

Hitchcock Lake Improvement Association

Annual Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2021

I. Call to Order

The Hitchcock Lake Improvement Association Annual Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm via ZOOM by President Kathleen Mrazik.

II. Attendance and Process for Voting

Attendance was taken as members entered the meeting. Vice President Lina Marunas explained the process for voting in the virtual format.

III. Approval of the November 30, 2020 meeting minutes as posted on the web.

Jeremy Chicano made a motion to approve. Judy Miceli seconded. The motion passed.

IV. President's Annual Review (attached)

V. Treasurers Report

Treasurer Dave Judd reviewed the financial statements and provided an overview of membership.

VI. Vote to adopt the amended HLIA Certificate of Incorporation

The Board approved, on November 30, 2020, and submits for approval by the members of the HLIA, the Certificate of Incorporation as amended and restated in its entirety.
The Certification of Incorporation was approved.

VII. Vote to adopt the amended HLIA Bylaws

The Board approved, on November 30, 2020, and submits for approval by the members of the HLIA, the Bylaws as amended and restated in its entirety.
The Bylaws were approved.

VIII. Vote to approve the Nominating Committee Slate of Officers and Directors

President Mrazik called for a vote to approve the Nominating Committee recommended Slate of Officers and Directors as follows:

Officers – positions ending January 2023

President: Kathleen Mrazik

Vice President: Lina Marunas

Secretary: Kimberly Belval

Treasurer: Dave Judd

Directors – Positions ending January 2024

Cynthia Cayer, Cheryl Corey, Judith Miceli

The Nominating Committee slate for Officers and Directors was approved.

IX. Audit Committee

President Mrazik announced the appointment of Gina Fazio and Kevin Christopher to represent membership and Kimberly Belval to represent the Board on the Audit Committee.

X. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Jeremy Chicano and seconded by Kim Belval. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Cayer, HLIA Secretary – posted on the website pending approval at next regular meeting.

Attendance - HLIA Annual Meeting , January 25, 2021

Kimberly Belval
Robert Browne
Cindy & Dave Cayer
Jeremy Chicano
Kevin Christopher
Cheryl & Bruce Corey
Noreo Gabriel
June & Carl Gemino
Laurie Greco
Dave Judd
Lina Marunas
Judy & Chuck Miceli
Kathy & Mike Mrazik
Christine Parsons
Eardley Punter
Ashley and Mike Ruotolo
John Sharek
Ed Sullivan
Mark & Lisa Sussman
Thomas Tella

Hitchcock Lake Association Annual Review (Review of 2020)
Kathy Mrazik, President, January 25, 2021

2020 was quite a year in many ways, not simply for our relatively small lake community, but for the population of our town, state, country and the world. The Covid-19 Pandemic has brought heartbreak to many, including some fellow lake residents, who have lost family members and friends. We have continued to fulfill the duties we were elected by our lake membership to do, and that is to see that the lake is maintained as best as we possibly can.

MEMBERSHIP

2020 saw our Membership increase again as it did in 2019 and had in 2018, so we are seeing a slight improvement. The total number of households that paid dues (on and off-lake) was 172, or 51% (up from 166 last year). Of this, 148 were Lakefront or 61% (up from 144 last year). There is always a turnover of residents, so in a few cases both buyer and seller paid dues, and in other cases neither buyer nor seller paid dues. In 2020 we received dues from a few households that had not paid in the past, and that is quite encouraging.

WEED TREATMENT

In 2020, we again had a one-year contract with Solitude Lake Mgmt. The Solitude contract continued to include 6 weed inspections and additional water quality testing. 2020 was also the 2nd year of a 3 year DEEP permit.

Solitude performed their 1st weed inspection on April 22nd and it showed curly-leaf pondweed growing in moderately dense patches throughout both the North and South Lake. They performed the 1st treatment on May 14th. They treated with Tribune(diquat) which is an herbicide and Captain (copper) which is an algicide, as is their usual protocol. They felt this 1st treatment was successful.

The cove ("lagoon") on the North Lake (at Ledgeside/College Place) was totally overgrown with weeds/algae early in the season. A Solitude employee treated it from the shore in early June at no additional cost to us and the condition improved drastically.

A 2nd treatment was conducted on July 1st to treat some remaining curly-leaf patches as well as some thin-leaf pondweed, using the same combination of chemicals.

As it was a hot summer with little rain, we felt the need to treat the lake a 3rd time, as we were seeing a good-sized reappearance of weeds, which were most obvious on the South Lake. They did treat again on August 11th, although the patches of thin leaf pondweed and curly-leaf pondweed they observed were small in density. At this time, they observed a large amount of tapegrass, which is difficult to treat and control chemically.

As their report stated: "Tapegrass is rarely treated as it is important for sediment stabilization, nutrient sequestration, and provides food and habitat to aquatic organisms".

We were not billed by Solitude for the 3rd treatment.

