



**SLPID Meeting Minutes
Malta Town Hall
March 16, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.**

Call to Order: Chair Kathy Simmonds, 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call Commissioners present: Simmonds, Mazzotti, Borisenok, Scalici.

Commissioners absent: Baker.

Staff present: Cristina Connolly, Lake District Administrator. Consultant, Dean Long.

Public present: Michael Funk, Dan Buckley, Barbara Conner.

Public Comment: limited to three minutes. The time is not intended for commissioners or staff to answer questions or speak, only to listen. The Board of Commissioners will not take action on an item presented during the public comment period.

PRESENTATIONS:

Secretary Report (SLPID Chair)

***Present January minutes.**

No Comments.

Motion to accept January 2023 minutes.

First: Mazzotti

Second: Scalici

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH

Treasurer report (Commissioner Mazzotti)

Financial Report: The total checking account amount is \$77,285. The total money market account is \$16,060. The total savings account is \$53,962. With a combined total of \$147,307. Year-to-date expenses are \$34,506. The remaining budget expenses for the year are \$411,693.18, with a surplus of \$16,320.61. Assets total \$862,374.50.

Motion to accept the Financial Report

First: Simmonds

Second: Scalici

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH

Motion to accept the paid bills. Invoices were emailed to the commissioners.

First: Scalici

Second: Simmonds

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH

***Lake Administrator report: (Cristina Connolly)**

Cristina reported that the four municipal checks had arrived early. Typically, we see them at the end of March or the beginning of April.

Lake Stewards

Cristina reported that since the beginning of the year, meetings have been ongoing with the State Bureau of Invasive Species, PRISM, etc., on new protocols, data entry, and approaching different cultures about invasive species—also, meetings with NY Heritage and Imap Invasives on ArcGIS and mapping for the surveys.

Cristina said she had been invited to participate in the Mohawk River water chestnut stakeholder meetings giving them information on how chestnuts have been handled in Saratoga Lake by SLPID. She also attended an in-person invasive species stakeholder meeting hosted by PRISM in Albany.

She noted that there is a big push on education and prevention on the spread of the spiny water flea and round goby to inland lakes. Also, more education on vegetation and the threat of a new invasive coming into Saratoga Lake, particularly the hydrilla plant. Cristina is aware of and proactive with the upcoming program.

Her plan with the stewards this season is to focus more on approaching anglers on aquatic invasives. Many anglers at the boat launch are Chinese and Latinos. Added to the training will be approaching different cultures. She has ordered many supplies and handouts with informative materials for the public.

Cristina is now interviewing and, in the coming month, hiring employees. She has several applicants who have reached out by word of mouth and hoping to recruit stewards who can work through October with full-time hours this year. Her challenge is finding stewards to work through the summer, as last year, all the stewards were in college and left the second week of August. That was tough as it is the time that we need the stewards the most going into late summer early fall with washes and assisting with water chestnuts, etc.

Cristina noted that the “Buffer in a Bag” cut-off had been met with 26 properties. She is working with Brookside Nursery to distribute them with the Town Supervisor within the first couple weeks of May at the Malta Town Hall or Malta Community Center.

The advertisement for the “Buffer in a Bag” has garnered much interest outside the town of Malta, with other residents on Saratoga Lake and other lakes reaching out and asking for assistance to do the same on their lakes. Based on the “Buffer in a Bag,” the Water’s Edge community formed a garden club and is looking for input and an assessment of their property. The Sailing Club has also signed up for both.

Cristina commented, “in my mind, this alone is a success.” She will document these programs with photos to use these sites as models for the SLPID website. Outside Malta, residents who

have asked to join in are being sent information on what they can do, along with the link to the Vegetative Buffer Guide. She is hoping next year to expand this initiative with the other municipalities.

Cristina emailed the SLPID board a flyer and distributed it to the public on SLPID offering property assessments. The assessments are information and homeowner education, including basic lake science and strategies to reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff into the lake. Cristina has partaken in training provided by Dan Buckley, who has volunteered to conduct these with her. They have a date set up with the Water's Edge community in two weeks for their assessment. Cristina noted on the record, Thank you again, Dan, Buckley, for all your time and professional input.

Cristina is also planning this season's educational outreach events and has been working on arranging two events at Browns Beach. They will focus on explaining native and invasive aquatics, having a model to show stormwater runoff effects from properties, Sheriff Marine Patrol presenting Saratoga Lake boating laws, and possibly DEC fish and wildlife addressing the Saratoga Lake fish population and regulations.

Cristina noted she is planning a more significant presence at the City Waterfront Park, hosting weekend tabling events and taking advantage of the opportunity to interact with the non-motorized recreational users and the many young families that utilize the park.

Cristina distributed a quote from Aquatic Weed Harvesting, LLC. This is the same price as the last two years, but for two ten-hour days at \$2,500. This is with a discount of \$250, totaling \$4750.

