

## Minutes of the Lake Hopatcong Commission July 16, 2012

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A meeting of the Lake Hopatcong Commission was held on July 16, 2012 at the Hopatcong Senior Center, 32 Lakeside Boulevard, Hopatcong, New Jersey. At approximately 7:00 p.m., Chair Felter called the meeting to order. He stated 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 for a moment of silence for our armed forces.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Mark Fisch, David Jarvis, Daniel McCarthy, Kerry Pflugh, Anne Pravs, Joel Servoss, Richard Zoschak, Chair Felter

Absent: Elizabeth Gantert

Alternates Present: Edward McCarthy, Richard Keir, Robert Mitchko

Speakers: Steve Ellis, NJ DEP Regional Superintendent for Park Service

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

The Chair welcomed Mr. Zoschak back and stated Ms. Macalle-Holly had to leave because she was not feeling well. He would be running meeting in her absence.

**Communications**

The Chair asked for questions about the Communications. Mr. Zoschak had a question about the letter from the Musconetcong River Association and the Chair indicated that would be discussed later.

**Treasurer's Report/Payment of Bills**

In Ms. Gantert's absence, the Chair provided the report. He stated the Valley National Bank balance as of June 30, 2012 was \$31,522.16. Mr. Zoschak moved the report and Bill List for \$16,107.44 and Mr. Fisch seconded. The Chair read the roll call vote.

**ROLL CALL:**

Fisch	Yes	Pravs	Yes
Jarvis	Yes	Servoss	Yes
McCarthy	Yes	Zoschak	Yes
Pflugh	Yes	Felter	Yes

Motion unanimous.

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### Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. McCarthy made a motion to approve the June 18, 2012 minutes and Ms. Pflugh seconded. The Chair requested a roll call vote.

#### **ROLL CALL:**

Fisch	Yes	Pravs	Yes
Jarvis	Yes	Servoss	Yes
McCarthy	Yes	Zoschak	Abstained
Pflugh	Yes	Felter	Yes

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

### Commissioners' Comments

Mr. Zoschak thanked everyone for their concern for about his care and recovery including the Roxbury Fire Department and Morristown Memorial Hospital. The Chair and Commissioners welcomed him back. Mr. Servoss stated he and his neighbors were happy to see the weed eaters out there. Mr. Servoss stated when he participated in the scout for the water chestnut he was surprised at how little weeds there were in the northern end of the lake, but he has never seen the canals this bad mostly with lily pads. Commissioners discussed the possibility of harvesting some areas in the canals next year.

### Public Comment

Mr. Clancy, resident of Lake Hopatcong, asked Commissioners to consider every viable option before dismissing Ms. Macalle-Holly to save costs. He discussed how the towns and counties contributed to the Lake Hopatcong Regional Planning Board prior to the formation of the Commission. He stated he reviewed their budgets and if they took less than one-tenth of one percent for approximately .000 something of their revenue stream from real estate taxes, it would generate enough money to run the administrative aspects of this Commission efficiently and would not be too onerous. As a lakefront homeowner, he would like to see this amount go to benefiting this lake. The State has an obligation from the Commission's enabling legislation there so there should be some nominal administrative fees from the State. If Ms. Macalle-Holly is let go he is not sure how the Commission will manage and be able to seek out grant money. He asked the Commissioners to go back to their appointing governing bodies and tell them another source is needed for administrative costs and they could sue the State later for reimbursement. Without administration the Commission would have less going on their predecessor, the LHRPB.

Mr. Clancy reported on the Water Scout effort. Although there were some stragglers, 80% of volunteers did their area and they were all clear. There are 6 or 7 areas of concern which should be completed by Sunday and if not he will be out looking at them himself. Chair Felter thanked Mr. Clancy for his great efforts, acknowledging how important it is.

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The Chair stated the Commission would go into Executive Session later to discuss personnel issue.

### **Chairman's Report**

Chair Felter stated the Commission is getting down to seriously low funds with approximately less than \$60K remaining. He stated the Commission needs to reach out to the towns, counties, the State and our Legislators to keep the one staff person. The Commission has important work to do even without the harvesting. The Commission still has the rest of its charge including lake quality, administering grants and a lake clearinghouse. It's important the Commission stays in business and needs to look for funding. The Chair asked each representative to go back to their governing bodies and talk about some line item money for the Commission as they start their budget process.

He stated there are some budget implications for the 2013 drawdown and what needs to be done such as where dumpsters should be located, where people can dispose of tires or pilings. The local DPWs may have to include money in their municipal budget for a dumpster or two. Jefferson will continue dredging near outfalls in the fall, but their big push will be for next year. The Chair asked Commissioners to go back to their governing bodies and think of some ideals for cleanup and moving ahead. He stated the Commission should discuss with Princeton Hydro to see if there is anything on their list. He wanted to remind residents that if they want to repair docks or bulkheads next year, now is the time to start planning process.

Mr. McCarthy brought up the vacancies with the State and DCA representatives. He discussed how the Commission staff did a lake wide cleanup during the last five foot drawdown and asked Mr. Ellis if staff could do a cleanup next fall. Mr. Ellis said it would depend on the amount of maintenance needed but he would discuss further with staff.

