

Minutes of the Lake Hopatcong Commission October 17, 2011

A meeting of the Lake Hopatcong Commission was held on October 17, 2011 at the Roxbury Municipal Building, 1715 Route 45, Ledgewood, New Jersey. At 7:00 p.m., Chair Felter called the meeting to order. The Chair stated that the meeting was being held in accordance with "Open Public Meetings Act."

Salute to the Flag: Chair Felter and all those in attendance joined in a flag salute.

Moment of Silence: The Chair asked to remain standing for a moment of silence for men and women serving in our troops and for Officer Joseph Wargo of the Mount Arlington Police Department who was killed in the line of duty. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his families, fellow officers and residents of Mount Arlington.

Roll Call:

Present: Betty Lou DeCroce, Daniel McCarthy, Robert Mitchko, Kerry Pflugh, Anne Pravs, Joel Servoss, Richard Zoschak, Chairman Felter

Absent: Elizabeth Gantert, David Jarvis

Alternates: Michael Brunson, Richard Keir

With eight members present at Roll Call, Chair Felter declared a quorum.

Communications

In response to Mr. Zoschak's inquiry about the Jefferson ordinance, the Chair stated the redevelopment ordinance for Rt. 15 was for several sections from Jefferson Dinner to other side of McDonalds near Mase Mt. and a couple other sections down at the bottom.

Mr. McCarthy inquired about the extension of the grant letter from Abigail Amutah indicating additional extensions would only be granted under extenuating circumstances. Ms. Macalle-Holly stated all the planned projects had been completed for this 319(h) grant. When the Commission had a meeting with the DEP project manager, it was discussed how the DEP was trying to reallocate unused funds so a no-cost time extension was submitted. She anticipates the remaining money will be used for small scale retrofits along Yacht Club Drive in Jefferson Township. She does not anticipate having another NCTE for this grant past next August.

Treasurer's Report/Payment of Bills

In Ms. Gantert's absence due to illness, Ms. Macalle-Holly provided the report. She stated the Valley National Bank checking account balance as of September 29, 2011 was \$45,099.89 The Revised Bill List of \$9,369.93 was submitted for approval. Mr. Zoschak made the motion and Ms. DeCroce seconded. The Chair requested a roll call vote.

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ROLL CALL:

DeCroce	Yes	Pravs	Yes
McCarthy	Yes	Servoss	Yes
Mitchko	Yes	Zoschak	Yes
Pflugh	Yes	Felter	

Motion unanimous.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Chair asked if everyone had received the minutes and if there were any questions. Mr. Brunson had a typographical correction. There being no other comments, the Chair requested a roll call.

ROLL CALL:

DeCroce	Yes	Pravs	Yes
McCarthy	Yes	Servoss	Yes
Mitchko	Yes	Zoschak	Abstained
Pflugh	Yes	Felter	Yes

Motion carried 7-0-1 (one abstention).

Commissioners' Comments

Ms. Pravs stated she visited Waterloo Village today to see what was being done by volunteers. Ms. Macalle-Holly stated that is why she included the article in the package which described the devastation downstream caused during the flooding. Mr. Zoschak stated Roxbury had a milestone that it was voted best town for children which included a \$2500 grant. The Chair offered his congratulations.

Public Comment

The Chair stated before he begins public comment, there will be a presentation by Mike Smith. Mr. Smith distributed a copy of his presentation to Commissioners.

Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Zoschak for inviting him to give a presentation on monofilament fishing line recycling program. He described his background and his interest in the project. He provided a historical background, decomposition rates and environmental impact on the use of monofilament fishing line. The recycling program is through a NOAA grant administered by Boat US. According to Boat US over 2700 miles of line have been recycled to date. He gave examples of how the fishing line is detrimental to wildlife. According to NOAA more than one million birds and 100,000 marine animals die each year due to ingestion and entanglement of marine debris which includes fishing line. It can also be harmful to swimmers and boaters. Due to the line's chemical makeup, it cannot be recycled with other plastics at home, but it can be recycled. He stated the Commission and partners/sponsors could work to untangle this problem by establishing a monofilament fishing line recycling program. Barclay, parent company of Pure Fishing, provides postage paid shipping containers for line collection. The line is recycled to make tackle boxes, fish habitats, toys and spools for more line. He provided further details on the program and BOAT US involvement. BOAT US has a website to enter recycling data. Each month whoever collects the most can win \$100 gift certificate. The cost to towns is nothing because BOAT US provides the bins and signage and they just need to be installed. Mr. Zoschak and Mr. Clancy discussed how recycling was done in the Lake Hopatcong area and how recycling containers were available at various

