

MINUTES
OCTOBER 27, 2010
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
LAKE ONOTA PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED (LOPA)

The Annual Membership Meeting was officially called to order at 7:19 pm.

Directors Present: Bob Race, Gail Light, Dorothy Mara, Joe Cancilla, Mark Selkowitz, Tom Dailey, Jeff Rose, Lew Cuyler, Jack O'Brien and Bob Quattrochi.

Voted: The notes from the July 29, 2010 and the minutes from the April 28, 2010 meetings were unanimously approved.

Gail Light distributed the Treasurer's Report, calling attention to the added members as the result of the membership committee's efforts. Gail reported that the CD was again due for rollover in November, and that the Balance of Accounts through October 27, 2010 is \$42,635.50.

Voted: The Treasurer's Reports for July and October 2010 were unanimously approved.

Voted: A motion to approve the slate of At-Large Directors to serve two year terms as submitted by Bob Quattrochi was unanimously approved. (see Election of 4 At-Large Directors)

Voted: A motion to allow LOPA to Join LAPA-WEST at the annual fee of \$100 was unanimously approved. (see LAPA-WEST Membership)

Voted: A motion to allow LOPA to join COLAP at an annual membership fee of \$40 was unanimously approved. (see COLAP Membership Dues)

Voted: A motion to allow LOPA to employ Ken Wagner to review its 10 year sampling database and produce a report summarizing important issues and trends with an emphasis on reducing sampling costs for a fee up to \$1,500 was approved by a majority vote with one dissenting vote. (see Proposed Ken Wagner 10 Year Data Review)

Voted: A motion to allow Gail Light to rollover the LOPA CD at her discretion for the best short term rate was unanimously approved. (see CD Rollover)

Secretary's Reading of a Letter of Resignation:

A letter of resignation was submitted by Vice President Dick Laureyns to the LOPA Board of Directors and President. The letter, read by the Secretary, expressed Dick's need to spend more time on personal and family matters. Dick thanked everyone in the organization that had worked on various teams with him. He also volunteered his time to help the next person in charge of the Macrophyte Survey.

A letter of appreciation was sent to him by LOPA President Bob Race. This letter, also read at the meeting, thanked Dick for his numerous and significant contributions to LOPA and expressed LOPA's deep appreciation for all his efforts in helping to preserve Onota Lake.

Old Business and Committee Reports.

Water Quality and Weed Control:

Bob Race reported that the water quality remains good for both recreation and wildlife. Bob reported that the weed control program for 2010 was highly effective, particularly for milfoil. Very little milfoil was found during LOPA's Macrophyte Survey. This was also supported by Lycott's observations following the herbicide treatment. Bob noted that European Naiad (bushy pond weed) has begun to replace the milfoil, but this weed is much less offensive than milfoil. The volume of water chestnut removed was also significantly down this year and is still confined to the area north of the Dan Casey causeway.

Bob reported that Lycott's survey found a re-growth of Robbins pond weed in various areas of the lake. It is a very desirable native plant that is low growing and good for providing fish cover. There was a discussion as to whether second application of herbicide would be needed next year to treat the additional growth of Naiad. Concerns of budget and lake closings seemed to support the idea of a single application, in light of the current program's effectiveness against milfoil.

Lake Recreation and Water Safety:

Jack O'Brein thanked Dick Mole and Joe Carusotto for their help in the removal of the buoy markers from the lake this fall. Jack expressed concerns that even with the current buoys and maps marking road beds, sand bars, and rocks, that many boaters still don't understand where it is safe to pass. Bob Race said that a LOPA team will be looking at new buoys and their placement over the winter months and hopes to be making recommendations to the city for next year's season.

Citizen Education and Public Relations:

Lew Cuyler reported that he is working on the Guardian, a publication that updates our membership and the community on activities around the lake. Lew expects the printing around the beginning of the year. Lew also reported that he is the liaison between LOPA and the Parks Commission and provides notification to the Berkshire Eagle of any relevant lake activities.

Fish and Wildlife:

Tom Dailey reported that the state has stocked the lake with trout this fall. This is the transition season with little activity, he said, serious fishing should resume when there is ice on the lake.

Membership Committee:

Mark Selkowitz reported that through the efforts of his group including Gail Light and Jeff Rose, about 300 names were assembled. These came from the tax rolls of lake front home owners, the list of boaters docked at Onota Boat Livery, and any prior members that were not current on their dues. A letter and lake brochure were sent to the individuals asking them to support LOPA's efforts by becoming members. These efforts resulted in the addition of 86 members. Mark, Gail, and Jeff will review the list for people that didn't respond and attempt to contact them after the first of the year. Tom Dailey asked for a list of boat owners that did not respond to the membership drive, to encourage them to support LOPA and attend meetings to express their concerns. Gail agreed to supply the list to Tom. Some confusion existed over which year the new member dues would be applied as a result of the interim mailings. The consensus is that dues paid prior to the October meeting would allow individuals to vote and/or run for office in the current year. After November 1st, with the annual membership drive, dues would be applicable to the next year. Dorothy Mara, Gail Light and Bob Race would discuss the issue and make recommendation at the January meeting.

