



**Watchic Lake Association
Board of Directors' Meeting Summary
March 27, 2024 via Zoom**

Interested in joining the board or attending a meeting? We are looking for new members. To learn more about what we do, or how to become a member, please use our Contact Us page: <https://watchiclake.org/contact-us/>

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Paul McNulty. A quorum was established with 11 directors present. Minutes of the February 7, 2024 meeting were approved by consent.

Agnes reviewed the **treasures report**. No additional questions or comments.

Rt 113 Runoff Remediation System. Debby Oddy has completed the repairs at the culvert intake and David B has installed the trash guard. CCSW has approved the work. Thanks to Debby and John Burke.

Kiwanis is interested in hosting a **Watchic Lake Regatta** this summer. Owen and bill will try to share details at an upcoming Kawanis meeting.

Second DEP Section 319 grant application. Heather Hunt from CCSW has been hired to write the grant and will visit residential candidate properties with Dave. Six residential properties and one road project are candidates. Heather at CCSW in contact with Trinity stables about an interest in participating. The application is due May 17. As reference the projects for the previous DEP grant totaled \$150,000.

A property owner asked for **advice on dredging in the inlet area**. The WLA discussed researched this topic, and agreed that we strongly recommends against dredging. We informed them:

We spoke with Maine DEP and Cumberland County Soil and Water. They explained that these organizations very rarely support lake dredging as the dredging and the disposal of dredged material have both long- and short-term adverse impacts on wetlands environments. The approval process is significant, with permits needed from Maine DEP and the US Army Corp of Engineers. Unpermitted work can result in significant fines or costly requirements to restore work done.

Stephanie Parker leads the WLA environmental work. She has a master's and PhD in aquatic ecology, studies lakes and rivers for the National Ecological Observatory Network. Stephanie adds that, the wetlands in Watchic's inlets are balanced ecosystems that help filter pollutants, nutrients, and stormwater that flow into the lake. Additionally, they provide habitat for several organisms, including loons, ducks, turtles, frogs, fish, native aquatic plants, and aquatic invertebrates. Disturbing these environments upsets the ecological balance of the lake, which is already experiencing significant stress in terms of nutrient loading and runoff as we saw in 2023. Removal of sediments and native plants also increases the probability of invasive aquatic plants moving in, which would not only be detrimental to lake health, but also to property values.

The DEP and CCSW reps pointed us to this information: <https://www.maine.gov/dep/land/nrpa/fsdredg.htm>, <https://www.maine.gov/dep/land/nrpa/> and <https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/wetlands/threats.htm>

Given the adverse effects and for the health of the lake, the WLA is not supportive of dredging.

Given the very early ice-out this year, the dam was closed on March 13 (ice-out was March 8). With early ice-out dates more common, David and Owen will make recommendations if/how we should change and communicate spring dam closing dates. This will be reviewed with members at our July annual meeting.

Rick provided recommendations on **Strategic Expenses and Fundraising**. We agreed to consider strategic spending and fund raising and in two buckets:

- A) Spendable portion for Major Water Quality Protection Expenses, i.e., for projects or programs to use for infrastructure programs, or to mitigate threats to water-quality, such as surface runoffs and other point-source contaminants (e.g.s, Dam replacement, road/residential remediations, DEP grant co-funding, etc.)
- B) B) An Emergency Reserve: to be used only in situations of dire, time-critical, emergency need, such as combating an invasive species infestation, or a major algae bloom.

Given the above, and our current account balances, this leads to an average annual strategic fund raising target of about \$25k/year

As reference, our Operating Fund covers regular annual recurring expenses (e.g. website hosting, water quality testing, insurance, smaller projects, etc.). This is funded via membership dues and smaller donations (e.g. Clynk and ad hoc member donations).

Rick and the WLA will review this in more detail at our annual meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.