



SLPID Minutes
Malta Town Hall
July 16, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

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

Roll Call Commissioners Present: Simmonds, Scalici, Mazzotti, Borisenok, Baker

Staff Present: Cristina Connolly, Lake District Administrator

Public Present: Paul Mattison, Hub Miller, Mary Kennedy, Jim Demassi (all representing SLA), Dan Buckley, Matt Fueston.

Public comment: Chair of the meeting, Commissioner Simmonds, opened public comment, stating it is not intended for discussion, only for stating comment.

Jim Demassi, current president of SLA, said six, seven, or eight years ago I attended these meetings, and down the road there was an apparent rift with SLPID, and I would like to rectify it if I can before I step down from my position. We should be considered allies, not adversaries. There will be differences in opinions on what is going on. We feel you should have more power. We have our differences, but it is constructive dialogue, and I am offering to discuss issues.

Paul Mattison said, May I add to that? I would like to say SLPID has the power and money. However, SLA has over three hundred plus members and a lot of expertise that can help SLPID with issues; one is weeds, and the other is boaters. If you talk, it's not a scientific example, but if we talk to people around the lake-weeds and boats-we need to try and find answers to those, and I believe people's expertise in SLA can help with that. I just feel we have an awful lot of brain power and sophistication. With new people coming into the area, there is an awful lot of brain power you could use.

Commissioner Simmonds replied that you are aware that SLPID conducts several boat surveys every year. Paul Mattison then said, yes, I know, and we do a weed survey every year. The issue is, if you talk to people, they say it is getting worse.

Commissioner Simmonds, regrettably, to those people, they are native weeds that we need for the lake. Paul Mattison then said, My lakefront has been green for the last three years, and I know we have been attacking it diligently, but I believe there is something we can do with the people we have.

Commissioner Simmonds said you do understand there are limitations to taking the weeds out of a lake, and we work with NYSDEC?

Paul Mattison said, I understand that, but there are people who are saying weeds are getting worse. Commissioner Simmonds said this comes back to educating your members that this is a lake. A result of successfully managing aquatic invasives in a lake is that now we have native weeds, which for SLPID is the goal.

Paul Mattison continued, SLA can help, and SLPID does a great job with your website and with educating the public and taxpayers. However, SLA has three hundred other people they can reach with word of mouth.

Commissioner Borisenok said that we are focused on the aquatic invasive species; the SLPID budget is \$500,000, plus the towns also contribute. SLPID prioritizes this money for aquatic invasive species and lake quality. As far as the SLA, SLPID has public meetings to attend. You say you have three hundred members; you can inform your three hundred members and tell them to reach out to SLPID with their concerns or with these questions, and we can explain it to them, or come to the open meetings. On top of that, SLPID has a website with information, social media, emails, newsletters, employees, Lake Stewards at the boat launch, a telephone number to call, or if not, tell them to come to me; they can find out all about the budget. That is what we do here: anything with the budget. Number two, you said personalities. Have we recently received certified mail from an SLA representative?

Commissioner Mazzotti said he recently received a packet and was away, so it sat for a while; on Monday, he received it and forwarded it to Cristina, who forwarded it to the other commissioners for discussion.

Commissioner Borisenok then said ok, is this a member, board member? Does he represent the board? Who is your communicator?

Paul Mattison said, I think we can do that and should have one communicator, and there is a lack of communication, and I do not think things are working as efficiently as they should. You're right; there are frustrations and should be one set of communication.

Commissioner Borisenok said there is no frustration on the SLPID side; we are doing what we basically are set up to do by our legislation.

Paul Mattison said, why don't we go to towns and say we need more money? Or why don't we charge? I pay taxes, but why don't we charge the other half of the users on the lake who do not pay taxes? Why don't we get the half who are using it to pay to use it, those people who use the lake and do not pay taxes? We have three hundred people who can lobby for that and back it in the passage.

Jim Demassi said we keep going to the past, and I know you folks are monitoring phosphorus, and say those are critical issues when looking at the lake, and we can't kill the weeds, but in some way can we minimize the nutrients coming in?

Commissioners said, Cristina, do you want to talk about this?

