

# LTPA Annual Meeting MINUTES

July 13, 2024, 9:00 a.m. St. Helen's Church Hall Chasm Falls, NY

## Board Members:

*President Dick Chalifoux, Vice President/Secretary Deb Venuti, Treasurer Dani Rapier, Trustees Franz Fredericks, Terri Livingston, Bob Smallman, excused absence: Allison Howard*

**Motion to approve the minutes** from 2023 seconded and approved

**Quorum established** (57%) 36 representing members present

**Muster List:** Dick recognized George Lucier, Billy Coughlin, BJ Sherwin, & Ernie Scott — our friends who have passed on.

**Fire Safety (Stephen Todd):** As a result of last year's concerns from Lake Titus, 3 counties will now respond to a fire on the lake. Scott Smith noted new OSHA requirements regarding the replacement of fire trucks raise concerns about the viability of the smaller fire departments that serve Lake Titus and potential tax consequences to property owners.

**Welcoming Committee (Laura VanDeusen):** New owners were welcomed, with camp Trailside new owners Marji McCullough and Dirk Schroeder attending

**President's Report (Dick Chalifoux):** Pleased to report no major issues and a solid financial position. In the process of finalizing a three year timber harvest. Immortelle dock repaired; South Beach docks need repairing before the BW. The gate at the boat launch off the Fayette Road is in process of getting repaired. Board has approved additional testing to address water quality concerns.

**Treasurer's Report (Dani Rapier):** Surplus of \$5-6k for the last 2-3 years. \$70k in operating funds. \$140k in endowment fund. Dues are coming in well. Dues do not cover all expenses, so we rely on donations, clothing sales, raffle, and BW. Full report on the website and in the Equinox.

During the treasurer's report, members expressed concerns about annual dues not covering expenses. Rick VanDeusen spontaneously made a motion to increase dues to \$150 effective 2025 to help cover expenses, and it was seconded. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the need to cover expenses and saving for possible future large projects, including dam repairs, etc. The board was concerned about raising dues at a time when our current financial position is strong and the upcoming timber harvest could bring significant additional revenues. There are 112 lakeshore owners, 95-100 owners pay dues annually. Suggestion to send a notice to alert members of the increase. Several members noted we shouldn't rely on clothing sales and donations to cover expenses when we could simply raise dues. Others suggested the board should make the decision. Many pointed out dues have been \$100 for 20+ years.

Motion to raise dues to \$150/annually starting in 2025 - 27 in favor, 9 opposed. The motion passed. *NOTE: The board will continue to discuss this issue and may suggest a revision to the membership at the 2025 annual meeting.*

**Communications Report (Dick Chalifoux - for Phil Parker):** Cost of printing and mailing the Equinox (\$300-\$400 per year) is becoming a significant expensive. There will be special notice on this issue in next year's Equinox and the board is encouraging members to print their own copies. Phil also noted the website is running well and to contact him if members are not getting emails.

### **Navigation (Betsy Suatoni):**

§ Personal water craft speed on the lake is a concern. As a private lake we do not have jurisdiction over this. Malone town board would need to create an ordinance.

§ Friendly coaching is recommended...be very nice and explain your position. Debris on the lake could cause a safety issue.

§ Scott Smith, Mark MacLean, and Dirk Schroeder will join Betsy on the navigation committee.

§ 2025 NYS Brianna's law states all operators of any age are required to have a safety certificate before operating any water craft. Certification course can be done on line. Members suggested the information be added to the website and included in 2025 Equinox.

**Dam and Trail Condition (Rick VanDeusen):** Dam is in excellent condition, Mark Fitzsimmons continues to do yearly inspections. Water levels are monitored regularly and multiple adjustments have already been made due to the recent heavy rainfall. Immortelle trail has a tree down about half way up and Elephant's Head has one down near the BW area and trailhead. Both will be addressed soon, but hikers have been able to get around them.

### **Lake Quality, Invasive Plants (Maggie Cardinal-Alison Sims):**

§ Extensive annual report available at the end of July and will be posted on the website. Water clarity is very good (as of 2023, it was 19')

§ Board approved a water test near Snake River for the first time to see impact of road salt from Rt 30. Levels were high: 40 ml per liter. Potential remediation is being explored with state officials.