We again received positive news from Solitude's Annual Report Summary: Water samples underwent microscopic examination for the presence of potential toxin producing cyanobacteria (blue-green cells). These blue-green cells can be threatening to not just aquatic life but to humans and animals that use and live around the pond. A count of 70,000 cells/mL is the threshold level for potential health effects to

humans, pets, and other wildlife. Water samples testing for cyanobacteria were taken from Upper and Lower Hitchcock Lake three times: June 12th, July 1st, and August 11th.

No dangerous or concerning levels of cyanobacteria were observed in any of the tests. The highest concentration of algae was counted on August 11th, as the Upper (South) Lake had a count of 3,900 cells/ ml. and the Lower (North) Lake had a count of 4,700 cells/ml. These levels were lower in 2019, but we experienced a much hotter summer in 2020, with little rain.

SAFETY:

We are always concerned about safety. The violations of the WLCT Rules and Regulations that are the most common are: *operating without being registered with the HLLA, operating during Quiet Time, operating too close to shore or other vessels, and towing over capacity. Non lake-registered vessels (which are not allowed) tend to be an issue around the holiday weekends.

This year we had very serious complaints, including an incident in June that resulted in police ticketing residents (and a non-resident); charges included operating unregistered jet skis, interfering with wildlife, and disturbing the peace. The Wolcott PD and Animal Control were involved, and the DEEP was contacted by Animal Control.

We had other violations including those referenced above (*), and to the best of our ability, they were dealt with. Many violations are not only violations of the WLCT Rules & Regulations but also State Boating laws, and the police should continue to be called in these instances.

STATUS OF THE NEEDED DAM REPAIR

As you all know, for the past two years, we have been unable to lower the lake in the fall, as the valve on the North Lake Dam is old and we fear, if opened, will be stuck in open position. The Dam Committee has been consulting with engineering companies as to how best to proceed throughout this past year. Also being looked at are possibly less costly alternatives to lowering the lake than replacing the valve. We are also awaiting news from the town as to the status of grant money. Be assured that the board is eager to lower the lake, hopefully this fall, so that members may clean out leaves, debris and make repairs to walls and docks.

SOCIAL

Sadly, the only social event we were able to hold in 2020 was a Parade of Boats in September, as we were able to be socially distant there. We are hopeful to do much more in 2021 under the guidance of Laurie Greco, our CDC chairperson.

COMMITTEE TO UPDATE BYLAWS AND CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION:

As begun in 2019, the Bylaws and Certificate of Incorporation continued to be studied by Lina Marunas, Cindy Cayer and Attorney Mark Sussman, and much-needed updates and revisions will be voted on this evening. Mark, an environmental attorney and South Lake resident, has been an incredible asset due to his legal expertise and ensuring that all changes are legally sound. A formal Conflict of Interest Policy was also created. Thank you, Mark, and thank you, Lina and Cindy, and our board members for their participation in additional discussions held in recent months.

Looking to 2021!

Our hope is to resume in-person meetings when it is safe to do so. Not seeing our friends and neighbors at meetings has been a challenge, but our Zoom meetings went well.

Our 2021 contract with Solitude is in the process of being finalized, with a 3% cost increase. We will continue with weed treatments, as they are fairly successful, but need to continue exploring more weed treatment/shorefront options including:

Hydro-raking and mini-dredging which are available to individual homeowners through Solitude; and weed removal and placing “benthic barriers” (lake mats) along the shore through C&D Weed Removal and other similar companies. These protect individual swim areas from weeds. The company installs them in the early spring/removes in the fall.

Financial: Work on increasing our membership by continuing to reach out to those who are not members. We need everyone’s help in encouraging their neighbors to join the HLIA and pay the very reasonable dues. Only in this way can we continue in maintaining the health of the lake.

As stated earlier, we also hope to have some social events back up and running!

THANK YOU! In closing, thank you again to our Board of Directors who have been such a great team again this year. Lina Marunas has set up our ZOOM meetings, and our other officers, Cindy Cayer, as Secretary, and Dave Judd, as Treasurer are a huge asset. Although Cindy is stepping down as Secretary, I am grateful that she is remaining on the board. We will be welcoming Kim Belval into the Secretary role, and bid farewell to Andy Giordino, who has been on the board for many years, including terms as Vice President and Treasurer. Thank you, Andy, you will be missed. Rob Browne continues in his role overseeing the dam property, raking, cleaning up brush, etc. and all board members join in and help whenever needed, including posting and taking down weed treatment signs. We have some non-board members who also help out: you know who you are, thank you all most sincerely!

We both received and sent a lot of emails this year, some of a negative nature (such as addressing safety violations), but most with information that needed to be shared. I cannot express deeply enough my thanks to those members who respond with positive words of encouragement and thanks. As I said last January and am repeating again, we are very blessed to live on this beautiful lake. Let us continue to work together to not just maintain it, but to improve the overall health of the lake for those who come after us. And please, as always STAY HEALTHY!!