



**SLPID Meeting Minutes
Malta Town Hall
July 20, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.**

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

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

Staff present: Lonnie Van Buren Harvesting, Cristina Connolly Lake District Administrator.

Public present: Malta Supervisor Mark Hammond, Murray Eitzmann.

PRESENTATIONS:

Secretary Report (SLPID Chair)

***Present June 15, 2023, meeting minutes.**

Discussion: No Comments.

Motion to accept June 15, 2023, minutes.

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

Treasurer report (Commissioner Mazzotti)

***Present June 2023 Financial Report:** Year-to-date income is \$465,226.57. Which includes \$462,154.40 from the tax levies, \$3,000.00 from the Global Foundries grant, and \$72.27 from interest income. Year-to-date expenses total \$131,108.66. The remaining budget for expenses is \$315,091.35. This includes \$515,503.67 in the bank accounts, two certificates of deposits, and the checking account. Additionally, the budgeted surplus for the year is \$16,320.61.

Discussion: Commissioner Simmonds asked about Tracey's bill for the grant and if it is separated on the line item. Yes, it is.

Motion to accept the June 2023 Treasurer's Report

First: Baker Second: Borisenok All Commissioners present voted: YEAH

Motion to accept the June 2023 paid bills. Invoices were emailed to the commissioners.

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

Weed Harvesting (Lonnie)

Discussion: The year-to-date load of weeds is 150. The water clarity is not the greatest. We talk about algae, wind, and waves; the water quality has been cloudy and holding down the weeds. The harvesting operation is on the north end now. Apparently, the Weedoo has been moved to the 31st.

Lonnie said that there had been a lot of harvester machine breakdowns. The hydraulic controls on H2 were modified and took nearly three days; H1 yesterday blew a pressure hose and also an arm on H2. Today the back roller broke; I machined a new keyway with a grinder.

Toward the edge of Manning Cove, the water chestnuts are not too heavy; they are approximately the same as last year, maybe thinner. Lonnie said It is really more of a hand-pick thing, but we have the time with the Weedoo.

Yesterday at Lees, the water became too high, and we are not dumping weeds there now. Last night one dump truck had to be parked outside the building because it was loaded with weeds. We dumped it this morning.

Cristina asked Lonnie if he would like her to call Lee's and ask if they had another dumping spot. Lonnie said you could, I don't know if you need to, but it should be okay next week.

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

Discussion: The Lake Steward program is going well. With all the rain, there have been very few full weeks of working for the stewards. The weather is also cutting back on the number of boats using the lake.

The annual moving boat count has yet to happen. This Sunday's weather may be the opportunity for it. After the Weedoo is finished, Cristina will begin the docked boat count at some point in August.

The Coast Guard is scheduled for August 5 to be at the launch to conduct volunteer safety inspections again this year.

The draft Erosion and Stormwater Standards for the District have been emailed to the SLPID commissioners, supervisors, and planners. It has become a very simplified one-page introductory sheet with fact sheets as a guide for solutions. Sarah branded the Lake Champlain Basin material with the SLPID information.

The June 25 Browns Beach educational event garnered about 18-20 attendees outside of any relation to SLPID or the presenters. Attendees' comments were excellent regarding education and very informative presentations. At times, the presentations may have been too technical and lengthy. However, everyone with feedback said they learned something about the lake they did not know or needed to be more informed of. One suggestion was to have it later in the season or in the fall when fewer activities occur. However, that time of year has challenges with back to work, school, and holiday mode.

The education paddle at Manning Cove with Saratoga Plan, DEC, and Lake Champlain Basin was well received. Only one event happened. The second was canceled due to rainfall.

Cristina attended the Lakeside Acres HOA meeting with Commissioner Scalici. She commented that the number of people who showed up compared to other HOAs was impressive. At the event, Cristina gave a brief history of Saratoga Lake and SLPID and had informational handouts and freebies from DEC. Quite a few of the attendees signed up for the SLPID email list.

SLPID also had a presence at the Saratoga County Fair with the County Soil and Water District in the State Conservation building. She was there on Tuesday and will be there again on Friday, handing out information and more freebies from DEC.

Cristina attended the SLA yearly social event. She said she was happy to have attended, and she spoke with quite a few people with concerns and questions about the buoys, docks, boats, and the South Shore Marina project. People at the event expressed gratitude to hear directly from SLPID as they had different information.

Cristina noted that reading and hearing so much misinformation and hearsay about the lake can become frustrating. Every chance she gets, she has been directing people to call SLPID, sign up on the email list, and visit the website. If it is a question on land use, she directs the people to the municipal building and planning department and the developer to answer.

The SLPID Facebook posts are generating some good comments. In the last 28 days, over 5900 people have been reached this month compared to 2000 from last month. 1200 people engaged by clicking on or commenting compared to 400 people last month, and 25 new followers this month compared to 12 last month.

