

Otsego Lake Association BOD Minutes October 2, 2004

The meeting was called to order by President, David Sanford. Others in attendance were: Matt Albright, Scottie Baker, K. Wayne Bunn, Mickie Richtsmeier, Paul Lord, Chuck Hage, Win McIntyre, Burr Southworth, and Mary Clarke.

Sediment Study

Matt Albright from the Biological Field Station was recognized and asked to proceed first because he had other commitments which required that he leave the meeting early. Matt reported that he and Tom Gergel had done an aerial inspection of the lake area after a moderate storm (approximately 3/4 inch of rain had fallen). Matt showed pictures that Tom had taken which demonstrated the scope of the run off problem and what Matt considered to be the horrible shape of the stream corridors. Many of the pictures taken were in the Shadow Brook area, and there were both color and black and white images. Matt discussed the relative expense of enlarging color versus black and white photography and a discussion ensued about the use of the photos. Two uses were elaborated upon- one being a tool to show landowners specific problems, the other as a vehicle to make the public aware of the problem in general. The consensus was that the black and white photos would be better for specifics, and Matt said that they could be made available. It was also confirmed that only \$500 to \$600 had been spent of the \$3500 budgeted for the photography and that much more could be done in this area.

Win discussed the financial incentives through NRCS for landowners to take stream borderland out of agriculture. He questioned if an informational brochure would be a good way to use the photos as well as using specific photos with individual landowners. A discussion followed. Paul Lord showed a book entitled Landscaping for Wildlife and Water Quality from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, which he felt, would be an excellent resource. Win stressed that he felt that not enough publicity has been given to the NRCS incentive program. David Sanford suggested that we highlight that "mud" was to be the topic of our upcoming newsletter. Prior to discussing of the newsletter, the group asked Matt to proceed by scanning the best images which are already available and also to be ready to fly again with a focus on the Willow Brook area. The board also approved that Matt go ahead with enlargements to be shown to landowners.

Newsletter

Paul Lord is putting our next newsletter together and gave us an overview of his format. He will utilize an aerial view from Tom Gergel and Win's septic update article on the front page. The center two pages will be about "simple solutions to help reduce lake sediment and weeds". The last page will have an ad for the landscaping book and a piece recruiting the "no wake zone" buoy manager. (This will be a voluntary position). Scottie also asked if an ad for the OLA shirts could be included. It was also suggested that the next newsletter might be used to delineate our mission and goals.

Joint Meeting with OCCA

Win discussed the possibility of having a joint OLA and OCCA board meeting which would be preceded by a smaller planning meeting. The goal would be to find our relative roles. There was discussion about the perception that OLA and OCCA were working against each other, the need for OLA to decide on its focus, our mission to implement the Lake Management Plan and how to best do that, the need for coordinated efforts, etc.

David Sanford informed the board that he had met with Teresa Winchester and that she had discussed some of the history of the problems between the groups. He said that he had also had a discussion with the current President of OCCA and that he indicated that there was a willingness to move on and to work with OLA. OCCA will shortly elect a new president and as soon as he/she is elected, David will make contact to further explore the idea of a joint meeting. In a follow up discussion, some board members reiterated that OLA was not interested in being a fundraising, grant writing organization but rather was dedicated to initiate programs and ideas.

Books

Paul discussed the book, Landscaping for Wildlife and Water Quality. He proposed that we give two books to each municipality. Paul stressed that it was very important for Planning Boards in particular to be familiar with this information. Paul said that if we order in bulk the cost of the book would be approximately \$12 plus shipping.

Scottie moved that we order 50 books. The motion was seconded by Mary and unanimously carried.

In addition, Paul informed us that the National Fish and Wildlife Association has put out the Upper Susquehanna Riparian Vegetation Guide. This is a free publication and would be particularly helpful in conjunction with the Minnesota book since it is specific to our area. Paul asked that board members order these. Usually 5 free books are allowed per order.

