



## MLCA Spring Membership Meeting

April 4, 2024

7:00pm

Mountain Lake Fire House

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **Draft**

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Bob Ballou, President at 7:02pm. Introductory remarks were given. A warm welcome was extended to approximately 25 attendees from the community. A special thank you was extended to the Mountain Lake Firehouse, Ladies Auxiliary and the Lake Sub Committee. The agenda for the meeting was available to all attendees and is posted on our website, at [MLCAWAG.Org](http://MLCAWAG.Org)

**Meeting Minutes:** The minutes from the August 17, 2023, Annual Membership Meeting were distributed to the attendees with an opportunity for any changes/additions. No additions or changes were offered, and a motion was made by Marie Emery to approve; seconded by Brad Russo. The minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **Appointment of New Officers and Trustees:**

Bob Ballou updated the membership on the appointments of new MLCA Officers by the Board. At the Board's October 2023 meeting, the Board voted to swap some positions, resulting in the following new slate: Bob Ballou, President; Daniele Nevins, Vice-President; Buffy Harrison, newly appointed Treasurer; Patty Hoffman, newly appointed Secretary; Nancy O'Leary, newly appointed Trustee; Barbette Johnston and Brad Russo, Trustees. As these are interim appointments until the next Annual Meeting in August, no further action is needed until then.

**Treasurer Report:** Buffy Harrison provided an overview of the Treasurers report for 2023. The report shows a solid status for the MLCA's account, with \$47,758 in total funds on hand, dispersed fairly evenly between our checking and investment accounts. Scott Anderson, LPL Financial manages the investment fund and handles the investment structure. The account grew in value by \$2,486 last year, or 11.3%, ending at \$24,545. The checking account closed at \$23,213. Total income in 2023 was \$9,936, over 90% of which came from membership dues and contributions, the rest mostly from small grants tied to the Clean Communities Program. Total membership dues and contributions in 2023 were \$1,376 less than in 2022. Subtracting out the purchase of the new meter, purchased with a special donation received in 2022, total expenses in 2023 were \$8,642. About half of those expenses related to lake monitoring and weed harvesting, the rest involved basic administrative costs.

**Membership Update:** To date we have 192 members with 32 of those being new members. Welcome to all our new members. Thanks to all our members for your continued support, engagement and commitment to preserving the health of Mountain Lake now and for generations to come.

**Volunteers:** Bob Ballou requested the members and community as a whole to consider volunteering with the various activities that are slated for 2024.

### **Programs, Projects & Activities Slated for 2024 Water Quality:**

**Lake monitoring:** A team comprised of Bob Ballou, Larry Supp and others will continue to go out onto the lake and perform water quality monitoring. The data is maintained in a database. Anyone who would like to volunteer to perform the water monitoring is encouraged. April 6, 2024, will be the first date they will sample for this year

**Goose Control:** Joe Bello is heading Geese Control with the ongoing, humane addling program. Volunteers are encouraged to join Joe in the very early stage of egg development by addling to control and not eradicate the geese population around and in Mountain Lake. The resident geese are currently at manageable levels.

**Pet Waste:** We have two (2) waste bag stations located on the lake to pick up and properly dispose of pet waste.

**Septic Program:** As a potential new initiative, Bob mentioned that the Association would support efforts by Liberty Township to improve compliance with state cesspool and septic regulations given the potential impact to the lake.

### **Aquatic Plant Management/Weed Control:**

**Aquatic Weed Management:** MLCA continues to work with the Liberty Townships Lake Subcommittee to control the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). Efforts continue with Princeton Hydro to reduce the nutrients with efforts, previously mentioned, to control known sources of lake pollution. Data continues to be collected via the Warren Community College Drone Survey Program and the once per month monitoring of the SAV.

Bob introduced the idea of a new subcommittee to formulate a comprehensive management plan for the lake to control the SAV's. Bob suggested meeting informally on Saturday mornings to review and discuss. Bob inquired with the meeting attendees if they agree we need weed control and all attendees nodded yes. Bob encouraged attendees to volunteer as part of the proposed subcommittee to generate weed control ideas, costs, etc. Attendees with suggestions around weed management stated the following: John; request folks to come and discuss how to get control of the weeds; Amy suggested a survey asking the community what is the solution you would participate in to manage the weeds; Joe Thomas; rakes his beach to get the weeds; Karen Dos Santos; stated concern from borrowing any outside equipment for fear of cross contamination; whether boats launching or a borrowed weed harvester. Dennis suggested we categorize all the options so people can make an educated decision as to which option is most plausible. John; educate community about the invasive plant species and what needs to be done on a continuous basis.