Assemblyman D'andrea called this past Sunday to say that SLPID is doing a great job and to keep up the excellent work. Assemblyman D'andrea created SLPID with Senator Joe Bruno and Mrs. Dake, who was with the county then. Assemblyman D'andrea sponsored all of the laws on the books for SLPID with Saratoga Lake.

Snake Hill has been receiving many visitors, and there are concerns seeing people climb Snake Hill from the roadside, scale the hill from the lakeside, and add more graffiti. Snake Hill is privately owned, and the owner said this is very concerning and will have to address it.

Cristina said she would like to get prices for SLPID public relations giveaways such as sunglass holders, koozies, towels, and floating key holders. There is money in the education and outreach budget.

An internal draft report of the DEC fisheries fish count was emailed to the commissioners. The final report will not be ready for the public until next year's final fish count. DEC fisheries can join SLPID for a public presentation and Q & A on the final report when completed next year.

On Monday, Dean and Cristina reset the temperature recording devices and surveyed the lake. This was after heavy rainfall, and there was .6 meters of clarity, not a lot because of the severe storm washing in. There has not been much sun this season between the rain and wildfire smoke, which could be keeping the weeds at bay.

She has observed several small, short-lived, shoreline, localized cyanobacteria blooms, mainly on the east side of the lake. Unfortunately, these blooms have been affecting the public swimming beach at Browns Beach, closing it several times. Many calls have come through to SLPID asking if the lake is ok to swim in,

which it is. The blooms result from very shallow areas, warm water, air temps, and much rain. Plus, the lake never had a deep freeze—all a perfect set up for these algae blooms. With the early algae, the fluoroprobe has been getting its use. Cristina grabbed a catch sample at Browns Beach and sent it to Upstate Freshwater Institute. It came back toxic, aligning with the fluoroprobe results. Today, she will pick up test strips from supervisor Kinowski, who asked her to sample different areas of the lake to get an idea if other sites that are not public beaches are testing similarly. So far, there has not been any indication of toxicity forming in other areas of the lake.

This past Monday, supervisor Kinowski called a meeting with his deputy supervisor, Malta supervisor Hammond, DOH, EPA, County Soil and Water, Solitude, and SLPID. At this meeting, future testing and mitigation options for Browns Beach were discussed. For testing, a quicker turnaround with a lab, using a closer testing site and one open on the weekends would help. The Supervisor would like a more definitive answer from DOH on the procedure for testing, such as how to, the location, and different types of tests. There were no hard answers from DOH on a specific procedure to give him. NY State has the strictest regulations on HAB testing for public beaches, which is for drinking water quality. The parts per billion limits are half in New York State compared to other states. These blooms will likely be a problem again next year, depending on next year's weather.

Aeration was discussed as an option and something the supervisor may try in that location. He will be researching how to use a bubble curtain to keep the water flow moving for prevention.

Next year, if SLPID does a spot treatment for Eurasian water milfoil and Browns Beach is in a similar circumstance, the town can piggyback on the permit to use a peroxide treatment. Peroxide is safe and has fewer side effects on zooplankton. Copper sulfate is another option. However, copper sulfate has a 24-hour no-swimming restriction, and peroxide does not. The Supervisor has communicated with CNA labs in Ballston Spa about becoming a certified HAB testing facility so the sample turnaround can be quicker.

Commissioner Borisenok asked if the tests did confirm a HAB. Cristina said yes, the sample sent to Upstate Freshwater Institute did confirm toxicity, and the Fluoroprobe also had a high number consistent with a toxic bloom.

Cristina said that with the recent extreme rainfall at once, almost 4 inches in one hour, there had been numerous stormwater runoff complaints from property owners saying that the streams going into the lake and the culverts on 9P are clogged with debris from tree cutting and one complaint of a possible sewer pump station leak at Cozy Cottages. The County Sewer went out immediately to check, and it was unfounded. Everything is working correctly. Cristina spoke with and reported to DOT that the culverts needed to be cleaned and was told they would send engineers out to inspect them. There was also a driveway collapse in the Town of Saratoga on the lake hillside. This is the third collapse for the same driveway. DOT is aware and making sure that portion of 9P was not affected.

Commissioner Borisenok stated that Palmer's Maple Shade was underwater, that there were 3.5 inches of rain in less than an hour, the creek overflowed. The last time it flooded like that was 1996, it was an incredible amount of water, and the streams and culverts couldn't handle that amount of water.

Cristina said she was speaking with Dean about a plan for next year's vegetation if a spot treatment is needed. Dean suggested she reach out to Solitude before Larry's assessment and for her and Solitude to

spend half a day surveying the vegetation to understand the situation better. Solitude is short-staffed and very busy; they suggested she contact Adirondack Research to do the survey. Adirondack Research is preparing a proposal. However, Cristina wants to ensure the survey will not be redundant with Larry's survey in August.