Ms. Pflugh stated she would like to be able to coordinate with the Lake Level Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) on all draw downs. One of the discussion items is do we want an annual draw down. There has to be some discussion about expectations, weather and regulations in terms of the lake recovering from a five foot draw down. The CAC meeting will be in September. Chair Zoschak discussed proposed legislation about managing reservoir levels during heavy rain events. In response to an inquiry, Ms. Pflugh stated the CAC may make some recommendations which will be brought back to the Commission.

### **Harvesting Update**

Mr. Ellis began by giving credit to Mr. Calderio and the harvesting staff. They did an outstanding job repairing the harvesters and other equipment working at the Franklin facility in 105 degree temperatures. From July 9-16 they removed 191 cubic yards (CY) compared to 156 CY for the same period last year. Currently four harvesters are in the

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water and three are operating. The fourth one will be operating in the next day or two. Out of the seven available positions, seven employees will be on State payrolls. The last two employees will begin soon. They finished up River Styx and Crescent Cove and are working near North and Bryant Islands in the north end of the lake. One problem was that the Morris County MUA will no longer allow disposal of vegetative matter again. The MUA would only take 300 CY. He stated his staff will set up an account with Nature's Choice so they can switch over. The MUA has to follow a ratio for the mixture of grass clippings with aquatic vegetation. He will speak with Mr. Calderio about a cleanup, but their budget is tight. There was further discussion about how much aquatic vegetation the MUA would accept. Chair Felter stated he would discuss the issue with the MUA Director to get a better understanding. Mr. Ellis stated the rate for disposal will increase considerably at Nature's Choice to \$10/cy from \$4/cy at the MUA.

Mr. Ellis spoke about how Water Chestnut is a scary thing that the Commission is aware of. It was found at Wawayanda where harvesters were used, but it is so heavy and thick. They removed so many tons just to keep the bathing area clear. Mr. Rogalo, LMRPB Vice Chair discussed the Water Chestnut in Lake Musconetcong and how it has been reduced from 100 acres to approximately 35-40 acres now. Lake Musconetcong is treated with herbicide and harvesting, but the harvesters can not reach pockets along the shoreline, but there is not enough along the shoreline to justify an herbicide application. It started on the Lake Musconetcong seven years ago with very small pocket. Mr. Clancy stated if it is found on the lake it will be removed by hand pulling.

Pat Rector, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, stated there is a fact sheet on the Rutgers Cooperative Extension website and there is a link from the Commission website to the fact sheet. Mr. Clancy stated Lake Hopatcong has to be vigilant because we are at great risk. No other Lake would have the economic destruction that would be experienced here. Ms. Rector stated if it is found early, you can get rid of it with hand pulls. She stated what the Water Scouts are doing is absolutely phenomenal.

The Chair thanked all including Mr. Ellis for their efforts. There were inquiries if any water chestnut was found on Bear Pond or Lake Shawnee. Chair Felter stated he would discuss with Lake Shawnee contact.

### **Grants Update/Old Business**

There was no discussion for these agenda items.

### **New Business**

#### **Water Quality Monitoring Program for 2013**

The Chair stated since the Commission was talking about running out of money, it is important to continue the 2013 water quality lake monitoring. He stated the Commission should apply to the Lake Hopatcong Foundation (LHF) for funding for the program. If the Commission approves, a letter will be sent to the LHF. The Commission cannot

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make any recommendations on who would do the monitoring, but should provide an outline of what funded is needed for the monitoring. There was inquiry on how bids would be received. Jessica Kitchin, LHF President, stated they are still determining how it will be worked out. Ms. Pflugh stated a firm would have to have qualifications and develop a QAPP and get it approved by DEP and have capacity to do analysis. The Chair requested a motion to send a letter to LHF regarding funding for water quality monitoring program. Mr. Zoschak made the motion and Mr. Servoss seconded.

### **ROLL CALL:**

Fisch	Yes	Pravs	Yes
Jarvis	Yes	Servoss	Yes
McCarthy	Yes	Zoschak	Yes
Pflugh	Yes	Felter	Yes

Motion unanimous.

### **Executive Session**

The Chair stated he has a resolution to adjourn to Executive Session. Since he did not think there will be an action as a result, he proceeded to Public Comment before Executive Session and adjournment.

### **Public Comment**

Brenda Fisch, resident of Lake Hopatcong, discussed finding something in the water which looks like a floating brain. She did some research and determined it was a bryozoan colony. She provided some photos. She stated they are harmless and are good filters for fresh water. She was advised that the canals have them.

Mr. E. McCarthy stated he saw a person on the lake with a jet pack. There was discussion on how the equipment worked. It was reported that there is an article on [www.lakehopatcongnews.com](http://www.lakehopatcongnews.com) about the jetpack use.

Mr. D. McCarthy stated he noticed many comorants on the lake this year. He asked if Fish & Wildlife could address it in their report. Ms. Pflugh responded that there must be a food source that is bringing comorants here, but she would check with F&W.

Mr. Clancy stated since the State is foregoing any obligation of bringing money to manage the administrative costs and the LHF is going to donate for monitoring, when the State brings their checkbook he will care about the DEP protocol. The Chair stated he will pass comments onto the State. Ms. Pflugh stated her comments were made about the water quality monitoring so the data collected could be used.

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### **Executive Session**

The Chair read the Executive Resolution session stating the general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is personnel. Mr. Zoschak made the motion and Mr. Servoss seconded. The motion was unanimous.

Prepared by: Donna Macalle-Holly