Cristina said the weeds, SLPID has come a long way with the vegetation, which at one time was complete milfoil. SLPID's management efforts over the years have come a long way between herbicide treatments, weed harvesting, and boat inspections; milfoil last year was surveyed at under three percent in the lake. This year we put in place an herbicide permit for milfoil treatment, and there has not been any to treat. That is our goal: to have a healthy, fair amount of native weed beds in the lake for the lake to thrive. A freshwater lake needs native weeds for its health and the ecosystem; native weeds provide oxygen and wildlife habitat, help to stabilize the shoreline and sediment. Native weeds consume excess nutrients that contribute to algal blooms. There are many links and a balancing act to managing a lake, and every season it changes; there are no future predictions for managing an ever-changing ecosystem. Saratoga Lake is also a freshwater wetland, which requires more balance. SLPID, besides aquatic invasive species control and scientific monitoring, provides outreach to the public on a functional ecosystem. Saratoga

Lake is consistently ranked among the top NYS lakes for anglers and recreational users. There are multi-million-dollar properties and businesses that rely on the lake's diversity and boaters. Saratoga Lake contributes to Saratoga County's economy; there is the Saratoga Rowing Club. SLPID communicates with local and state legislators on our initiatives and funding. SLPID is for a public purpose, meaning for all, and yes, we are responsible for taxpayer money and abide by the SLPID mandate. When you see these marinas full, restaurants, and outside recreational users, that is a success story. There are a lot of permits involved with managing a lake correctly, and we work very closely with NYSDEC, NYSDOH, the local municipalities, county, and state agencies.

Paul Mattison then asked, "Can I make a suggestion? Can we do a survey of the users of the lake and see how that goes?"

Cristina said SLPID does conduct surveys; Lake Stewards survey the users at the launch; we have surveys of recreational users and boat surveys of moving and in-lake boats. We are planning on doing another recreational survey again this season.

Paul Mattison asked, "Are you asking if people are happy using the lake?"

Cristina said, yes, we do, and SLPID does have open communication with all users of the lake.

Commissioner Mazzotti asked Mr. Buckley Do you have something to say?

Mary Kennedy then asked to interrupt with a question. You mentioned native plants; how many are there?

Dan Buckley said yes, there are thirty native species in the lake, and I would like to say I have over thirty years as a professor and as a limnologist, and there is a balancing act to managing a lake. Yes, there is a phosphorus loading problem from shoreline owners due to the high volume of development around the lake. If you were in the 70s, this lake was much worse, and some of you have been on the lake and know about that; we have come a long way. Now the main problem is nutrients coming into the lake from properties and development runoff, which fertilize the plants along the shore. But guess what, you get rid of those healthy native plants that are consuming the nutrients, and then the nutrients fuel algal blooms. It is a balancing act. The amount of phosphorus and nutrients from shoreline properties needs to be reduced first.

Cristina said there are lakes in this state that are shut down for recreation from algal and cyanobacteria blooms. I speak with these other lakes, and they share SLPID information, and they would much rather navigate our situation with weeds than not be able to use their lakes due to algal blooms. Property values also suffer considerably in that situation.

Hub Miller said he would like to talk about the thought of partnership. We had a meeting once at Uncommon Grounds, and we understand the SLA is not equal to SLPID, and I know you have talked about the public getting confused that the lake association is the player. A couple of weeks ago, the lake association had a talk at the library, and Saratoga plan and Skidmore were there, and it was surprising to me that the SLPID was not there.

Jim Demassi said they were invited but had other commitments.

Hub Miller went on to say, " Well, I appreciate what you do, and the SLPID Land to Lakes Perspective in 2022 are there plans for another one?"

Hub Miller went on to say that within it there is the word partner, and Walt is right; we need to do our part to have our members understand how this works and the role you play.

Cristina said that partnership in relation to the report was meant to include SLA with questions about the report. At the time, I forwarded the draft to SLA, asking SLA to read it and present input with questions for the public Q&A portion, which is at the end of the report.

Hub Miller then said he is kind of interested in knowing why SLPID avoids the idea of partnering with SLA at all costs when it was written here.

Commissioner Simmonds said, in all honesty, SLPID is a government agency that does not partner, and it would help if SLA could be sharing the SLPID information more, and you can tell your members this is the government agency that oversees the lake. To this day, there is still a lot of communication with people saying SLA is the agency.

Jim Demassi said every single platform we have, we share your weed harvesting updates, and we get the question "How many homes are on the lake?" and we are not a homeowner association; then I get, "Who is Saratoga Lake Protection and Improvement District?" The name is confusing to people.