Septic Update

Win informed the Board that 80% of the lake area septic systems had been inventoried to date. Mailers have been sent to all property owners and follow up calls will be made to those who have not responded. Win said that there are approximately 350 systems around the lake, but that the inspections will begin in the area between Rte 80 and the lake. Win will publish the current data in November and a final article will be a letter sent in the Spring to some 450 households around the lake and local newspapers. Inspectors will also be trained in the spring (it may only be necessary to train one inspector although initially it was planned to train two.) Win himself will be trained in December. A grant request through OCCA will go to the Clark Foundation on October 15. This will be for \$35,000 - \$40,000 per year. Win detailed that homeowners will not pay for the inspections but will have to pay for the pump out.

A discussion followed about the process of the inspection. One area provoked some concern by Paul. This was that homeowners who had pumped out their systems within the past two years would not be required to pump again for the inspection although it would be preferable to inspect an empty tank. He was concerned that people could take advantage of this to avoid having their tank inspected while empty.

Wayne Bunn, a new board member who is also a civil engineer, asked about the logistics of the inspections. Discussion ensued about what was the process of enforcement when there was a failure. Win said he had developed a flow chart, which he detailed. Concerns were voiced about backlogs, options for phosphorus removal, financial considerations for homeowners, etc. The consensus was that this was a challenging project!

Lake Event

Win distributed information about possibilities for a Lake Festival 2005. He stressed that this was in its formative stages. The Board was receptive to this idea. In addition to the ideas that Win brought, suggestions were to include a fishing derby, have the divers do a demonstration, display vintage boats, use multiple venues, and have a model buffer strip planting on display. Win detailed that the proposal will have to be

presented to Otsego Water Quality and the Chamber this fall. Scottie Baker volunteered to be our liaison for this event.

Funding for Septic Project

Win asked if OLA would consider funding the septic project. In discussion, it was suggested that it would be preferable for us to fund a specific part of the program. David proposed that we could promulgate why it's important to fix your septic or why to remove phosphorus in the process. Win will come back to the Board on this.

No Wake Zone Buoy Project

Mary requested figures for the Biological Field Station's overhead for this project. After discussion, Mary moved that OLA contribute \$300 to this project. The motion was seconded by Scottie and unanimously carried.

Thank You to Divers

Paul told the Board about the diverse group of volunteer divers from all over the region who give so much time and energy to the lake. Scottie suggested that we should give each of the divers an OLA T-shirt. David so moved. Scottie seconded and the motion was unanimously passed. Following this and the next item on the agenda, the meeting briefly adjourned to meet the divers and distribute shirts.

Storm Drain Decals

Paul raised the possibility of OLA placing storm decals on places where storm water drains into the lake. Paul will bring an example of this to our next meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Donation from Betsy Hawn - Mary announced that Mrs. Hawn had made a \$500 donation to OLA. After discussion, it was decided that this could go toward constructing a buffer strip at Lake Front Park. The consensus was that this was an excellent idea. David will write a thank you note to Mrs. Hawn and also send her a copy of the landscaping book.

FOLA - Mary raised the point about rejoining FOILA for \$150. (the only advocate in Albany for lake issues) Paul moved to join. This was seconded by Burr and unanimously passed.

Mary requested \$750 in Carl's absence, for the boat inspection program. Wayne seconded this and the motion met with unanimous approval by the Board.

The treasurer's report was distributed. Mary Clarke reported that there had been a balance of \$8324.93 on 9/30/04, which after expenditures (allocated at this meeting) would be approximately \$8,000. Mary also noted that \$230 in memberships had come in.

Web Site Update

Burr gave an update on our site. A motion was made by David Sanford to renew our domain. This was seconded by Paul Lord and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

David will set a date for our next meeting after meeting with OCCA.

A motion was made by Mary Clarke to adjourn. This was seconded by Wayne Bunn and the meeting was adjourned.