Selby, approved.

**4. Elections - Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain, Sean Selby** – Director terms expiring are Bruce Barter, Charles Woods and Bruce Remick. Sean Selby is stepping down due to a professional conflict. Charles Woods has agreed to stay on; Bruce Barter is resigning after many years of service. Bonnie McWain is resigning as Vice President and has agreed to stay on the Board filling Sean Selby's one year term remaining; Bruce Remick has agreed to leave the Board and take over as Vice President. Michael Tule and Tracey Becken are being recommended to replace Bruce Remick and Bruce Barter's positions on the Board.

The director slate is as follows: for three year terms as Board members: Charles Woods, Mike Tule and Tracey Becken and Bonnie McWain for one year - A Motion was made to accept the slate by Ted Jewett and seconded by Bob Steenrod, approved.

The slate of officers - Rhonda Shippee, President, Bruce Remick, Vice President, Jean McKenny, Treasurer and Linda Buzzell, Secretary A motion was made by Chris Blais and seconded by Bob Steenrod to accept the slate of officers for one year, approved.

## **6. Committee Reports**

On-Line Committee - Candy Moot - responsible for email blasts and newsletter, Facebook updates and the SLA website. 685 views on the website in the past 30 days; 931

users. Real estate, fishing, current news and SLS news are the most viewed. Did 32 email blasts in last year.

Boating - Tim Buzzell, Candy Moot, Bonnie McWain –

Dredging was put off again for 3 weeks because of the flooding and contractor busy throughout the State. Much discussion about timing but it was made clear that it was the State's project and SLA doesn't have a say. Boat inspections will be done at the beach parking lot. SLA will send an email blast to let everyone know of the timing.

14th annual Boat Parade - Bonnie reported there were 54 watercraft participating and 219 camps with decorated docks

Final Wake boat report - Candy said Vermont now has the strictest wakesport rule in the nation effective 4/15/24. The Home Lake Rule means that the wake boat owner will have to choose a lake for a calendar year and cannot take his boat anywhere else. Our greeters know about the rule and will talk to boat owners at the access. Brue Remick asked about the 200' buoys so boaters know what 200 ft actually looks like. Denis Fortin is researching ways to set buoys possibly for next year.

Water Quality - Peggy Barter

**LWAP Update** – Tracey, Peggy and Rhonda have worked with our contractors OCNRCD (Bevin Barber-Campbell) and MWA (Patrick Hurley). Two meetings for the entire Echo-Seymour watershed have been held seeking input by interested citizens. On August 25 a shoreline survey by Patrick Hurley and Gabby Gianoni took place. Denis Fortin provided transportation on his boat. Additional participants were, Alison Marchione, Ernie Broadwater and Peggy. Phase 2 stream geomorphic assessments on Sucker Brook, Upper Valley Brook and other tributaries have been completed by Patrick and Gabby. A road survey was conducted with Shawn Austin and Wendell Hastings to determine priorities for the more problematic road segments. Earlier this month Bevin Barber-Campbell completed 6 Lake Wise assessments for lake shore owners who volunteered their properties. Tracey assisted in identifying these properties. Owners of the properties are Dana Seguin, David & Nancy Bullock, Denis Fortin, Dave & Pat Sanders, Paul Frascoia and Tina & Scott Schissel. The Bullock, Paul Frascoia and Schissel properties earned the Lake Wise sign.

Gabby and Patrick met with Wayeeses Road/Sugarbush Road landowners to view their concerns. They report a great tour of Wayeeses Road/Shore Road/Sugarbush Road with Jim Judd and other landowners. Patrick stresses this is a difficult area which he considers outside the LWAP. He is currently working with Ben Copans and DEC to continue to explore possible solutions to the drainage in this area. MWA will work to identify funding for DEC's possible solutions.

***PLEASE NOTE - An informational Meeting will be hosted at the Morgan Community House by the conservation district on Wednesday, August 7 at 5:30 – 7 PM. The community will be informed of the top priority projects which the Team (OCNRCD and MWA) has identified within the Echo-Seymour watershed for projects needed to best protect Echo and Seymour lakes from shoreline and watershed runoff which increases phosphorus in the lakes and can lead to algae blooms. Please plan to attend to voice your opinions when given the opportunity.***

**A1 Reclassification Update** - All reclassification petitions filed, including the one from Echo Lake, are on hold until the Legislature acts on the removing the 1,000 gpd limit and the anti-degradation legislation is finalized. One legislative session is concluded, so we must wait for January 2025 and the upcoming two year session. There is a will within DEC to complete the transition, but it is taking longer to bring the legislature along.

**Damage from the July 2023 heavy rain** was reported to Peggy. Many of the reports were from the Wayeeses Shore area. Road damage was documented with help from Jean McKenny with support from Linda and Ernie Broadwater. Dan Barry documented and had remedied issues on Spaulding Road.

**Lake Wise Assessments** - Tracey arranged for the following assessments for volunteer land owners Karen Abada, Nicolas & Zea Larochele, and Mark & Loren Montgomery. Both the Abada's and Larochele's properties were awarded Lake Wise signs. Tracey is attempting to schedule four more assessments with DEC in August. Seymour Lake currently has 62 Lake Wise awarded properties.

