

Canadarago Lake Improvement Association
General Member Meeting June 20, 2020
Minutes

(Still immersed in constraints from the Corona Virus Pandemic, the CLIA Member Meeting was held via zoom.us on Saturday June 20, 2020 in order to remain in compliance with Governor Cuomo's executive orders regarding large group gatherings in preventing the spread of the virus. Also, Baker's Beach, our regular site for meetings is closed.)

Present from the Board of Directors: President Matt Dombrowski, Secretary Susan Rosengrant, Membership Co-ordinator Karen Dombrowski, Brian Baczanski, Brett Sluyter, Kellie Colf, Ryan Fagan (ex-officio) . Absent: Vice President Doug Hitchcock, Treasurer Jim Marzeski, Rita Hitchcock.

Members present will be listed at the end of the minutes as signed in.

The Summer meeting of 2020 was called to order by President, Matt Dombrowski at 9:01 a.m. Matt thanked those present for their understanding as the CLIA Board of Directors attempts to weave its way through the pandemic and still accomplish our mission. He reported that the newsletter and membership letter had been mailed, but if anyone did not receive either one, please let us know through info@canadaragolake.com .

Finance Report: In Jim's absence, Matt gave the year end balances of the finance report:

as of 12/31/2019 Checking - \$9,048 Savings - \$34,368

For the year ending 12/31/2019 Revenue - \$42,993 Expenses - \$27,634

The net income of about \$15,000 is better than usual (prior year was about \$6,000.) The difference was driven by a very generous anonymous donation of \$5,000, growth of the golf tournament's success (Thank you Kathy Faber and Maria Brindisi coordinators of the event), success in

fundraising, and lower watershed steward (lake steward) cost last year due to lower boat volumes and worse weather.

New policies for internal control and management improvement will result in monthly financial reports going forward so that updated financials are readily available for membership and board for better transparency and management.

Watershed Steward Program (AKA Lake Steward Program): Matt reported that by emphasizing the fact that Canadarago Lake is the busiest lake in the CRISP PRISM (a 5-county region) acting as a “hub” for boaters who come from and go to many other water bodies, we were able once again to win the CRISP/DEC Grant of \$25,000. Despite a scare that NYS would defund the program due to the pandemic, Matt and WSP (Water Shed Program) Director Ryan Fagan worked hand in glove with SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station to win this grant. We are eager to keep this alliance strong for future opportunities for our lake. We work closely with Paul Lord and Sarah Coney of SUNY Oneonta, who are great friends of Canadarago Lake and provide supplemental steward staff at the boat launch. This factor enhances our already “Super Stewards” Mark and Jean and our newest addition, Thomas. These stewards are the ambassadors for our lake by greeting every boat owners launching at the boat launch, examining their boats as they enter AND leave, hence making certain any critters from our lake do not get transferred to other water bodies. They have already found and removed ten water chestnuts from entering boats this year! Had these nasty nuts gotten in our lake, an impenetrable mat at the water surface with roots imbedded in the bottom of the lake multiplying 25 seeds to a nut would have ensued and literally destroyed recreation on this beloved lake.

The Boat Washing station is up and running which enhances our ability to further clean boats before entrance to our beloved lake. Most members do not know that getting this washing station not only requires permitting and storage over the winter but also assembling and requires supplemental staffing for both set up and tear down each season. Once we got the grant and the station, we learned the huge responsibility that came with it.

Citizen’s Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) :

We are in our fifth year of involvement in this partnership with NYSFOLA (NYS Federation of Lake Associations) and NYS DEC and in conjunction

with SUNY ESF. Thank you to our team of CSLAP volunteers which includes Barb Crandall, Christine and Chuck Kuhn, Rita and Doug Hitchcock, Dr. Pam Lea, and team leader Susan Rosengrant. Boat captains include Bill Boyle, Kathy Faber, Ryan Fagan, and others. The dedicated team members venture in small groups onto the lake every two weeks to collect water samples, make observations about the lake water and weather conditions and report about them along with sending samples to the lab for analysis. This detail work allows NYS to correlate changes in the environment with symptoms we see on the lake such as Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs) which are a direct product of the combination of algal bacteria strains, nutrient load (mainly nitrogen and phosphorus) and weather and water conditions and temperatures. When we discover possible HABs we send samples for corroboration and alert lake dwellers of their presence.

