

Warren County Board of Supervisors

Committee: **Invasive Species Sub-Committee**

Date: **March 26, 2013**

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Dickinson
Conover
Monroe
Mason
Frasier
Loeb

Others Present:

Paul Dusek, County Administrator
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
Frank Thomas, Budget Officer
Supervisors Montesi
Strainer
Walt Lender, Executive Director of the Lake
George Association
Dave Wick, Executive Director of the Lake
George Park Commission
Roger Phinney, Eastern NY Marine Trades
Association
Rick Haag, Warren County Conservation
Council
Don Lehman, *The Post Star*
Nicole Livingston, Second Deputy Clerk

Committee Member Absent:

Supervisor Bentley

Mr. Dickinson called the meeting of the Invasive Species Sub-Committee to order at 10:57 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2013 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the agenda packet were distributed to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda packet is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Dickinson recognized Walt Lender, Executive Director of the Lake George Association (LGA), and Dave Wick, Executive Director of the Lake George Park Commission (LGPC), were at the meeting today to provide presentations on the invasive species currently in Lake George and the ramifications of such. He extended privilege of the floor to Mr. Lender for the presentation on the Asian Clam Management in Lake George. Mr. Lender provided a power point presentation on the Asian Clam which he reviewed in detail with the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

During the power point presentation, Mr. Monroe asked how far the Asian Clam could travel in its' microscopic stage and Mr. Lender replied they were working with the scientists at Darin Freshwater Institute to obtain accurate information with regard to that, noting there was literature available on the Asian Clams ability to travel, but it was not specific to Lake George. Mr. Loeb questioned if the temperature of the water was a factor in the locations of the Asian Clam and Mr. Lender responded they were hopeful that depth was a limiting factor for the Clam; however, he said, there was no true scientific data to support that at this time.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Lender advised there was a website, www.stoptheasianclam.info, that provided up-to-date developments and project updates. He encouraged everyone to sign-up with the site to receive emails and be kept up-to-date on the progress of the programs.

In response to an inquiry relative to the cost per benthic mat, Mr. Lender explained the costs associated with the placement of mats was very site specific in terms of the size and location of the site and the amount of materials needed.

Mr. Loeb asked if there was enough funding to complete the work this year and Mr. Lender replied there was \$60,000 left over from the 2012 fall installation of the mats, as well as an additional \$200,000 that was received from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (NYS EPF), for a total budget of \$260,000 for spring removal and surveying efforts. Mr. Wick pointed out that a funding source for 2013 fall treatments had not yet been identified. He added it cost approximately \$50,000 to \$70,000 to treat one acre and there were currently twenty acres that required treatments. He asserted they would be presenting a management and financial plan to the County, the LGA Board of Directors, the LGPC and the Governor's Office in late June or early July.

Mr. Monroe questioned if there were potential grant programs that could be accessed for this effort and Mr. Wick responded there was approximately \$3 million in EPF grants that were distributed State-wide. Mr. Wick reported the Village of Lake George was recently awarded \$390,000 in grant funds and the LGPC was advocating for either all or a portion of those funds to be put towards invasive species management.

Mr. Wick provided a power point presentation on Eurasian Watermilfoil in Lake George that he reviewed in detail with the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. He highlighted the fact that the efforts in eliminating Eurasian Watermilfoil were a success story. He advised the goal of the LGPC was to eliminate all milfoil areas in Lake George over the next three years. In terms of funding, he continued, they had determined it would cost \$200,000 per year for three years to eradicate the milfoil in the Lake. Mr. Wick informed they currently had \$140,000 secured for 2013 and they were working to generate an additional \$60,000.

A brief discussion ensued relative to other invasive species that had been found in the area and in Lake George.

Mr. Dickinson directed the Committee members to the Pending Items portion of the Agenda and noted Item 1 was for a discussion about the possibility of adding a line item to the County budget for invasive species control.

Mr. Mason recognized that the invasive species issue was an ongoing problem and would require focus and dedication indefinitely. He opined all of the towns, the counties and the State should put a determined amount of funding towards these efforts to protect the waterbodies in the area. Mr. Monroe apprised a line item in the County budget was necessary to deal with the problems of invasive species County-wide; however, he said, he did not feel the effort should be supported solely with County funding, noting the towns should contribute, as well as private property owners, users and not-for-profit organizations. He added the funds should be dedicated for both control and prevention of

invasive species. Mr. Dickinson said a determination must be made for a reliable, dependable, long-term funding source for the County budget line item.

Paul Dusek, County Administrator, expounded that during the month of June the budgeting process would commence and they would again be implementing a multi-year plan, at which time the Supervisors would need to decide where certain funds would be directed. For example, he said, if funds were earmarked for invasive species, it could result in a lower fund balance or a reduction in other services.

Mr. Conover expressed his opinion that a line item needed to be created in the County budget with a specific amount of funding dedicated to it annually.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover and seconded by Mr. Mason to create a line item in the County budget for invasive species.

Mr. Monroe stated he supported the creation of a line item in the County budget for this and he further suggested that the State be requested to establish a matching fund program. Mr. Dickinson added the description and intent of the line item for invasive species should be for the control, prevention and rapid response of such throughout the County.

Mr. Conover amended his motion to include the description and intent of the line item for invasive species to be for the control, prevention and rapid response of such throughout the County and to amend the 2013 County budget to accomplish it this year. Mr. Mason amended his second to the motion.

Mr. Dickinson called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to amend the 2013 County budget to create a line item for invasive species as outlined above, and to refer the same to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Dickinson advised the next Pending Item pertained to mandatory boat inspections that had been tabled pending the outcome of the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) process that was being undertaken by the LGPC. He remarked the results from LGPC had not been received and therefore the item should remain on the Referral list.

As there was no further business to come before the Invasive Species Sub-Committee, on motion made by Mr. Monroe and seconded by Mrs. Frasier, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Second Deputy Clerk