Gladys Brigham Center Development Update:

Bob Race read a brief statement from Dick Laureyns. It reported that the Blythewood Association had entered into a conditional agreement with Gladys Brigham Center (GBC) to provide water and sewer services from Blythewood Dr to only five residential sites north of Parker Brook. The GBC will be selling the property to DABCO who will be handling the development, with a time frame that is market driven. According to the statement GBC alleges no further plans for sale or development at this time.

319 Grant Update:

Jim McGrath reported on the progress to date of the 319 Grant which is in its third and final year. Jim reported on the installation of the second outflow pipe at the dam, which will primarily be used for the deep drawdown every 3rd year. Another small project just completed was the installation of curbing along the left side of the access road to the north parking lot. In addition, a deep sump catch basin system was installed to catch the run-off from the access road. The shore line stabilization project has received both state and local permitting approval and will be out for bid shortly. The citizen education portion of the grant has funded LOPA's website development, new brochures, and helped with the publishing of the Guardian. All remaining work will be completed by June 30, 2011.

Jim reported that this year's drawdown will be three and a half feet and will begin the first week of November. The drawdown was delayed a couple of weeks to manage possible river overflow conditions at Wahconah Park and further south, due to the simultaneous drawdown at Pontoosuc Lake.

Review Results of Mayor's Meeting:

Bob Race discussed results from the post-July's meeting brain storm session which produced issues which LOPA members suggested would require more action from the city. These involved Zebra Mussels Issues, Burbank Park Master Planning, Boating Safety and Canada Geese Control. Bob and several LOPA Directors met with Mayor Ruberto, Deanna Ruffer and Jim McGrath to express appreciation for the city's efforts expended this year. The meeting then focused on issues that needed additional action. The agenda outline is attached on page 5. The meeting resulted in a plan that the city would take these issues under advisement. In a letter to Bob, Mayor Ruberto expressed the city's commitment to these priorities and expressed confidence in Jim McGrath as the point person for the initiatives. Comments on these issues from Bob and Jim follows:

Zebra Mussel Issues:

Lew Cuyler raised the issue of access control to the lake that would support launching of only "clean" boats. This could include the issuance of tickets for those that don't comply with the current requirements, to the installation of a gate for off hour access. Jim said that this and a number of other issues would be explored in the coming months.

Jim summarized the city's efforts to prevent zebra mussels in 2011 and beyond.

- the city will continue to help and coordinate efforts with other lakes in the county with this issue,
- the city will continue to support the ramp monitoring process,
- provide for an earlier start and an easier way for volunteers to participate in the ramp monitoring effort,
- continue outreach and education efforts with more billboards'
- continue with boat wash training programs during first couple weeks of the season,
- continue to work with the state and the lake and pond programs, to pressure them on the zebra mussel issue,
- enforce requirements that 2011 fishing tournaments organizers be required to certify that applicants have cleaned their boats, or not been in infected waters within the last 30 days.

Jim McGrath restated his commitment to preventing zebra mussels and asked that anyone with suggestions or concerns to call him at city hall.

Tom Dailey displayed a large bag of zebra mussels that had been removed from a boat that had been in Laurel Lake over the last three month period. He said that this could be used to demonstrate the severity of the problem.

Burbank Park Master Plan:

Jim McGrath reported that the Burbank Park Plan was originally an action item in the city's Park, Open Space and Recreation Plan, that due to lack of funding, was not undertaken. Jim suggested that in place of an expensive park master plan, that a guiding document, which can be endorsed by the Park Commission and the city, be developed. It could include: future development, new amenities, access, safety and security within the park. Jim asked Lew Cuyler for his help in developing this document. Bob Race asked the members to call Lew at 442-4482 with their ideas.

Boating Safety:

Jim McGrath reported meeting with Police Chief Wynn. The Chief will be assessing the components of a safety plan, which will involve equipment, dedicated officers, and a work schedule for lake patrol. The Chief is considering the assignment of this responsibility to a specific individual. Bob Race discussed some of the Police Department's issues that need to be resolved. Examples include: sharing lake authority with the Environment Police, and the inability of the Chief to assign officers but needing to depend on volunteers for lake duties, due to city policies. Jim will keep LOPA updated as to the progress of these efforts.

Canada Geese Control:

Bob Race and Jim McGrath will coordinate with Andrew Madden of Fish and Wildlife and the USDA to develop a plan that will include everything from egg adding to hunting, and should have it available by next year. Jim added that the city would again chase the geese from the park using border collies. In addition, the guard rails at the causeway would be painted with the "DO NOT FEED WATERFOWL" message.

Volunteer Hours Reporting:

Bob Race continues to request that LOPA volunteers send him their hours, either each month or by month at the end of each quarter. Bob said that in the first three quarters of this year 737 hours had been reported, which equated to \$18,425 of matching Grant monies.

New Business

Election of 4 At-Large Directors:

Bob Quattrochi, speaking for the nominating committee that also included Walt Pickwell, and Jim Ditello, submitted a motion for the following slate:

For a two year term of Director At-Large: Dorothy Mara, Bob Quattrochi, Jack O'Brien, and Ron Smith.