Cristina also contacted several companies that do aquatic hand pulls to solicit quotes on hand pulling after the Weedoo. However, she spoke with and can arrange volunteers through Saratoga Plan and Capital Mohawk PRISM to help her hand harvest any pop-up chestnuts after the Weedoo. Both groups are excited to have a stronger relationship with SLPID, and with the help of volunteers, she can be more thorough with getting all of the water chestnuts. Cristina commented that this is an opportunity to give people volunteering a sense of ownership and awareness of water quality and gain knowledge on aquatic invasive species. Using volunteers is at no cost to the taxpayers in the District.

Regarding past comments on the development of Snake Hill, Saratoga Plan advised her that Snake Hill still has a heartbeat and is very much alive. Previously, the Open Space Institute was in discussions with the owners on some protections for Snake Hill and those discussions ended. Now the Saratoga Plan is in the initial discussions of contacting the property owner about its sale and protection.

Cristina also wanted to mention the letter and information forwarded to the SLPID commissioners on the request from a property owner to move and place additional buoys and

possibly move buoys further than the 1500 navigation law. She reported that this was visited last year with SLPID, Marine Patrol, State Parks, the Town, City, and Assemblywoman Woerner's office.

In the end, Sheriff Zurlo and State Parks signed off on the permit and approved the locations and SLPID map. Mayor Kim and Supervisor Wood both recently replied that they support the letter from Cristina to the property owner on the current law and buoy placement. Marine patrol will be enforcing the law as is.

Cristina said a possible idea for the commissioners to think about is expanding on the donations section of the webpage and having a page to itself with categories on choosing where a donation could specifically go towards. For example, water testing, education, etc. She has had inquiries wanting to donate to SLPID, but they wanted to have an easy online click toward a specific purpose to guarantee where the money would be spent. This is something for the SLPID commissioners to consider if appropriate, and she and Sarah can develop the idea for the website.

Something else Cristina proposed for the future is the need to purchase a safe work and education boat to use. Ideally, a pontoon boat. Thankfully, Cristina bought an older pontoon boat herself that has been working well and used that last summer for SLPID work. Cristina commented that if she did not have that for use, there was no way she and Dean could have safely done the thermistor strings with the rowboat. The rowboat is helpful for some things but unsafe for many jobs and requires two people to raise the motor.

With a pontoon boat, she could continue regular floating classrooms again, as the boat rentals are too much to justify. The Di Donnas used to generously volunteer a boat to SLPID, which they no longer have.

She is requesting that the SLPID commissioners think about her pursuing the purchase of a used pontoon boat. It would be an excellent opportunity for someone to partner with SLPID and advertise "Sponsored by" on the side of the boat.

Cristina said at the January meeting that there were two resolutions approved for her to move money from the SLPID savings account and SLPID money market account into two six-month certificates of deposits. When Cristina went to the bank, that CD option had expired, and only fourteen-month CDs were available. She recently checked, and a Six-month CD is now available at a higher rate of 3.02%.

Cristina said that If the commissioners would like her to transfer those accounts, she can today after the meeting and would need two motions to amend resolutions #25-2023 to \$16,060.35 and #26-2023 to \$53,963.17.

Cristina said Tracey could not make today's meeting. However, to give an update on the stormwater grant, the discussions have been positive. So far, she, Tracey, and Dean have met with the Town of Saratoga, the Town of Malta, County Stormwater, and County Soil and Water. Next week, they are meeting with the City of Saratoga Springs and the Town of Stillwater.

So far, there is mutual agreement that protections need to move forward. The thresholds and how to manage the changes are still being discussed. Cristina said Dean might comment further under his report, and commissioner Borisenok has also been part of the committee from the beginning.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked, "Dean, what is with the inlets around 9P, especially Luther Rd. to Fitch, and who is in charge from Luther Road to Fitch, who checks to make sure they are not clogged?"

Dean replied that they all end up falling to the towns, etc. it is on the topic list that Cristina put together working on discussions with DOT in the coming months. Some questions on the topic are how DOT can do better planning for stormwater discharges off 9P into the streams around the lake and planning for future treatment opportunities for those discharges.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked, "can the towns go in and dig out sediment?"

Dean said if it is in the DOT swale, then DOT, if the towns or county own the property, then the towns or county would be the ones to handle it. Route 423 is state-owned, and they did do some ditch maintenance on that corner last year.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked who is responsible for checking the depth and maintaining the flow.

Dean replied that there is inventory done by County Stormwater on the condition and if they need to be cleaned out. Generally, the towns are impacted and the first one to respond. This is just another thing we are working on and trying to find out who is responsible for what, and then we can discuss where are the opportunities for DOT and where for the towns.

Two summaries have been done by SLPID, one myself and the other the county, and it is just getting that inventory together and getting it straightened out and part of our discussion with DOT.

Commissioner Simmonds asked who is writing up the DOT questions.

Dean said Cristina did, and I am going to take a look before we sit down and talk to them.

Commissioner Simmonds said we spoke about this in January.