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locations including the State Park, Lakeside Marina, Dows, Brady Bridge, Ramsey Outdoor, Lee's Park with the earliest ones being done through Boy Scout projects. Chair Felter discussed the Eagle Scout project underway through Morris County and how there is one by the Bill Clark Pond. Mr. Clancy stated since anglers are the ones buying it, they know what to do, but everyone does not always comply with recycling. According to Mr. Smith, Boat US does not have any recycling sites registered in this part of New Jersey. Ms. Macalle-Holly stated she would check with the Park Superintendent to see if the recycling sites she takes care of are registered with Boat US. Mr. Clancy suggested Mr. Smith focus on more remote type places that do not have centrally located businesses that handle fishing line recycling. Mr. Smith thanked the Commission for their time. Mr. Zoschak extended his thanks for the presentation.

Mr. Clancy inquired if the Commission would still be involved in the harvesting anymore or if it would be handled only by the State Park. He and others are concerned that the skilled staff and the equipment that belongs to the Commission will stay at Lake Hopatcong and not go elsewhere. The Chair stated the equipment will stay with us.

The Chair stated he was going to cover this in his report, but would discuss it now. The Chair stated it will be brought back to this Commission about ownership of the harvesters. Nothing has been decided and it will come back here for a full discussion. There is a commitment for full time seasonal people for next year and one full time person year round to run the operation. He stated the Franklin Building is under construction and all Commission equipment will fit except for two small harvesters and the green dump truck. Discussions are occurring with the County Park to put two small harvesters in the Saffon Building on Weldon Road. The Chair stated all details are still being worked out. The equipment will stay here. There is an interest because there is a State Park here and that is why the State is taking over the harvesting.

Mr. Clancy stated it is good to get this out in the public. The Chair stated the harvesters will not go all over the State. They are committed to be here since they were purchased for the Commission to use on Lake Hopatcong.

Mr. McCarthy inquired about whether a committee would be set up to meet with DEP to discuss the new world of the Commission. The Chair stated the Commission should meet amongst ourselves first to figure out how the Commission will accomplish its mission and where other agencies, towns or groups could help. He still sees needs for fundraising to accomplish certain projects such as hydro raking. He keeps hearing if the State is taking over the Commission, that the Commission will have nothing to do and that couldn't be further from the truth. Mr. McCarthy stated he was stopped by people asking if the State is taking over our equipment. There was further discussion on ownership of the equipment and weed harvesting. Ms. Pflugh suggested that the Commission reviews the water restoration plan which is really why the Commission is here due to the need for water quality improvement. In response to Mr. Zoschak's inquiry, she stated the harvesting program will be managed by the State. As to why this administration changed its position on harvesting, Ms. Pflugh stated she believes it was because there was not going to be a State appropriation to the Commission and the DEP does not have money to

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give to the Commission. The most cost-effective and efficient way to address the harvesting question is for the State to take it over as a major property owner on the lake. Mr. McCarthy stated the Commission should have a serious role in the weed harvesting operation because if there is a problem, people will come to the Commission.

Ms. Macalle-Holly stated it is her understanding that although the Park will oversee harvesting the Commission will still have a clear understanding on how the harvesting is operating and that the public comment or concern will go through the Commission. In response to an inquiry from Ms. Pravs, Ms. Macalle-Holly stated the equipment is registered to the Lake Hopatcong Commission. Mr. Zoschak inquired about insurance issues. The Chair stated if the State runs the harvesting operation, the Commission will not have to pay for insurance. Ms. Pflugh stated if the Commission is in but not of, ownership of the equipment is the question. She stated the goal is for the Commission to not have to pay for harvesting and insurance which is the reason the Governor negotiated this agreement with the Chair and DEP Commissioner. Mr. Brunson inquired if the State could lease the equipment for a dollar a year. Ms. Pflugh stated the harvesting program will be run out of the State Park, people that run the program will be employees of the State and supervised by Park personnel.