DEC Walleye and Tiger Muskellunge stocking

Every year DEC stocks our lake with many Walleye and Tiger Musky fry. Fry are not much longer than the first knuckle on one of your fingers, and when stocked, it is typically expected that less than 1% reach adulthood. But it is good for the fishery as a whole meaning, they provide food for the larger fish in the ecosystem. The DEC just stocked 40,000 Walleye Fry and will be stocking 40,000 Tiger Musky fry in September. DEC does this at no cost to us.

Walleye Club funded Walleye stocking

The Walleye Club, our stocking program that you all support every year, stocks Walleye Fingerlings, which are the size of one of your fingers. They have a much higher survival rate, and we are seeing a direct impact on the health of the fishery from that. We stocked 2,160 of these last November. Each one costs a couple of bucks. Thank you so much to those who donate towards this program, as well as the NYS DEC, Ryan Fagan, VP Doug Hitchcock, Tom Taylor, our stewards, and everyone else who helps make both of these stocking levels possible.

Membership and Outreach

Karen Dombrowski has assumed the command of the huge task of Membership and outreach, taking over after the valiant efforts of Barb

Sluyter for several years. Karen is working with the members and Zone Captains. They've gone above and beyond this past year. Leaders include: Zone 1 (Northwest) is covered by our Board Members Brett Sluyter and Brian Baczanski.

Zone 2 (Northeast) is covered by Becky Marzeski.

Zone 3 (Southeast) is covered by former board member Kathy Faber.

We know they have worked very hard to connect with you in our outreach program.

We are still looking for Zone Captains for Zone 4 (Southwest) and Zone 5 (Off lake portion of the lake community) Barb Crandall has been holding the fort in that area. If you are interested please contact:

info@canadaragolake.com.

You, our members have been tremendous in your support of CLIA . Last year was our highest membership count ever at 307 members! This year we sent out 360 newsletters *The Voice of the Lake*, and membership renewal applications, and have more available if you or someone on the lake you know did not receive one for some reason.

If you have any other questions or know of someone who would like to become a member, please email: **info@canadaragolake.com**

Golf Tournament/Picnic/ Zone Gatherings

The Golf Tournament spearheaded by Maria Brindisi and Kathy Faber, the Picnic hosted and organized by Rita and Doug Hitchcock, and our Zone Gatherings hosted by our awesome Zone Captains have all been regrettably set aside and cancelled for this Summer, due to the pandemic and the concerns for social distancing. We will however continue to strive to connect with you, and in working together towards and supporting the mission of CLIA we will continue to unite around the lake around the protection and improvement of Canadarago Lake and its community. One idea we are considering is podcasts to connect you about the lake. This and Zoom could each be used to better connect with the lake community at this time.

Social Media and the Website

Matt explained the status of the website:

“One of our big off season projects was to take another step with our website and update to a new easier to manage website. Our website at the end of 2019 we had for several years, and was our first mobile capable

website, but it was WordPress and it fell victim to a weakness of WordPress. WordPress websites operate on multiple apps coming together to comprise the website. Sometimes these stop updating. That happened and our hand got forced sooner than expected to move to our next website. That all being said, Paul Palumbo the original CLIA website builder and Kellie Colf our current website and social media specialist, have been working together to bridge your favorite features of the two older websites of ours, and the new website. We are at a point now that we are comfortable saying the new website should be up the week of July 4th. Taking into account vacations in the next week, after that the webcam, weather, and DNS transfers should be able to be completed, and the website should essentially be done and ready to go. Thank you both for all of your efforts!”

Starry Stonewort

Matt gave a detailed and educational report on this Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS):

“Starry Stonewort is not a new problem in the lake, it has been in the lake for over a decade, and was introduced likely via a boat entering the lake, again emphasizing the need for invasive species awareness, as well as the need to clean, drain, and dry and/or treat your boat and gear before entering and after exiting bodies of water. What is Starry Stonewort? It looks like a plant, but it is actually an algae, a very structurally strong algae when in the water. It looks like very dense pillows of weeds, or at least that’s how I’d describe it, but it is in fact an algae. It becomes a nuisance beginning in early July when it appears to appear out of nowhere. Last year, it became a hot point of discussion again, and rightfully so. I personally at my property am significantly impacted by it, so I get it and understand. I reached out last Summer to my friend at NYS DEC Scott Wells, and he came to my property with a biologist colleague of his, and then both put on scuba gear and dove on and around the problem for a couple hours. It gets so thick and bad that they were actually pulling themselves across it as if scaling a wall or climbing a ladder. Scott says this is the worst he’s ever seen it anywhere. That being said, it is very difficult to eradicate. You can hand harvest it if you like or use a rake. I’ve done it. It works, but it’s not fun, and there is not much bang for your efforts. It also weighs a ton as it is saturated with water, being an algae. You also have the negative impact of its main source of spread being when you shred it, which automatically

