



# Mountain Lake Community Association

## Membership Meeting

April 15, 2022

Mountain Lake Firehouse and via Zoom

## Minutes

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Bob Ballou, President at 7:06pm. Thanks were extended to the Mt. Lake Fire Department for allowing us to host our meeting at the firehouse. A warm welcome was extended to all Lake Association members and others from our community, attending in person as well as on zoom. The agenda for the meeting was distributed to everyone attending in person and posted on our website, at [MLCAWAG.org](http://MLCAWAG.org), for those attending via zoom.

**Introduction of Officers and Trustees in Attendance:** Bob Ballou, President; Danielle Nevins, Vice President; Nancy O’Leary, Treasurer; Buffy Harrison, Secretary (attending via zoom); Lorraine Thiel, Trustee

**Meeting Minutes:** January 14, 2022 Membership Meeting

Daniele Nevins made a motion to approve; seconded by Nancy O’Leary. Motion was approved unanimously.

### Announcements & Upcoming Events

- Grant application with Princeton Hydro – In conjunction with Princeton Hydro the Water Quality Restoration Grant was applied for seeking \$85K. The decision will not be known until summer, but if approved the funds will be used towards a more detailed study to address pollutants of the lake by Princeton Hydro.
- Lake Subcommittee – The committee continues to meet regularly to coordinate strategize and plan various activities.
- Opening for new trustee – There is currently an opening for a trustee with the possibility of other openings. There is currently one candidate in consideration; anyone else who may be interested should contact the Association.
- Litter-free campaign – Details on the campaign are posted on the Association’s bulletin board by the firehouse, along with garbage bags for anyone wanting to pick up litter when they are walking. To assist the campaign, please take photos of any/all litter collecting and email the photos to [mlca.wag@gmail.com](mailto:mlca.wag@gmail.com).
- Jenny Jump Brook macroinvertebrate survey (April 24) – The event is scheduled for Sunday, April 24 at 12:20 pm with a rain date of April 30 at 9 am.

- Town wide yard sale (May 21) – The event will be held from 8 to noon with a rain date of Sunday, May 22.
- Annual membership meeting (August) – The date for the meeting will be announced and we may consider an alternative day of the week.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Nancy O'Leary provided an overview of the Treasurer's Report YTD. Expenses for the membership mailing cost about \$1,000. Revenue from membership dues to date in 2022 is \$530. Currently the checking account is at \$13K, the CD at \$7K, and the investments account is at \$23K.

### **2022 Lake Monitoring Program**

- Baseline volunteer program – The same primary group of volunteers from 2021 will continue to monitor the lake at the center-lake station, which is at the deepest part of the lake (36-37 feet). The parameters to be monitored include: temperature, dissolved oxygen, PH, clarity, total phosphorus, and blue green algae levels. Anyone interested in joining the team is welcome to do so; if interested, contact the Association.
- Collaboration with Warren County College – The college is partnering with the Lake Association to use drones to conduct aerial photography and assess lake conditions using under water drones.

**Goose Management** – Canada geese are native to region, but NJ has the highest population. The Lake Association plans to achieve healthy levels, which means a reduction of approx. 33% of the current population. The Lake Association is looking to deploy a variety of approaches and will be monitoring effectiveness by maintaining counts of the resident geese throughout the year. To be successful in these efforts, community feedback and engagement are essential. There is an ordinance not to feed the geese, and we are urging the community to comply with this ordinance. Some important control methods are nest and egg control, along with use of deterrents. None of the deterrents is intended to harm the geese -- just make them uncomfortable. Shorefront property owners can help by maintaining riparian barriers. Joe Bello who lives in Liberty Township is going to help with goose management by using trained dogs and assisting with addling eggs. Joe and Bob are registered with the USFWS to addle the eggs. Joe has been in business since 2013 and although this area is not really in their range, he is volunteering his time here. He will be starting this Monday April 18; please let us know if anyone is interested in volunteering to assist. The process involves making sure that the eggs are not about to hatch, so before they do anything they will check to see if the eggs float, which is an indication they are ready to hatch. If an egg floats those are placed back in the nest and left alone; if the egg sinks those are removed and oiled (which will keep the egg from developing). They will make several visits and once the number of eggs in the nest are up to 6, 7, or 8, that is when they would oil the eggs. The main goal is not to hurt the geese in the process but keep them at bay while they addle the eggs.

