

Minutes Lakes Management Advisory Committee

July 6, 2021 7:30p.m.

Present: Committee Chair Scot Kuehm, Debra Dewing, Andy Hilton, Derek Jackson, Mike Russo, Lukas Dequina, Solitude Lake Management Representative Bob Schindler

Not present: Lukas Dequina, Frank Luzzi, Yash Samat, Mitchell Stern, Ben Schuckman, Borough Council Liaison Chris Richter, Environmental Commission Liaison Allison Rankin

Committee Chair Opening (Scot Kuehm)

- Approval of Minutes of June 1, 2021 meeting: Motion (Dewing) and Second (Hilton)

Borough Manager's Report (Mitchell Stern)

Borough Manager not present. The following updates were provided to the Committee in advance of the meeting:

Shadow Lake Aeration – DPW has repaired the system and it should be working as intended.

- Committee Discussion:
 - Michael Russo noted that this situation has visibly improved.

Boats from Out-of-Town (in connection with ML recreation program) – There are a number of issues with a wash station within the Borough. Staffing and the runoff from the cleaning (even if it's just water) are the two big ones.

- Committee Discussion:
 - Bob Schindler noted there was less risk from the types of boats we have in Mountain Lakes. Trailers and boats with carpeted bumps are the worst, which we don't have in the town. One gallon of water with one gallon of Simple Green natural disinfectant sprayed on the boats to kill active bacteria sufficient for the current situation.
 - Debra Dewing suggested we advise visitors (planned - through recreation program) to our standard protocols for cleaning boats before introducing them to our lakes in advance prior to coming to Mountain Lakes. (Reference website for guidance.)

Lake Shoreline Encroachments – The Borough investigates reports of shoreline encroachment as we are notified. Along with education on the issue, reminding people to notify the Borough Manager's office of potential encroachments is important so that we can stop any improper work.

Living Shoreline Update – After consultation with our Borough Engineer and the Engineer's consultant, the Borough Manager is satisfied that the project presented by Solitude is covered under more than one of NJ DEP's permit by rule. Any deviation from Solitude's proposal could alter this opinion.

- Committee Discussion:
 - Bob Schindler notes that we will wait until later in the summer to advance the project so we don't put plants at risk during summer heat.

Mountain Lakes Club Update – The MLC has removed a significant amount of sand from the canal and placed it back on their beach. The remediation still needs to be checked by Borough personnel to see if what was done was sufficient. MLC has been advised that it is their responsibility to be sure that the sand does not end up in the lake again.

- Committee Discussion:
 - Debra Dewing observed that the depth of the canal has improved slightly to ~18", but a far cry from the 4-5' depths observed after clearing out following Hurricane Sandy.
 - The Committee had general discussion around the need for more aggressive policing to hold MLC accountable, as well as violations at all waterfront points. The Committee requests to understand what the policy of the Borough is with respect to introduction of new sand at town beaches (Island and Birchwood).
 - Committee Recommendation: Have discussion with MLC to educate and make a case for mutual benefit to MLC and its members (e.g., no stagnant water at MLC beach). Commission study on impacts of private beaches at other points around our lakes.

Update on Grunden's Pond – No update. Awaiting info from the engineer. Not expecting anything before this fall.

- Committee Discussion:
 - Committee has expressed concern that the Borough is moving too slowly on this issue.

Hydro-Raking Plan – Borough Manager requests a definitive statement on the progress of Birchwood Lake to understand progress to date and expected future results. Aside from Birchwood, Borough Managers request for Solitude to provide a report on the condition of all of our lakes as it relates to hydro-raking. The report should also rank the lakes regarding which lake(s) should be raked next. Committee has no visibility into the budget. Had the Committee had visibility, a hand would have been raised about the decision to limit hydro-raking at certain locations.

- Committee Discussion:
 - Solitude: Recommendation is to wait until later in the season to treat surface leaves with herbicide because we don't want to encourage decomposed materials during the height of summer and risk lowering dissolved oxygen.
 - Solitude: Should not be discouraged about progress made to date--the floating islands have largely been removed. What's visible now is new growth only.
 - Solitude: Southwest cove of Mountain Lake will require two weeks of hydro-raking.
 - To economically accelerate progress Committee recommends assessment of the feasibility of purchasing the requisite hydro-raking equipment (est \$100k) and ensuring DPW capability/capacity to operate. Solitude: staffing could be provided by Solitude to operate Borough equipment.

Solitude Lake Management Report (Bob Schindler)

- (See report under separate cover.)

Questions and Additional discussion

- Derek Jackson: Question raised from residents about volume of the debris from fireworks and its impact on Mountain Lake.
- Debra Dewing: Need to address downed trees in the lakes. In several locations throughout town, downed and/or dead trees are observed, while others visibly in jeopardy of falling into the lake.
- Debra Dewing: Opportunity for additional student projects (south end of Birchwood), conversation deferred to next meeting.

Motion to adjourn (9:00 pm by Andy Hilton. Seconded by Michael Russo.