Adirondack Research can also review the SLPID bio base data, compile, map the information, and give ideas if SLPID should continue with the data. One suggestion was to pass the information collected on to the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program funded by the State Environment Protection Fund, and they would do their analysis on Saratoga Lake vegetation and suggest future vegetation management.

Rick, from Upstate GIS mapping, was asked to look at the bio base uploads and decide if he can help us. However, the platform is still down from its IT security breach.

Due to the heavy rains, the Weedoo will come one week later. The water chestnuts at the Kaydeross appear much less than last year—about half from last year and about 1/3 less from when SLPID first hired the Weedoo. Dustin at County Soil and Water District will be out to take drone footage for comparison.

Capital Mohawk Prism will not assist SLPID with volunteers for a hand pull as there is no nearby access for volunteers and their kayaks. The Saratoga Sailing Club and Waters Edge complex are too far for people to paddle; the public right of way on Arrowhead Road is closed, plus there is the possibility of someone getting hurt going up and down the hill.

Cristina said she would do the hand-pull herself and may recruit some residents interested in volunteering to help. However, the Weedoo has accomplished a lot in the past couple of years, the chestnuts are less fierce at returning this year, and she expects the Weedoo will have time to grab even the stray water chestnuts in that area, saving much-needed time. She has been pushing the message to property owners about what to look for and how to pull and dispose of water chestnuts in their lakefront, as it is the property owner's responsibility for vegetation in their frontage and in between docks.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked where we are with Upstate Freshwater Institute assessing lake quality data. Cristina replied that they said they would have time to review the SLPID reports sometime in mid-August and get back to us.

Cristina asked the commissioners for all comments regarding the draft erosion and stormwater guidance.

Commissioner Simmonds commented that she thinks the informational sheets are precise and simple enough that anyone can understand them easily.

Commissioner Borisenok said it is excellent, and none of the engineering nonsense. This is something a property owner can understand and do themselves.

Commissioner Borisenok asked if there is a way to publicize a better understanding to the public on algae and that not all algae are in panic mode, which is what we see on the narratives in the paper and not a good look.

Commissioner Scalici said it is even more aggravating when you see inaccurate information.

Commissioner Borisenok said exactly.

Cristina said yes, she can, and she has past articles. She will pull them and write a new one that is easy to understand and positive.

Commissioner Borisenok said that would be good, and can we reach out to the paper and news media with an actual assessment vs. the crisis headlines you see and cover all the public relations markets, social media print media? Let's get a factual basis.

Cristina said absolutely; she would be glad to start that right away.

Commissioner Scalici asked about posting something at Browns Beach.

Cristina said yes, there are postings at Browns Beach.

Commissioner Borisenok said on the DEC website that the whole state is lit up.

Cristina said yes, there has been a campaign on Know, Avoid, and Report it. This year's weather has created early algae blooms, and people seem to be reporting anything other than clear water as a HAB, even without a photo. Unfortunately, there is a negative focus on Saratoga Lake with specific papers, even though other lakes have it worse.

SLPID 2024 draft budget

Discussion: Commissioner Simmonds said the draft looks good.

Cristina said we will not know the final tax levy amount until sometime in August and that she added another \$1,000 to tools after speaking with Lonnie about more tools needed. There were no further comments from the commissioners on the preliminary budget.

RESOLUTION # 29-2023 7/20/23

Whereas the Commissioners approve amending the SLPID HR Manual section 406. VEHICLE USAGE to add an AUTHORIZED VEHICLE USAGE and an UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLE USAGE policy. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commissioners direct the action of the District Administrator, Cristina Connolly, to make those amendments.

First: Mazzotti

Second: Scalici

All Commissioners present voted:

RESOLUTION # 30-2023 7/20/23

Whereas the Commissioners approve amending the SLPID HR Manual section 501.

ATTENDANCE POLICY to add a NO CALL/NO SHOW POLICY.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commissioners direct the action of the District Administrator, Cristina Connolly, to make those amendments.

First: Mazzotti

Second: Baker

All Commissioners present voted:

Commissioner Simmonds motioned to set the public hearing on the SLPID 2024 preliminary budget for August 17, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at the Malta town hall.

First: Simmonds

Second: Mazzotti

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.

Commissioner Simmonds motioned to set the next SLPID regular meeting on August 17, 2023, immediately following the SLPID 2024 preliminary budget at the Malta town hall.

First: Simmonds **Second: Borisenok** **All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.**

Commissioner Simmonds made a Motion to suspend the meeting at 3:38 p.m. to go into executive session to discuss a legal matter.

First: Scalici **Second: Mazzotti** **All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.**

Commissioner Simmonds motioned to reenter the public meeting and adjourn the public meeting at 3:53 p.m.

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