

Minutes Lakes Management Advisory Committee

March 9, 2021 7:30p.m.

Present: Committee Chair Scot Kuehm

Committee Members; Alpesh Amin, Debra Dewing, Tina Gargano, Ethan Grodofsky, Andy Hilton, Derek Jackson, Mike Russo

Solitude Lake Management representative Bob Schindler, Borough Council Liaison Chris Richter, Environmental Commission Liaison Allison Rankin

Student Auxiliary Members: Ben Schuckman

Not present: Lukas Dequina, Frank Luzzi, Yash Samat, Mitchell Stern

Committee Chair Opening (Scot Kuehm)

- Approval of Minutes of May 4, 2021 meeting: Motion (Dewing) and Second (Hilton)

Borough Manager's Report (Mitchell Stern)

- Due to Mitchell's absence, there was no report.

Solitude Lake Management Report (Bob Schindler)

- Administrative reports are behind but will be brought up to date.
- Have been visiting the lakes to determine appropriate course of action for treatments. Every lake except Crystal has had treatment. There has been slow growth in Crystal. We will continue with maintenance treatments in the lakes.
- Mountain Lake had visibility to 8 foot lake bottom.
- A resident has been vocalizing and communicating speculation to the DEP that our treatments are killing fish. Solitude does not agree with this assessment and explained the same to the EPA
 - DEP wants to regulate the use of aluminum sulfate. The DEP is considering whether there should be some form of permitting required to regulate the same in the future. There was no recommendation from the DEP to change our treatment plans
- There was a meeting between Solitude, Brian Marshall (concerned resident and consultant on native planting with Garden Magic) and Mayor Tom Menard about the living shoreline proposal at Briarcliff Park. Mr. Marshall disagrees with the proposed location and believes that we need additional DEP permits for anything touching the waterline. Although it is unclear if Mr. Marshall's opinion is true, if permits were required the cost and timeline would likely be prohibitive, and we would need to limit the scope of the project. There is a belief that the project would be "permitted by rule". There was additional discussion about what options, the community has regarding the need for a permit and the project scope.

Questions and Additional discussion

- There was commentary that the Bass Weed in Mountain Lake is densely overgrown in a few locations. Bass Weed makes the lake water clear and encourages health plants to grow in the deeper water. Controlled and spot treatment will continue along dense waterfronts in the future.
- Shadow Lake aeration system appears to have stopped. It is unclear if it is off, or if it has failed. Bob from Solitude indicated the DPW maintains the systems and Solitude has parts available. There will be a follow-up with Mitchell to determine if he knows the status.
- There have been public inquiries about feeding the swans at the lakes. The swans appear to have been domesticated and will approach people looking for food. The DEP position is that you should NOT feed the wildlife. This will be communicated in the Borough Blast email.
- Debra Dewing noted that while walking around Birchwood she observed significant debris and plant growth in the water. She thought there may be “new” islands despite the hydroraking earlier this Spring. Bob clarified that hydroraking scope focused on removing the “floating” material. Bob suggested a site meeting with Mitchell. Bob also noted that if Borough budget allowed it, we could potentially be more aggressive in the future by removing additional material that rests on the bottom if we do not disturb the original lake bed bottom.
 - There needs to be further analysis and planning around how to proactively handle this challenge in Birchwood and other lakes in the future. The upper part of Wildwood near the Boulevard will need to be included in this scope.
 - There will be additional follow-up with Mitchell to determine if there was money budgeted in 2021.
- The Recreation Commission and Sailing Association are inquiring about requirements to invite “guest boats” to the lake. Many lake communities and/or clubs clean boats with high pressure steam to avoid transmission of invasive species. Bob recommends the borough steam clean watercraft before they are brought to the lake. The Borough Manager should make a recommendation of the location; potentially the DPW. There was additional discussion of educating the public on what steps should be taken to avoid bringing invasive species to the lakes and/or creating an enforceable policy for the same.
- There was discussion of several changes to residents’ lake shorelines. There is a perceived lack of enforcement of DEP requirements, and the borough’s lake encroachment permit ordinances. This may be another community education opportunity. It was suggested that we could create material and provide it to lake front homeowners and/or with lake front residential sales transactions.
- Discussion of future projects for interested students, scouts etc. The committee is open to hearing proposals but suggests “day cleaning” type activities.

Andy - Motion to adjourn at 9 pm. Second Mike