



Watchic Lake Association Annual Member Meeting Minutes, July 6, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Paul McNulty at 9:05 a.m., at Standish Town Hall. A certificate of mailing was filed with the secretary, with the meeting notice mailed and emailed on June 10, 2024. A quorum was established with **42** members present.

Paul McNulty gave the welcome and introduction, giving a summary of the good and ugly from the past year.

David Burnell discussed water quality and detailed how water quality had declined last year, and that so far this year it has been improving. We also had high phosphorus levels the last two years with runoff being the primary culprit. Preventing runoff and proper septic system maintenance are the best ways to reduce phosphorus levels.

Stephanie Parker discussed Cyanobacteria and the blooms that occurred in 2023. Likely due to the increased rain we received in addition to warmer water temperatures.

Guest speaker Maggie Welch from the Lakes Environmental Association (LEA), discussed algae and cyanobacteria. She gave guidelines on avoiding exposure to potentially hazardous water, the causes of blooms, and how to decrease phosphorus levels in the lake. She encouraged attendees to get involved in LakeSmart (or LEA's "Clean Lake Check-up" program) for an evaluation and learn how you can prevent runoff.

Stephanie Parker continued to discuss cyanobacteria and gave some visual examples of what a cyanobacteria bloom looks like and encouraged people to report it if they see such a bloom. She then also encouraged people to get a LakeSmart evaluation so that property owners can improve their properties.

Monica Mahoney also discussed the LakeSmart program and provided a signup sheet for evaluations. Anyone interested in becoming a LakeSmart evaluator can reach out to Stephanie or Monica for more details.

Stephanie Parker discussed invasive plant monitoring. We ran our 8th annual plant survey in 2023 and we did not find any invasive species. Some algae blooms were spotted. She encouraged all residents, renters, guests, etc. to inspect their boats and fishing gear for invasives. She also asked for volunteers to participate in the 2024 plant survey.

Stephanie Parker then discussed the loons on Watchic Lake. In 2023 we had three pairs, one lone adult, and 4 chicks. Two of the four chicks died, likely from boat or plane strikes. July 20th will be the 2024 loon count and we are also looking for volunteers for that effort as well.

Paul McNulty discussed the 2025 DEP Grant Application. The plan is for 4 road association projects and 4-6 residential projects with work to start in 2025 if the grant is approved.

Owen Smith gave an update on the dam. The dam was stained in September, 2023. In the fall the dam was opened on 11/1/2023 and closed on 3/13/2024, five days after the earliest ice-out on record. We had a really wet spring that required lots of dam adjustments this spring. Traditionally the dam has been closed a few days after ice out. More recently ice out has been happening about 4 weeks earlier than normal. The board has been

discussing the dam closure and opening dates and for now, plan to stick to the current schedule. There will be a dam tour on August 17th at 10am.

Paul McNulty discussed membership. We had a record 166 members, but a slight decrease in the total number of properties (106) with members. Currently, 41% of eligible properties have a member. He also encouraged people to help donate returnable bottles and cans using the Clynk program. Clynk tags can be obtained at the town hall (on the bulletin board).

Paul McNulty then discussed upcoming events including the dam visit on 8/17 (tentative), meet your neighbors event at Carr's Restaurant on 7/17, the loon count on 7/20, the invasive plant paddle on 8/17, the ice cream boat, on 8/11, and brought up the topic of possibly reviving the "Watchic Lake Regatta" in 2025.

Agnes Wiggin gave a financial update. We are in a generally healthy financial state but the threat of invasives and the cost to respond to such an infestation is a looming risk. We plan to have a fundraising drive to build up the strategic fund to help rapidly address any invasives and/or water quality issues that arise in the future.

Rob Brisk discussed new board nominations. Paul McNulty, Nancy McNulty, and Owen Smith have termed off the board this year and we thank them for their years of service to the WLA.

Cathy Austin, Bob Babcock, Rick Green, Don Marean, Debby Oddy were nominated and duly elected as new board members.

Stephanie Parker was nominated for President, Travis Roney for Vice President, Chris Martino for Secretary (to finish the current 2-year term), and Rick Wiggin and Rob Brisk were nominated as co-historians. All were duly elected.

Rob Brisk then moved to approve the 2023 annual meeting minutes and they were duly approved.

Rob Brisk encouraged people to volunteer for the various committees to help the association in various aspects. A signup sheet was passed around to the attending members.

Stephanie gave closing remarks. Our short-term goals are to continue with water quality testing, growing membership, and ensure that DEP and WLA remediation projects are evaluated and maintained. Longer term, the WLA will partner with DEP, CCSW, and the Town of Standish to address increased stormwater runoff. Also, there is a need for more volunteers for committees, events, and educational initiatives.

A question was asked by Izzy Higgins regarding the tracking of rental properties on the lake. Stephanie responded that she has spent time identifying rental owners and reaching out to them so that we can better educate their renters on keeping invasives out of Watchic Lake.

A question was asked by Izzy Higgins regarding the clear-cutting on Sebago Lake, the related legislation, and if the board was aware of the state statute for preventing improper renovations/clearing. Discussions around this topic ensued, but there were no definitive answers as to the current state of the new legislation or the funding to enforce it.

Cathy Watson brought up the land on 113 that was clear cut and mentioned the effort by the Small Woodland Owners non-profit to buy land on or near the lake to help prevent development. They are trying to raise money

and welcome contributions. It was suggested to put information on the WLA website about the Small Woodland Owners.

A question was asked about the annual boat races. Kiwanis helps sponsor it, permits are required, all boats are inspected, and the WLA does not receive funding from it.

A question was asked about Kiwanis and the 'glamping' areas and if motor boats are allowed to be launched from Kiwanis. Bob Babcock stated that motor boats are not allowed to be launched from Kiwanis.

A question was asked about Kiwanis' long term plans for their land. Owen Smith answered that their current plans are to stick with the current glamping and group rentals, as opposed to re-opening to the public.

Don Marean made a statement in support of the Small Woodland Owners non-profit, and was highly encouraged about their involvement in purchasing land around the lake.

Owen Smith presented Paul McNulty with an award of appreciation on behalf of the WLA for his many years of service as president, and detailed many of the achievements and initiatives that were successfully completed under his leadership.

The meeting concluded at 10:24am

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Martino