The motion was unanimously approved.

LAPA-WEST Membership:

Bob Race requested a motion to allow LOPA to join LAPA-WEST and pay the annual \$100 membership fee. The motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

COLAP Membership Dues:

Bob Race requested a motion to allow LOPA to join the Congress of Lakes and Ponds (COLAP) of Massachusetts for an annual membership fee of \$40. The motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

Proposed Ken Wagner 10 Year Data Review:

Bob Race reported that for 15 years, LOPA has been collecting water sampling data at an annual cost of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per year. Bob reminded the members that LOPA has one year left on its commitment to the state's 319 Grant Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP). Bob requested that LOPA employ Ken Wagner to analyze 10 years of data and determine the most important trends and issues, and produce a report of the results in laymen's language. This report could be used to reduce or eliminate certain types of data capture and/or sampling. A motion was made to authorize up to \$1,500 for a technical review of 10 years of water quality and microphyte survey data by Ken Wagner to possibly reduce sampling expenses while maintaining a viable data base. The motion was approved by a majority vote with one dissenter.

CD Rollover:

Gail Light reported that the current CD was coming due in November, and the rates were less than 1%. A motion to allow Gail Light to rollover the CD to the best short term rate at her discretion was unanimously approved.

Microphyte Survey Chairman:

Bob Race requested that anyone interested in taking on the Macrophyte Survey duties to please contact him.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Cancilla, Recording Secretary

Next Meeting

The next open meeting of the LOPA's Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday January 13, 2011 at 7:15 pm in room 203 at City Hall. All members and guests are welcome. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

ONOTA LAKE ISSUES IN NEED OF CITY / LOPA ACTION

- 1.) We need the City to become pro-active and take more actual preventative actions to prevent the spread of Zebra Mussels into Onota Lake.. This summer's ramp monitoring program has not been functioning as well as it could and should have (at least at Onota) with:
 - a) its late start,
 - b) many unprotected gaps in coverage,
 - c) no apparent use of the (admittedly meager) enforcement tools the City has at its disposal,
 - d) no apparent use of the rope barricade (whose signs went missing in early August),
 - e) no implementation of the boat washing training program,
 - f) functioning with apparent inconsistencies between DCR, City employee and volunteer monitor instructions,
 - g) no apparent accountability by State or City for the failure of the fishing club permittees to live up to their commitments as promised by the Zebra Mussel Task Force.

And we still have received no answer from the Governor or EOEEA to LOPA's April 2010 letter regarding the Zebra Mussel Task Force and Laurel Lake. It's only by dint of good fortune (and the excellent educational and public outreach efforts put forth by the City) that has apparently let us dodge the bullet another year. We really must do better going forward.

- 2.) We need the City to take action on the promised but not-implemented effort to generate a well-thought-out Burbank Park Master Plan. Everything should be "on the table" including entry gates, parking fees, boat launch fees, installation of ramp kiosk with remote cameras to monitor boat launch traffic, even exploration of the possibility of "re-possession" of the public access ramp, maybe a Community Boat House, maybe camping sites, and many other ideas yet to be proposed. This Plan is also probably the right venue to reconsider the possibility of the City taking over the Chapter 91 Dock permitting process in order to create an income stream as well as prevent proliferation of illegal docks and gain some control over the total number of power boats on the lake. (We're near safe maximum right now)
- 3.) We need a multi-pronged effort to increase education and enforcement of state boating laws, including
 - a) A meeting with Chief Wynn to fully inform him as to the situation on the lake and to discuss ways to obtain increased presence of the Police Boat -- including consideration of Auxiliary Police, off-duty police, volunteers, weekend overtime (possibly even partially subsidized by LOPA), use of EPO's, etc
 - b) Install "no-wake-zone" reminder signs at the launch ramp and maybe on the end of the ramp docks to remind boaters of the 150 foot off-shore requirement and maybe a few other rules of the road.
 - c) Consider obtaining new, better obstruction buoys and creating a more dependable plan for deploying and retrieving them. (LOPA is currently investigating per Jim McGrath's request at our last meeting.)
- 4.) We need to generate a cooperative program including the City, LOPA, MassDFG and USDA Wildlife Services in Amherst to gain control of the ever-expanding health and aesthetics problem of the resident Canadian Goose population. (LOPA has started preliminary discussions with USDA).

RWR 8/25/10

**MINUTES
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MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LAKE ONOTA PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED (LOPA)**

The Board of Directors meeting was officially called to order at 8:54 pm.

Directors Present: Bob Race, Gail Light, Dorothy Mara, Joe Cancilla, Mark Selkowitz, Tom Dailey, Jeff Rose, Lew Cuyler, Jack O'Brien and Bob Quattrochi.

Bob Race presented Bob Quattrochi as the candidate for Vice President to replace Dick Laureyns, the departing Vice President.

Voted: The election of Bob Quattrochi to the Executive Board of Directors was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Cancilla
Recording Secretary