**Aquatic Plant Management** – We will be looking at a multi-faceted approach for weed management this year.

- Aerial drone surveys – We will start with aerial surveys, which will be done in conjunction with Warren County Community College who has agreed to perform surveys with their drone, so we can see the effectiveness of treatments and removal once started.
- Removal of dead root masses – We will start with the removal of the root masses in the south end to make sure they do not end up contributing to poor quality. It was highly recommended to remove this mass as soon as possible. Jason with Northern Lights Lake Rejuvenation will start Thursday, April 21 with removal of the dead organic material to the boat ramp where it will be removed by the town and taken to a farm for disposal. The Lake Association will cover up to \$3,850 and the town will cover the balance. A motion was made to approve not more than the \$3,850 to remove the dead debris.

Nancy O’Leary made a motion to approve, and it was seconded by Arthur Strock. Everyone in attendance unanimously agreed to approve.

- Keeping outlet clear – It was discussed that if this initial work goes well, we will employ Northern Lights to keep the outlet clear throughout the year.
- Information for property owners- Solitude had in the past offered services and has now indicated they are no longer comfortable servicing the lake, because there were confrontations with other owners that objected to herbicide treatments. However, Northern Lights offers a service to cut the weeds, which could be an alternative to those interested, but it may be required multiple times a year as they grow back. Bob also indicated benthic barriers, such as lake mats are another option.

Don Lutz mentioned that he found a lake management company that would treat individual properties. Property owners would need to provide the size of the property to determine costs which would require \$150 up front to pay for DEP permit in addition to those costs. This company indicated that if more owners opt into this program they could do better on price.

**Priorities for New Funding** – It was asked what the highest priorities is for this next round of funding. It was mentioned there is a draft proposal for green infrastructure program at the town beach. There were 2 suggestions from the audience to pursue the green infrastructure program.

### **Communications**

Newsletter and Facebook – It was discussed that the Lake Association offers communication via the published newsletter and on Facebook. It was asked if there are any other options they wanted. A participant asked if the triathlon participants received the newsletter, Bob is going to ask the organizers.

A participant asked if information was extended to Hackettstown, such as the Christmas in July event, which was clarified was done by the Lodge, but we could consider collaborative events with them in the future where this could be considered.

### **For the Good of the Order/General Discussion**

Question from Audience

Arthur Strock asked if the township has agreed to continue to assist with costs for weed management. Bob advised that the town agreed to a total of \$10k this year and the indication is that they would most

likely continue to support this although not confirmed at this time. He also asked about the cost of the mailing in comparison to membership dues, and it was clarified that those numbers are only YTD.

Arthur Strock asked about the rec commission and Bob advised that it is still in discussion as to whether they are going to use herbicide treatments or remove the weeds. He asked if a representative could come to the next meeting and Bob advised the lake subcommittee might be a better option.

A question was asked what we know about Northern lights and Bob explained they were highly recommended by NJ lakes Assoc which is a group of NJ lakes that meets on a regular basis. Other lakes have used his services and Northern Lights requires less up-front cost than any of the other resources which ranged from \$30K and \$15K.

A question was directed to Joe Bello asking about the process for adding the eggs and Joe explained how it is better to address when it is cooler so they can see where the nest are as they are sitting on them. He also elaborated that they will not go on private property unless you advise and give them permission to do so.

A resident mentioned he had a reservoir that has fish that he would like to donate. Bob indicated this was a better question for the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, so he will reach out to them.

Arthur Strock mentioned he is a small boat builder such as kayaks and in thinking of the community he would be willing to offer his time to work with anyone interested in building their own boat, like a workshop. Art will provide pictures of his boats to the lake Association. He also mentioned an option for a tiered approach for lifetime memberships.

Cheryl mentioned that WRNJ might be a good option for fund raising opportunities.

A question was asked about the plane flying low and it was indicated it was mosquito control they must spray multiple times to make sure they are able to target at the appropriate times.

Bob indicated that it could be that Fridays are not a good time for the meetings, but if anyone has any suggestions to change, please advise.

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 8:36 pm Bob Ballou moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Danielle Nevins. Motion was approved unanimously