§ Septic systems – Board purchased and provided tablets free of charge to all members to test septic systems. Must know size of septic tank to get the appropriate number of tablets (placed in the tank of ONE toilet). Additional tablets will be available at the Breakfast Walk while supplies last. Everyone is highly encouraged to test their systems.

§ Invasive species (from Alison Sims): Milfoil is spreading. Looking for volunteers for 1-3 hours to tour the lake in August to capture a sample and send for analysis. Categorize the correct type of milfoil, so we understand if it is invasive/harmful/find ways to mitigate it. If owners attempt to reduce weeds near their camps, it is highly recommended that weeds are pulled early in the season, from the roots, and disposed of far away from the lake.

§ Do not use fertilizer on lawns because it seeps into the lake.

### **Land and Forest Management (Dick Chalifoux):**

§ We have partnered with F&W forestry management group. Tom Gilman. 2012 recommendation was to wait at least 10 years. It's now time to do a harvest – much of the land is under the Fisher Act which requires us to manage the forest, including harvesting when it is appropriate. This will be a three year contract in order to harvest during the appropriate seasons and allow time to gain access to lands. F&W will do their best to mitigate noise issues. Must give notice to the town of Malone 30 days prior to any harvest, town receives 6% of all proceeds.

§ Questions/Comments?

o Runoff from clearing – F&W is very aware and mitigate – it is their #1 concern, will mark trees for size, disease, not cutting within certain distance of streams, etc.

o Need to get owner's permission to use/cross property. Owners potentially may be able to piggy-back on the harvesting project (on their land), will need to contact F&W directly to explore the feasibility.

- o Very selective harvesting, no change in the canopy when looking at the lake; aesthetics remain.
- o Reforestation occurs naturally. No clear cutting.
- o LTPA member Mac Kilgour, a veteran forester & long-time forestry committee member, agrees that this is a good plan and the right time to do it. Beech bark disease is killing some trees, and more beech is coming back. The timing of the cut is important, especially to encourage more Maple growth.
- o Harvesters will put the work out to bid and will monitor their work. We get weekly payments, inventory spreadsheets, etc.
- o The board will vote about signing the harvesting contract at the next trustees meeting. A non-binding member vote showed unanimous support for the project.

**Breakfast Walk (Regina Darling):** Date 8/3/24, Rick VanDeusen volunteered to coordinate a site clean prior to the event. Still looking for volunteers to help that day.

**Raffle and Auction (Kathy Goodwin):** Several items were on display at the annual meeting, raffle tickets were sold (and will be available that morning). Still need items for both the raffle and silent auction.

**Clothing Sales (Terri Livingston):** Sales were brisk at the annual meeting! Terri took orders for items as well. She will be set up at the BW and possibly have additional dock sales before the end of the season. Several new items!

**Loons (Laura VanDeusen):** Two pairs (one on each end of the lake). The south end pair appears to have two eggs in the floating shelter. Advised all to be very cautious around the nest and reminded everyone that the baby loons cannot dive until they are at least 6 weeks old.

**Beaches (Terri Livingston):** Many members have asked about doing some clearing at the south beach, following years of growth. Bruce Barker will organize a selective clearing this summer to reclaim some of the lost beach area.

**Activities (Dick Chalifoux/Dani Rapier):** Discussed Wednesday Happy Hour parties, the Hick's cup sailboat race on 8/3/24 and the Dan & Elaine Riley Golf tournament on 8/4/24.

**Ice-Out (Muffy Charlebois):** Much humorous debate over the date (with the record early date and re-freeze) with possible contest rules being revised! Three winners were awarded mini engraved ice shovels.

**Nominating Committee (Liz Fessenden):** Liz made the motion to re-elect current board members Dick Chalifoux, Franz Fredericks, and Terri Livingston to additional 2 year terms to expire in 2026. Also Dani Rapier as treasurer for a one year term, and NEW board member Scott Spillane to a two year term. Motion passed. Liz also reminded members that the trustees elect the officers at their initial meeting as a new board. Liz invited members to reach out to her, Sherb House or Rick VanDeusen if they have an interest in serving on the board.

**New Business:** Bill Slack encouraged members to be aware of light pollution; suggested considering lower wattage lights on their properties.

**Meeting adjourned.**

**Respectfully submitted, Deb Venuti**