happens when you contact it, either by hand, rake, machine, or boat propeller. It breaks into many fragments, floats on the current, and spreads. This causes a major problem when you want to discuss mechanical harvesting, which works for multiple forms of invasive species, but our opinion at this time is that it is not the right option for Starry Stonewort. This isn't just a CLIA opinion. We've had conference calls and lengthy discussions with DEC on this topic. At the end of the day, the ultimate solution to excessive weed and algae in a lake is limiting the nutrient load that allows it to thrive. Those nutrients, as mentioned quickly earlier, are nitrogen and phosphorus. Limit one, and you directly reduce excess weed and algae growth. Nitrogen is a natural clean byproduct of the process of sewage treatment, therefore that is out. That leaves Phosphorus, our #1 target. The real wins in reducing phosphorus begin at the source, failed septic tanks. Our lake, like many others like it, is not encompassed by a centralized sewer system. It instead is surrounded by homes with septic tanks, many always in disrepair. We've done dye tests in the past, and know it to be true. Those septic tanks directly put nutrient load in the lake. This drives nuisance plant and algae growth. Believe it or not the agriculture around the lake has very little impact on the lake, the inlets all test mostly very clean for these nutrients comparatively. Our long term plan is take steps towards decreasing phosphorus load around the lake. This takes the form of working together to find means and solutions to having a higher percentage of good integrity septic tanks on the lake, and then eventually in a perfect world getting the lake on a centralized sewer system. It's possible, we've done the feasibility study with the engineering firm, but it's a big project that if workable is a long way down the road. You do that though, and you take leaps and bounds toward a more clean aquatic venue and experience. You also take leaps and bounds towards higher property values. All this being said, Starry Stonewort pops up in early July, and hangs out with us until mid or late August, and then poof it's gone as quick as it came. That's exactly what happened last year. I actually called two board members thanking them, thinking they had done me a favor and cleared my dock of stonewort while I was away, only to be surprised it had just gone. It will inevitably do the same this year, so prepare yourself, and if it frustrates you, join us, join the board, get involved, and help us take steps towards a solution."

Thank you for your support. On behalf of the Board of Directors, President Matt Dombrowski, shared our appreciation of all who attended the meeting and who continue to support our volunteer efforts to make sure CLIA grows in function and ideal every year. The newsletter and our member meetings endeavor to prove that to you all. We strive to win your support and trust again this year especially amidst the constraints of the pandemic. Please share with non-members what you learned today as you are our best advertisers!

Q&A

Question about when the New Website would be up and running:
We hope the new website will be up the week of July 4th.

Question about “weed mats” for containing starry stonewort:
Benthic mats as they are called can be used to temporarily contain this invasive species but requires DEC permitting.
The mats must be pulled up to be used again which is a lot of work.
The mats prevent the sun from getting to the plant but also kills good plants and animals when put in place.

Question about impact of failing septic systems on the lake:
Septic systems, the use of fertilizers, and pesticides are all contributors to plant growth in the lake both normal algae and harmful algae. Checking your own septic system with dry packs can be done but are not always accurate. Certainly a sewer system around the lake would make a huge impact on decreasing the level of nutrients in the lake, lowering the nitrogen and phosphorus levels significantly.

Question about using chemicals to treat the water:
No. Adding chemicals could impact the ecosystem to its detriment.

Question about cleaning kayaks to prevent introduction of AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species): Any water vessel needs to be cleaned, drained and dry before entering the lake to prevent any invasive “hitch hikers” especially if you use your boat in other water bodies. Kayaks are fairly easy but if you cannot get all the water out of the boat, add some Potassium Chloride (salt typically used for home water systems) to the hull to dry out the area.

Be sure to have visitors who enter the lake on your property clean, drain and dry their vessels. Better yet, have them enter via the boat launch where our expert Lake stewards can examine all the areas that hitch hikers hide and also use the boat washing station for a good cleaning!

Again, Thank you for your support and attention for the good of our lake.
Adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

(Present Members via Zoom: Alvey, Schneider, Kyhn, Fenstermacher, Sexton, Desmet, Fitzgerald, Palumbo, McDaniel, Paul H, Roseanne, Alexander, Faber, Sue, 4109205957, lle927535215, Jsolomusic, Jami, pplaia's, 5189440157)

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Rosengrant
Secretary

(total 8 pages)