### **Fisheries/Habitat/Ecology/Wildlife:**

**Fishing Derby:** April 6, 2024, will be the fishing derby from 8-10 am. The lake was recently stocked with Rainbow Trout. There will be prizes for different categories for the young anglers.

Macroinvertebrate Stream Survey: April 21, 2024, at the Jenny Jump Stream. The collection of macroinvertebrates help to understand the health of the stream and educates the community, as well. All are welcome to come out and help in this necessary and educational survey.

Porcupine Cribs: June is the target month for the Warren Community College to launch their underwater drone to locate the porcupine cribs that were submerged by NJDEP, in partnership with the MLCA, Liberty Township, and Muskies Inc. approximately 3 years ago. The cribs serve as a habitat for the smaller fish in the lake.

Wildlife Observation: As mentioned by member Jim Angley, the NJF&W has a database wherein they collect information on wildlife sightings in NJ. Any wildlife that is noted on our lake; eagles, ducks, bears, egrets, geese can be submitted to the NJF&W to be added to the States database.

**Community/Lake-based Events & Activities:** All events and activities require volunteers. Please consider volunteering for any and all events.

St. Patrick's Day Parade; March held by the Leddy Family

4<sup>th</sup> of July Most Patriotic Contest – NEED VOLUNTEERS

Summer Event Fund Raiser

Community Day

Trunk or Treat

Various attendees at the meeting offered suggestions to boost funding for the lake. Some suggestions were: Current operating budget \$10,000.00.

Corporate Sponsorships – namely the bank we use - John

Increase membership dues by \$10.00 – Karen Dos Santos

Amazon Smiles to donate to MCLA for purchases made by lake members - Karen Dos Santos

Calendar of Lake Pics for Sale – Karen Dos Santos

JCP&L Grant

Food Truck Event

**Litter Clean ups:**

Year round at the lake - Trash amounts are tallied and a small grant is received from the Township

Targeted Fall clean up – Grant sponsored by the Warren County Clean Communities. Usually held in the fall and is a more intense clean up of a county road or watershed area.

**Outreach and Education:**

MCLA Website: Our Website needs a major upgrade and refresh. During the meeting, attendee Jessica Mason stated she has a volunteer to upgrade our website. Thank you!

Enhanced Email Communication: Newsletter, Facebook, photos from members

### **Cultural and Natural History:**

BJ Johnston has initiated the History of Mountain Lake. Part 1 was introduced in the Winter 2024 Newsletter. BJ will continue to research and publish her findings to continue the story that connects us to our past. During the meeting, attendee Amy offered to assist BJ with historical research.

### **Development of Restoration and Protection for Mountain Lake:**

A zoom call with Chris Mikolajczyk, CLM, Sr Project Manager/Sr Aquatic Ecologist with Princeton Hydro commenced at 8:05 pm. Chris discussed the development of the watershed restoration and protection plan. The plan includes various studies and surveys of the watershed, tributaries, historical assessments, etc. All movement forward regarding the recommendations from Princeton Hydro will be forthcoming upon review of the Highland Council. An RFP Highland Project – maps lake, desk top based lake depth monitoring, water in/out and nutrients washed into the lake via rainfall. May 2024, six months of monitoring nutrient SAP plant beds; May-Oct, 2024 all data to formulate a plan; streams dry and wet (monitoring) MCLA will work in parallel with Princeton Hydro and the Highland Council

Larry Supp inquired about a dam impoundment, and it was mentioned by an attendee that dam safety overrules any suggestions for impoundments and the like. Public safety will prevail.

Chris spoke to work arounds to capture sediment and stated he would make recommendations. but topography will rule. Feasibility studies regarding sediment; how much behind the dam and how much will go downstream is an investigative study that can be modeled and can take up to two years to complete.

Tributary Sampling: Dry and Wet Weather Tributary sampling. Three locations dry stream capture 80-100% of the inlet. Stormwater is up for discussion. Mid-April dry tributary, May, 2024 Boat Base Work. Chris will keep Bob apprised of the exact dates.

### **General Discussion:**

Ken Lunden mentioned a plan from years ago to use the Lake Hopatcong machine to remove the weeds from the lake. When he did it in the past, they took out 1MM pounds of weeds and hauled them to a local farmer who uses them for fertilizer. This method is effective for water lilies but not for Milfoil.

Joe Thomas: Reminder of the Mentalist on April 14 at the Fire House and the Golf Outing scheduled for May 2, 2024

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm.

