

## **Lake Armstrong Association Member Meeting -- Minutes**

### **July 14, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 10:24 AM. The gathering at the home of Belle Soloway, 670 Cape Moonshine Road, brought out 34 people.

Kathy Soloway, LAA Board President, opened the meeting by extending thanks to all who helped to organize the meeting. She then presented gifts (stain glass hangings with loon and view of the lake) to Polly Tafrate, Alice Wellington, Lynn Dennison for their collective 21 years serving as LAA Board presidents/co-presidents. Alice was recognized for creating and maintaining our website; Polly for her humor and problem-solving skills; and Lynn for her “just do it” spirit, bringing solutions to big and small challenges.

#### Budget:

Kate Merritt reviewed the Association budget. In 2023 we were on target with donations slightly more than budgeted. The 2024 budget will bring \$100 more in for dues after slightly raising the rates. Same budgeted donation numbers. Our expenses are going up, for example: Portable toilet rental for lake host area was \$388 and is now \$823; our PO Box was \$44 and is now \$72; technology costs (website etc.) were \$300 and now \$818 (in the years that the fees are due).

The 2024 we are budgeting a modest net income of \$745. We have already received close to our budgeted dues amount, but donations are way under at \$950 vs a budget of \$6000. However we have not yet received the budgeted donation from Camp Walt Whitman yet, but even with that we are under so please donate. We are way under in net income, which is OK this time of the year because all income is not in yet and we have paid most of our expenses. 76% of all our costs go directly into the Lake host program and our purpose of our 501c3. Kate noted that we can now take donations with checks or Venmo. The cost to clean out the phragmites plants is in the budget – we have approximately \$600 more to pay for the removal; we already paid \$1000.

#### Weed Watchers Program:

Linda Kline said the lake looks good so far; there is a lot of bladderwort and not much of anything else. She thanked all who participate. Everyone should continue watching around their docks for milfoil. The small phragmites outbreak at the small end of the lake (near Kate Merritt’s place) is being treated by a contractor [I didn’t get the name]. It is mostly in the yard with a small amount in the water. Kate said it looks the same size as last year. They first tried to dig it up to remove last summer, but it came back; they are planning to come in July. The next attempt could be water-safe chemical removal. We will ask them to dig it out again. It is a small job so some of the companies don’t want to do the work – Wicot did it in the past in a bigger job. We hope it won’t spread anywhere else on the lake. It seems to come when building projects are happening around the lake.

Water Report: Mike Poole tested the water quality in 2023 came back and all of the results looked good. The results of the latest test from mid June 2024 are not in yet but will be posted on the website when we get them. He said the water transparency looked good.

#### Lake Host Program:

Linda DeMerchant has led this project for many years but is asking to back away from it this year; she is willing to do the grant in the Spring. We have a team of four volunteers (Lynn Dennison, Bill Musty, Lisa McGiffert, Chris Palmucci) who are splitting up the summer weekend check-ins and approving the hours that the inspection staff has submitted. Laurie Gramlich takes care of logging the

boat inspections. We have had Nick and Peter on staff for the past 4-5 years and they are very reliable and work well with us.

This is a short-term solution, and we need someone to take the lead to manage this project. The members discussed other ideas. Lynn DeMerchant can provide guidance but cannot continue the work due to other obligations. Should we reach out to DES for ideas? Lake Tarleton has one person doing the inspections and a person managing it. They can use an app to enter the boat information. The real work is in setting it up – recruiting workers, applying for the grant, paperwork, training. If we cannot find a way to oversee the work we might have to discontinue these lake inspections and no one wants that. All of the work is online.

Merchandise report: We have sold out our merchandise. The group discussed potential future merchandise option to create for order (without an inventory) t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, etc., made as ordered by a company that the Town of Piermont is using. The membership was interested in doing this and asked the board to explore further. It should be low maintenance with online orders and a minor outlay for the logo to be printed or embroidered. People agreed we could probably double the purchase price to raise money for the Association. Deb Jensen will follow up will report with more details at our September meeting. Another idea that was floated was to create some LAA tea towels; Deb Jensen and Lisa McGiffert will explore this idea. We will be asking for volunteers to help with this effort.

Lake Tarleton NH Land Management situation Issues: Bob Dennison reported the tentative beginning date was June 24 but not seeing activity doesn't mean there is no activity; the plan includes improvements on Lake Catherine and work in the forest, which he thinks will start first. A lawsuit was filed May 16 by Standing Trees and the Environmental Advocacy Center from the VT Law & Graduate School challenging the environmental process. My belief is that they probably went to a judge and asked for an injunction, but who knows what will happen next. Also Bob thinks they will continue to move forward with their project but can't do any logging until the winter.

Tarleton members attending said they have started to do some work on the road opposite the cape moonshine sign. They have put in some logs with heavy trucks and markers in the forest and on the Charlestown road they have taken the beaver dam down twice and then the beavers have rebuilt them; they put some colored sticks in the ground there and also on Lake Catherine. The auction for loggers for next winter took place but the project was not put out for logging next winter. So we think it won't happen this winter. They seem to be planning and proceeding on activity that doesn't involve logging. Standing Trees joined the Tarleton Project and a Goram project where they did a poor environmental assessment – so the two are now linked.

They flagged cellar holes – many back on Charlestown road; there are remnants of a town up there; there is an expert in Lyme who knows all about them. They are planning to restore the apple orchard up there. These projects plan to stay away from any archeological sites. They are out there, walking around, prepping. They are going to redo the boat launch on Lake Catherine, they are widened the road opposite of Cape Moonshine; also around Lake Constance and it comes around to Tarleton. They had a meeting with one of the tribes to see if there are any sites to be aware of.

Stan Soloway thought this history would be a great project for the Camp Walt Whitman kids to take on. We don't know enough of the history. There was a suggestion to invite the guy from Lyme to speak to members who are interested. Stan will explore further. Some people have done a tour of the cellar holes.

Miscellaneous information:

- Drinks on the lake will be held on September 7 at the McGiffert cabin off of Sir Echo Shores. A notice will go out to members.
- Kathy noted that Gene Robinson (Belle Soloway's son) will be taking over our website management.
- While we didn't have an ice out contest this year, someone asked and others said it occurred around April 10 in the big end of the lake.
- The board discussed having a "regatta" of boats around the lake as was done in the past on Lake Armington. Any volunteers to organize this? Beth Wellington volunteered to organize it for August 17 at 10am. We can meet in the middle of the lake. People can decorate their boats and wear costumes if they like.
- No one has heard from the Loon Preservation Group this year – they typically check in via email. Someone mentioned that they did come earlier in the summer. No loon chicks this year on Tarleton or Armington.
- Concerns raised about a radio controlled motorized boat on the lake from some renters; disturbed the loons; Wayne Evans asked them to put it away. All agreed the best way to handle is to mention it to those who rent their properties out.

Meeting was closed at 11:20 am.