Commissioner Simmonds said we were not here to choose the name.

Jim Demassi said, in all honesty, I am petitioning to change our name.

Mary Kennedy asked what the statutory limits are. That does not make any sense.

Commissioner Simmonds said we are regulated by the legislation that created SLPID.

Mary Kennedy asked, "What does that mean?"

Commissioner Simmonds replied it means SLPID is a government organization and we are regulated by the state.

Mary Kennedy said, so they do not let you talk to us?

Commissioner Simmonds said that is not what we are saying.

Commissioner Borisenok said again that is why we have open meetings here for you to attend, and our other platforms are all open and accessible; you can call.

Mary Kennedy asked, well, why can't you partner with SLA?

Cristina said we are mandated by the state for a public purpose and report to the state as a single agency. SLPID cannot share its statutory role (public funds) with a private group. Example: Road salt, we are unsure what SLA is asking of SLPID as far as the road salt topic. SLPID does communicate through public outreach on less salt usage and vegetative buffers, and has dialogue with the municipalities and NYSDOT, who are all doing what is possible to limit usage, but SLPID cannot issue joint statements with SLA, which is what an SLA member has asked.

Mary Kennedy said that does not mean you cannot form a partnership; it just means you cannot 100% work or agree on everything.

Cristina asked, what would the partnership be?

Mary Kennedy said, I guess that is what we have to figure out what it would be; it would be talking a lot.

Cristina said, that is public engagement. I speak with the public all day long, and you and SLA and SLA members can call me anytime if they have a question related to the lake or boats or weeds; you can direct them to call me. Similarly, if I get a call about a wild animal, I do not answer for them; I give out the proper channel to call the Wildlife Bureau.

Mary Kennedy said, but there are no statutory limits to partnering with SLA short of SLPID spending money on what SLA wants done. Why would there be? That doesn't make any sense.

Cristina began, yes,(a partnership would be shared governance; it is not within the statutory framework to mix the two groups or public funds).

Commissioner Mazzotti said this is the point we are trying to get across: if you have anyone come to you with a lake concern, you can tell them to contact SLPID, come to a monthly meeting, or put it in writing to SLPID; we would be happy to look at it and respond accordingly.

Hub Miller said, I am sure Jim does this; you and I know Cristina, where homeowners came to us (SLA) on an issue, and the first thing I did was contact Cristina, and at least when I was there I would, and Jim, I hope you do too. It was an issue of huge sedimentation from one of the creeks, and SLA does not have the power, and there should be an understanding with members that it is SLPID. We just need to let the public know.

Dan Buckley said there is every opportunity for SLA to share SLPID information, and I have heard from SLPID that, in the past, SLA helped put the word out for volunteers for a water chestnut pull. SLPID has produced information on promoting shoreline buffers and a lot of public information that SLA could be sharing. This is a complex system; it is not an easy job. This is an ecosystem. SLPID simply coming into shallow water to cut weeds; you need to understand this is complex. This would stir up sediment and release nutrients back up into the water column, so it is not that easy.

Chair Simmonds asked Matt Fueston if he would like to comment. Matt Fueston said he was just listening in, and he has to agree with the comments made here regarding point loading from nutrients and sediment and stormwater all compounding. Especially with the lake becoming more and more developed and bigger homes sloped toward the lake, it all compounds. How do you go about doing that? You have to work with the towns on that and develop a certain district statutorily created, so either get the legislature to expand SLPID, the purview of SLPID to include that angle, or hit the municipalities.

Commissioner Simmonds said thank you very much; you have hit on all of the things that SLPID is and does currently work on. We have met with all the municipalities on erosion and sedimentation control and...

Hub Miller said, Cristina, I salute some of the things that you have worked on early on as far as education to the public and for shoreline buffers and offering property owners property assessments.

Cristina said thank you, and SLPID still does these, and these are materials that SLA is always welcome to share with your members, and nutrient loading is the most important topic for Saratoga Lake.

Commissioner Mazzotti said these are all materials that SLA could be sharing with your three hundred members. SLA -take our materials and share them.

Commissioner Simmonds: SLPID is putting a vegetative buffer in at the new Malta Park as a public example. When this is made public, you can share this to get interest in the program.

Cristina said SLPID did this with County Soil and Water and County Stormwater at Browns Beach too.