Mr. Clancy inquired that, for the record, there is absolutely no possibility of the staff and equipment being used for other lakes. Ms. Pflugh responded that she has not heard anything of the kind. She stated she would bring that back and questioned why would the State want to do that because they are trying to deal with the problems of Lake Hopatcong. Mr. Brunson asked Ms. Pflugh if there could be a clause in the lease to address this concern. The Chair gave the bottom line stating no one wanted fees and very few people were going to vote for them. The State agreed to take the harvesting operation out of Commission hands by hiring six full-time seasonal employees, one full-time person and taking on maintenance and insurance of equipment. Everyone stated that was great, but we do not trust you with anything or our equipment. The discussion of equipment ownership will be brought back here. The details still need to be worked out. The Chair stated he told Ms. Pflugh that the equipment should be leased because everyone will think that the harvesters will be used somewhere else.

Grants Update

Ms. Macalle-Holly stated the Commission received the permit from DEP to move forward with the alternate septic systems at the Jefferson Daycare. The Commission is still waiting for the County soil permit. She will not move forward with sending the project out to bid until the Commission receives the no-cost time extension from the EPA. The NCTE paperwork has been submitted to the EPA. Before going out to bid, the Commission will have to enter into an agreement with the daycare to ensure they will pay for the septic expansion part and the Commission will cover the cost for the alternate septic components. Princeton Hydro finished the lake monitoring done as part of the 319(h) grant in October instead of September due to weather and high water level. One more year is left in the grant to cover monitoring costs. The Commission is moving forward with its projects for the current 319(h) grant.

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Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

Sub-Committee

In response to an inquiry about the sub-committee, Ms. Macalle-Holly stated she believes the members were the Chair, Commissioners Zoschak, McCarthy and Servoss. The Chair asked for Ms. Macalle-Holly to arrange a date to meet before the next meeting.

New Business

In response to Mr. McCarthy's discussion on public awareness for ice eaters, it was agreed Ms. Macalle-Holly would prepare a press release for review at the next meeting.

Mr. Brunson discussed his concerns about basins around the lake being cleaned with all the rain and how some are failing. The Chair suggested that a reminder be sent to the towns and counties to clean the basins.

Public Comment

Mr. Cliff Beebe, Beebe Marina, stated nothing is being done, nothing is being carried back to the State and the State is not listening to reports and paperwork. No one has produced any deeds to Lake Hopatcong. He discussed violation of property rights. The State has to control water level into the river from Lake Musconetcong and not Lake Hopatcong. He questioned how an administrative code could be approved that contradicts the NJ State Statute. The Chair stated Mr. Beebe has a legal right to go to court if he believes his rights are being violated. The State has answered and Mr. Beebe does not like the answer.

Ms. Macalle-Holly stated based on the current water level management plan, the lake is scheduled to begin the 26" drawdown on November 12 if it is at 9 feet. The lake is currently at 9.09 feet and depending how much rain is received, the drawdown may have to begin earlier if the lake is above 9 feet. The 60" draw down will be done in 2013.

Mr. Servoss stated that a bare foot skier hit debris on the lake and smashed his ankle. The Chair stated it was up to the town to determine if they would accept lake debris.

Ms. Clancy discussed how he saw two kids attacking a flock of geese which went on continuously. Because of this abusive behavior, he confronted them at their home. He mentioned it two other people and they had seen the same thing. He would encourage people to report this type of abuse. The Commission emphasized the importance of reporting these types of incidents to the State Police and the F&W Conservation Officer.

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. McCarthy made the motion to adjourn at 8:05 and Mr. Zoschak seconded.

Prepared by: Donna Macalle-Holly