



## Mountain Lake Community Association

### Membership Meeting

May 7, 2024  
Zoom Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Bob Ballou, President, at 7:00pm. The agenda for the meeting was posted on our website at [MLCAWAG.org](http://MLCAWAG.org).

**Meeting Minutes:** A request was made for any changes/additions to the minutes from the April 4, 2024 Spring Membership Meeting. There were none. ***Motion to approve the minutes*** made by Barbette “BJ” Johnston; seconded by Daniele Nevins. ***The motion was approved unanimously.***

#### **Monitoring Stations for Princeton Hydro Project:**

Bob Ballou reviewed the proposed monitoring stations. The project will involve monthly monitoring in the lake, as well as baseline (dry weather) and wet weather (storm) monitoring of tributaries and storm drains entering the lake. The funding for the project, provided by the NJ Highlands Council, covers a limited number of monitoring stations – namely, 3 baseline tributary sites and 3-5 stormwater sites. For review and discussion is the prospect of expanding the study by adding additional monitoring stations, with the associated costs covered by the Lake Association.

A map of Mountain Lake was presented showing a total of 13 potential monitoring stations -- 5 baseline tributary sites and 8 stormwater sites:

#### Baseline/tributary sites:

Mountain Lake Brook  
Jenny Jump Brook  
General Store Brook  
West Stream (along Lakeside Drive West, at small windmill)  
East Stream (near Park St. and Lakeside Drive East)

#### Stormwater Sites:

The 5 baseline/tributary sites noted above, plus  
Storm drain (1) at the boat ramp  
Storm drain(2) on Tsp property just north of the Lodge  
Storm drain (3) at the foot of Hillside Avenue

It was noted that the study could also potentially evaluate impacts associate with Lake Just-It by conducting additional monitoring above and below Lake Just-It on Mountain Lake Brook; however, per the advice of Princeton Hydro, best to wait on those until results come in from the mouth of Mountain Lake Brook.

Bob noted that if the membership agrees that the additional monitoring sites should be added to the study, the MLCA's proposed 2024 budget includes a line item that covers those additional costs, which total \$2,775 (based on \$185/sample/site). These are for lab analyses only; Princeton Hydro will cover the costs of collecting the samples.

There was consensus that the 8 proposed monitoring stations are all solid candidates for the study and should be pursued as a way to effectively characterize impacts to the lake from watershed inputs. As such, the Lake Association would fund 2 of the 5 baseline tributary stations and up to 5 of the 8 stormwater stations, pending approval of the budget.

### **Aquatic Plant Management (aka weed management):**

The general question is: what role should the MCLA play regarding weed management in the lake? A proposal was offered to launch a new initiative aimed at developing a comprehensive plan to control plants and weeds in Mountain Lake. That could be done by hiring a professional firm, but it might make more sense, and be far less costly, for the MCLA to lead/facilitate a community-based volunteer effort, with some guidance and assistance from Princeton Hydro. MLCA's role, in essence, would be to provide a forum for discussion and planning. The proposed strategy would seek to: 1) engage all interests, including members, the local community, shorefront property owners, and all lake users such as fishers, swimmers, and boaters; 2) hold regular meetings to exchange information, review options and provide direction, with one idea being regular gatherings on Saturdays at the pavilion; and 3) evaluate priority needs, interests and management objectives as they relate to individual areas/zones within the lake. An aerial image was presented showing 7 proposed management zones. Individual management approaches could be developed for each zone.

While specific goals and objectives may vary from zone to zone, they may include some or all of the following:

1. Recreational use, e.g., swimming, fishing, boating
2. Habitat and ecological value
3. Aesthetics

The proposed initiative would provide an opportunity to review and discuss various management options, such as herbicides, harvesting, hand pulling, diver-assisted removal, lake mats, and other approaches. Pilot projects could be undertaken, with funding support from the Lake Association. The forum approach allows for a plan first, then implements a strategy. We would like to brainstorm how best to manage the weeds adversely affecting the lake. We also want to discuss what species of plant are beneficial to the lake and wildlife and what are not. Our overall goal is to have a forum to discuss weed management with the private homeowners and community and other lake users working together.

Questions and comments focused on the nature of private ownership of submerged lands adjacent to lakefront parcels, perhaps ascertained from tax records or Zillow or ONXmaps.com. It was noted that such ownership varies from parcel to parcel, from 0 to 20 foot+. Another question focused on goals and objectives for weed management in public access areas of the

lake. Identifying the various species of aquatic plants in the lake over the course of the growing season was recognized as an important first step in the process.

There was general support expressed for moving forward with the initiative.

### **2024 MLCA Budget:**

A draft budget proposal was presented by Buffy Harrison, Treasurer. Total funds on hand to begin the year are \$47,758, broken out into \$23,213 in checking and \$24,545 in the investment account. Total projected income for 2024 is \$10,386. Total projected expenses for the year are \$16,107.

A question was asked regarding the approach for increasing membership, with a specific reference to welcome bags. It was acknowledged that welcoming new residents is a wonderful and effective way to boost membership and participation. A question was raised regarding the status of membership. In 2023, there were 192 members, of which 32 were new members.

***A motion to approve the 2024 budget proposal*** was made by Leslie Washuta; seconded by Barbetta Johnston. In response to a question, it was acknowledged that the budget, as proposed, includes the funding for the tributary monitoring to supplement the Princeton Hydro project. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

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

A question was raised regarding the MLCA's stance on a municipal septic ordinance. Bob Ballou explained that the MLCA remains supportive of any effort by Liberty Township to help enforce existing state law requiring that cesspools and septic systems meet state standards upon sale or transfer of properties.

Another question was raised regarding abandoned boats on township property north of the Lodge. Daniele Nevins, Vice-President, noted that several properties in the vicinity have deeded rights to keep a boat on that township property. She suggested that it might be a good idea to seek assistance from a local scout troop to help build a boat storage rack at the site. Buffy Harrison noted that she recently checked with the local scouts but didn't find anyone who might be willing and able to take on the project. Leslie Washuta suggested that notice to local residents regarding better upkeep at the site, e.g., keeping boats stored upside down, would be a good first step.

A comment was made in support of the MLCA's interest in upgrading our website.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:21pm by the President.