Commissioner Simmonds said SLPID is trying and doing all of these initiatives, and that is all there is to say.

Dan Buckley said I have one more comment. I was in Maine for thirty years; the most successful lake association used something called "Lake Smart". Cristina has something similar to this going on with SLPID. SLA could let your members know about this so your members can join in, and then they can show their neighbors.

Mary Kennedy said the problem is SLA has very little money.

Dan Buckley said you don't need money; SLPID is doing this and has the materials and is already doing this; talk to Cristina.

Commissioner Simmonds, we need to close the public comment at this point - 3.36 p.m.

Secretary Report (Commissioner Simmonds)

***Present May 2026 meeting minutes.**

Discussion: None

Motion to accept the May 2026 meeting minutes.

First: Mazzotti

Second: Simmonds

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.

Treasurer Report (Commissioner Mazzotti)

***Present the May and June 2026 Financial Report:**

Discussion: Year-to-date income is \$534,854.75, which includes \$523,008.33 from tax levies, \$3,000.00 for the Global Foundries grant, and \$8,846.42 from interest income. Expenses: Year-to-date expenses total \$188,956.05, primarily comprising payroll expenses of \$75,318.67, Professional Fees/Contractor expenses of \$14,980.80, and \$88,508.00 in Lake Management. The remaining budget for expenses is \$332,693.95. Additionally, the budgeted surplus for the year is \$1,333.00. Assets: Total assets at the end of June were \$1,444,750.30. This includes \$898,112.73 in the bank accounts/certificates. Liabilities: Total liabilities were \$3,471.96 at the end of June. This is the outstanding balance for the credit card.

Motion to accept the March and April Financial Reports.

First: Baker

Second: Scalici

All Commissioners present voted: YEAH.

Motion to accept the paid May and June invoices.

First: Mazzotti

Second: Simmonds

All commissioners present voted: YEAH

Lake District Administrator Report (Cristina Connolly)

Harvesting

Harvesting operations continue to go well. The harvesters are currently working on the south end of the lake for the second time this season. Operations have been running smoothly, with no equipment breakdowns and positive public feedback. With the past week of sun and warm weather, vegetation growth has accelerated as expected for this time of year.

The harvester trailer is scheduled for inspection and tire repairs on Tuesday, July 21. The Town of Malta will be towing the trailer.

Herbicide Treatments

The herbicide treatment of the curly-leaf pondweed bed from Brown's Beach to South Shore appears to have been effective; the treated area showed consistent die-off. There was still a significant amount of curly-leaf pondweed outside the treatment area that should be considered for treatment next season.

To date, only a few isolated milfoil plants have been observed at the northwest end of the lake early season and have died off quickly, and none so far in the proposed treatment area.

Lake Stewards

Lake Stewards are assisting me with water-quality monitoring, vegetation surveys, boat counts, garbage pickup, and educational outreach and social media content.

The Floating Classroom programs were canceled due to bad weather and, unfortunately, have not been rescheduled because of groups' limited summer schedules with kids. Waiting to hear from the sailing club if there is an opportunity to hold one with their kids' sailing camp.

Next week, the Lake Stewards will be planting a model vegetative buffer at Observation Pointe, funded by a GlobalFoundries/Town of Malta grant. Embark Environmental has been assisting SLPID and will volunteer to add pollinator plots in late summer/early fall. We also received approval to install a rain garden at the City Waterfront Park, funded by proceeds from the KOS Sauna.

In addition, Lake Stewards will staff an educational table with the Saratoga County Soil and Water Conservation District at the Saratoga County Fair.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will be at the state boat launch this Saturday morning conducting complimentary vessel safety inspections alongside the Lake Stewards.

Water Quality

Water quality remains good. The lake is clear, with no cyanobacteria blooms, beautiful, healthy native aquatic vegetation, and good water clarity.

SUNY Oneonta is doing DNA testing of aquatic invasives for \$1,000 per plant. As part of water testing, it would be a good idea to grab one and send it off to learn more about what we have in the lake and maybe gain better insight into its growth. However, we need to find the plants.

We have not done any testing with NYSDOH yet. The lake is looking good so far; NYSDOH is monitoring the satellite data, and I am doing regular visual inspections. When we do go out together, County DOH will also come along.

SLPID was contacted by a researcher from the Darrin Freshwater Institute at RPI, who is developing a five-year study on harmful algal bloom formation and the environmental factors that drive them. I submitted a letter of support on behalf of SLPID, and we are awaiting the outcome to see if we could collaborate on that with Saratoga Lake.