Cristina said she had reported that she made contact with DOT and discussed the questions; we are just now finishing stormwater meetings with the planners and waiting for added questions to come up; this takes some time and will take DOT some time to respond when ready.

Dean said, yes, that is correct, and when meeting with the towns, there was more discussion on this topic.

Cristina said if there are any further questions from the commissioners, please feel free to ask.

***Water Quality Report (Dean Long)**

Dean sent a report out for the new commissioners on the temperature data and will continue to work on it. It shows how dynamic the temperature in the lake is and how we have internal currents during the late summer and fall. The lake turned over sometime between September 29 – October 3rd.

Dean reported that the 2022 harvesting activity was about the same as the last few years, with little variability. The most considerable workload happens from late August to September as far as loads coming out. For the new commissioners, the key things to make it more efficient are additional take-out locations to make the harvesters move quicker. Brown's beach is not suitable with the depth. Maybe there is an opportunity at Mangino's as the town moves forward, they have a lot of great ideas and opportunities for SLPID at that sight.

Dean noted that the other thing Crissy mentioned looking at is the physical removal of weeds and having hand harvesting with volunteers to finish up. Then, also facilitate with the rowing club and others to address the water chestnuts in the Fish Creek to the Kayak Shak.

Dean said another thing this year with water quality for next month; there are additional options for HAB testing and toxicity testing we have discussed. The Upstate Freshwater Institute is putting together a program, and there is another program named Bloomtex that identifies whether or not you have toxic algae and the other algae. It is a unique program using an automated digital scanner microscope that you send directly to Bloomtex. The computer identifies if you have the algae associated with toxic blooms within a half hour.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked if there is a benefit to having bubblers.

Dean said they keep the water mixed to not aggregate the algae and disperse the water. The disadvantage is that you are stirring up sediment. Those water mixing techniques must start early and keep running and typically break down. You can't wait until the bloom starts.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked if SLPID should advise property owners on bubblers.

Dean said no, the resuspension and amount of mud stirring up is detrimental to the aquatic experience. Fortunately, our blooms are from late September to mid-October and very late. That creates a strategy problem because everyone associates HABS with warm temperatures, and we deal with a cold temperature group. It is hard to get people to understand that.

Cristina said she would like to note that she has spoken to Saratoga Rowing Association and PRISM on the water chestnuts within Fish Creek. They are putting together a plan and working with using Mr. Parillo's machine on harvesting.

Commissioner Simmonds asked Dean if there was more input on the stormwater meetings or if Cristina covered that.

Dean said the meetings with Malta and the Town of Saratoga both went well. It has given a bigger understanding of the complexity of moving forward with stormwater rules that focus on one-acre or less lots on Saratoga Lake.

Everyone understands that a pound of dirt near the shoreline discharged by the lake will get into the lake, and a pound of discharge up above the lake does not discharge the same.

We are discussing how to administer this and assist the towns.

Everyone is on board with the concept of the project and feels it can fit within their existing municipal stormwater ordinances. Now it is nailing down its details, dealing with open space protection, cross-referencing existing regulations and how they relate to wetlands, and getting this stormwater rule to connect with them.

The towns pointed out that we need to think about flood-resistance things. Things not floating down the lake, gazebos, and other items getting shipped down the lake. Everyone recognizes that this needs to be done, and no one is saying no.

New business: None.

Old business: Commissioner Simmonds made a motion to amend Resolution #25-2023 to \$16,060.35.

First: Simmonds

Second: Mazzotti

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.

Commissioner Simmonds made a motion to amend Resolution #26-2023 to \$53,963.17.

Commissioner Scalici asked if we are in a situation to have enough operating funds to carry us through if we do this. Cristina said yes, this comes from money sitting in a money market and savings account.

First: Simmonds Second: Mazzotti All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.

Commissioner Simmonds made a motion to set the next regular SLPID meeting on April 20, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at Malta Town Hall.

First: Simmonds Second: Scalici All Commissioners present voted: YEAH

Motion to Adjourn meeting to go into Executive Session to discuss employees' wage analysis at 3:35 p.m.

First: Mazzotti Second: Simmonds Commissioners present voted: YEAH

Motion to reconvene from executive session.

First: Mazzotti Second: Simmonds All commissioners voted: YEAH

Motion to accept the attached wage scale for the 2023 season for employees.

First: Mazzotti Second: Scalisi All commissioners voted: YEAH

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

First: Simmonds Second: Mazzotti All commissioners voted: YEAH

SLPID - 2023 Pay Scale

Years of Service
(3% annual increase)

Title	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Lake Steward	16.50	17.00	17.51	18.04	18.58	19.14	19.71	20.30	20.91
Truck/Harvester Driver	20.83	21.45	22.09	22.75	23.43	24.13	24.85	25.60	26.37
Harvester Supervisor	27.81	28.64	29.50	30.39	31.30	32.24	33.21	34.21	35.24

Adopted 3/16/23