**2024 Water Quality EVENTS** Inspired by a suggestion by Ron Kolar the following events were planned and implemented by Tracey Becken, Echo's Tom Wagner and a little help from Peggy.

Workshop:

- ***Driveways, Downspouts and Deluges*** Meg Carter, Northwoods Stewardship Center
- ***Invasives -You Can Win with Patience and Perseverance*** Sam Perron, NWSC
- ***Pruning Lake Shore Trees*** Jared Nunery, Orleans County Forester
- ***Wastewater: Everything You Need to Know and More!*** Cristin Ashmankas, VTDEC Technician

Garden Tours: Tracey and Tom also planned Lake Wise garden tours for two Seymour and two Echo properties which took place Fridays. Seymour lake shore owners Ted Jewett and Nancy & David Bullock generously served as hosts.

**Access Gardens/Kiosk** – Andy Barter, with help from Riley Barter, completed a set of 44 plant identification signs for the rain gardens. Because the old kiosk was destroyed by vandals, Andy has worked with Rhonda to plan to install a new kiosk next spring when it is expected the dredging will be completed. At that time signs will be placed and information about rain gardens will be displayed on the kiosk. Rhonda Shippee weeded and mulched the rain gardens this spring with mulch transported by Tom Adams. The mulch is expected to last 3 – 4 years.

**Public Beach Phragmites** – Gerry Cahill has volunteered to assemble and lead a crew to cut and dispose of the cuttings this month in an attempt to prevent the spread around the entire lake.

**Spring Yard Work**– Dan Barry facilitated the printing of an information sheet regarding spring yard cleanup on lake shores. These will be distributed in neighborhoods around the lake and by the membership committee, by volunteers and at today's meeting. **Because phosphorus is the**

**main cause of cyanobacteria blooms in Vermont's lakes**, fertilizing within 25' of the water is prohibited by state law and use of fertilizer containing phosphorous on any lawn is also very limited under state law. Another action you can take to lessen the chances of cyanobacteria blooms is to maintain at least a 15 foot buffer the lake shore.

**Scoop you pet's poop!** - Dog poop carries pathogens which cause illness in other dogs as well as humans. **PLEASE CARRY A BAG WITH YOU FOR COLLECTING THE POOP IN PUBLIC PLACES AND CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PET AT HOME.** Both E-coli and Giardia are present in dog poop and can sicken humans as well as other dogs. Dog poop in lake water can also cause disease. Be a good neighbor while protecting yourself, your family and the lake.

**Canada Goose Poop** – Maintaining a 15 foot naturally vegetated buffer with a 6 foot (or less) wide winding path on the waterfront will keep the geese away as well as protect water quality.

**Fishing/Smelt Project** - Bill Bilowus - we started the project to introduce smelt back into Seymour 4 years ago. We would like to get more but understand there aren't enough. We are dependent on the State to get the smelt. Bill says there are grants available to put smelt in the lake and people could be paid to help. Patrick Hurley of Memphremagog Watershed Association will help with the grant. Bill has an appointment with Pete Emerson and Levi Brown in St. Johnsbury to see what they suggest.

**Membership** - Tom Adams - 326 members to date (360 last year). The Membership Committee will start visiting non-members soon.

**Newsletter** - Denis Fortin - SLA has two newsletters, fall and spring. Please send pictures or stories to him.

**Aquatic Inspection Program** - Beth Torpey - We had another successful year. In 2009 Seymour was listed as having an invasive snail seen on the south east end of the lake but she has never seen one. Greeters who have returned - Bud, Bethany, Liam, Carla and Cassidy. The program received \$12,285 from the State last year and \$36,612 for 2024 because of an additional \$500,000 state appropriation. Still concerned about the wake boat ballast problem, but local owners have been responsible. Our decontamination station is working. Some discussion about greeter program. We will need a new decontamination station at some point.

**VIP Program** - David Weisemann - We have 16 patrollers. The recent storm made it impossible for them to do the first survey of their area. He warned people to be careful kayaking near the dam during the high waters.

**Activities** - Bonnie McWain - The Annual Social is August 3rd 6-8 pm at Camp Winape with many thanks to Ron and Janet Kolar. Bring an appetizer to share and your drink of choice. Next summer we will sponsor an art contest for kids "What Do I Like About Seymour".

**Loons** - Charles (Woody) Woods - Recently did the loon count with Denis Fortin and Bob Steenrod - 9 loons, 3 pairs and 3 individuals. Smaller lakes around Seymour have successful nesting pairs but we don't. We did have an immature pair off the northwest side of the lake build a nest this year but their nest was ruined in the storm. Denis will put a nesting platform there next year to see what happens. There are almost too many loons in Vermont, especially for fishing. The eagles are back and like loon chicks. Geese are a big problem as we all know. Peggy says a buffer zone on your property will keep the geese away!

**NEW BUSINESS** – None raised.

Rhonda thanked everyone for attending and supporting SLA.

A Motion to Adjourn was made at 11:15 by Tom Adams, seconded by Candy Moot. Approved.