Law Enforcement Update

Marine Patrol has been operating seven days a week on the lake and will continue to do so with a minimum of one boat. On weekends and at events, there are two Marine Patrol boats, and two jet skis are trailed in. Spoke with the Sergeant this morning; they have written many tickets and issued many warnings. There is a new navigation law in place: you must keep your lanyard attached at all times. They are conducting safety checks and issuing warnings about that. Park Police are also working more hours and issuing more tickets. DEC is also driving around the lake and yesterday went out on the lake with me to rescue a goose caught up in fishing line. All Law enforcement is doing everything possible to maintain a presence, and we have regular communication with them—strong relationships among all agencies working together on the lake.

Public Outreach

SLPID continues to receive calls and inquiries regarding docks, patios, stairs extending into the lake, and other shoreline improvement projects. Property owners are asking about native plant lists and removing Japanese knotweed.

The SLPID Community Guide has been popular through local businesses, along with the towels and floating sunglasses holders.

SLPID Boat

No interest has been expressed in purchasing the SLPID boat.

Brown's Beach Shoreline Project

The Town of Stillwater has applied for two grants to support stabilization of approximately 300 feet of shoreline at Brown's Beach and construction of a natural rain garden to reduce stormwater runoff. I submitted letters of support on behalf of SLPID highlighting the project's importance in reducing shoreline erosion and improving water quality.

Water Levels

Water levels have fluctuated slightly due to storm events but remain within the target summer operating level of approximately 203.3 feet.

Water Quality Outreach

Today, I met with Kevin C. Rose, Ph.D., Director of the Darrin Fresh Water Institute at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Director of The Jefferson Project at Lake George, and Dean Long, Consultant to the Saratoga Lake Protection and Improvement District and President of the New York State Federation of Lake Associations, to discuss future opportunities for water quality monitoring and research.

The discussion focused on developing a collaborative consortium with Saratoga Lake serving as the central hub for coordinated freshwater research and monitoring. Collaborating with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the Darrin Fresh Water Institute at RPI, the Adirondack Freshwater Institute, the Upstate Freshwater Institute, and other environmental organizations and lake managers.

Dr. Rose noted that Saratoga Lake is exceptionally well positioned for this initiative due to its size, geographic location, established management through the District, and the strong collaborative relationships that already exist between SLPID and state agencies and environmental partners.

As a next step, Dr. Rose invited us to spend a day learning about the water quality monitoring systems, research capabilities, and operational approach of the Jefferson Project at Lake George. He also recommended that I participate in courses and seminars offered through RPI and the Darrin Fresh Water Institute to expand my knowledge and support the development of this collaborative effort.

Finances

All municipal funds have been deposited. I reached out to the SLPID attorney with a quick question about a FOIL request. The proposed 2027 budget is for your review and discussion with no significant changes.

New Business:

Budget Discussion: Commissioner discussion on changes to the proposed 2027 budget increases are as follows: Lake Quality/AIS management-\$120,000, Water Testing-\$5,000, Storedech-\$2,500.00.

SLA correspondence: Commissioner Mazzotti presented in the record correspondence to him directly from John Cashin, an SLA representative. He received the Witt report and Skidmore Roadways Road Salt and Repercussions, 2025 Skidmore Road Salt Capstone Report, and the Road Salt Skidmore 2026 Capstone Research. Submitted to the commissioners, and the commissioners would like to prepare a full board collaborative written response back. Commissioner Mazzotti asked Cristina to please forward this to the NYSFOLA president. Cristina said yes; he has previously reviewed it all.

Commissioner Scalici pointed out to the SLA members that in NYS you are now required to obtain a Boater Safety Certificate. However, if you rent a boat, you do not need one. Maybe if three hundred letters went to the representatives, it would mean more than us commissioners sending a letter.

Motion to conduct the Public Hearing on the proposed 2027 SLPID budget on August 20, 2026, 3:00 p.m., at the Malta Town Hall Board Room, 2650 Route 9, Malta, N.Y. 12020.

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

Motion to conduct the next SLPID meeting on August 20, 2026, at 3:10 p.m. at Malta Town Hall Board Room, 2650 Route 9, Malta.

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

Motion to close the meeting at 3:56 p.m.

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