

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: INVASIVE SPECIES SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE: NOVEMBER 22, 2013

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS DICKINSON
CONOVER
MONROE
BENTLEY
FRASIER

OTHERS PRESENT:

KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MARTIN AUFFREDOU, COUNTY ATTORNEY
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS GIRARD

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS MASON
LOEB

MERLINO
MONTESI
SOKOL
STRAINER

MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
JULIE PACYNA, PURCHASING AGENT
DAVE WICK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE GEORGE PARK COMMISSION
WALT LENDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE GEORGE ASSOCIATION
MATTHEW SIMPSON, SUPERVISOR-ELECT, TOWN OF HORICON
JANE SMITH, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION
VINCE BLANDO, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION
RICH NAWROT, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION
BILL MCGHIE, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION
ERIC SIY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE FUND FOR LAKE GEORGE
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Dickinson called the Invasive Species Sub-Committee meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous 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.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Dave Wick, Executive Director of the Lake George Park Commission (LGPC), who provided a Power Point Presentation pertaining to the efforts to eradicate the Asian Clams in Lake George; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.* He displayed a map of the known locations of Asian Clam populations in Lake George. He stated there were 13 known locations, 5 of which were found during the lake-wide survey completed in September of 2013. He informed 49 volunteers had participated in the survey which had included the entire shoreline of Lake George. He listed the 5 new locations as: Million Dollar Beach; Sandy Bay; Cotton Point; Basin Bay; and Glenburnie.

Mr. Wick advised the Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force was experienced in finding and killing the adult Asian Clams but found it challenging to locate and kill the juveniles. He explained they worked with Darrin Freshwater Institute, who developed a methodology through lab and field work to identify the juvenile Asian Clams. He added they had tested this new methodology at Norowal Marina and it seemed fairly effective.

Mr. Wick reported the Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force had treated the Glenburnie location and he displayed photos of matting efforts at Glenburnie. He said 100-200 adult Asian Clams had been found at this site with the assistance of Adirondack Invasive Management (AIM). He displayed a photo of the Glenburnie matted area and commented the treated area was .51 acres. Mr. Monroe asked the name of the township for the Glenburnie location and Mr. Wick replied the Town of Putnum and Glenburnie was a fire access point. A discussion ensued pertaining to the Glenburnie matted area.

Mr. Wick informed there would be a scientific meeting held in early December. He added the Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force along with other groups were attempting to gather noted professionals from around the Country to meet via a conference call. He stated they were looking at transport and reproduction of the Asian Clams and he said there was a \$35,000 proposal which had been submitted to the Lake Champlain Basin Program to complete some work through the Darrin Freshwater Institute. He commented they hoped to continue to improve on the detection of juvenile Asian Clams. He advised they would continue to monitor all of the known sites for density and expansion of the Asian Clam populations. Mr. Dickinson asked if there had been interaction with the Jefferson Project and Mr. Wick replied in the negative but added their data would be helpful.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Wick advised the eradication efforts would continue and they would utilize the resources as best as possible to move forward. He said the funds received from Warren County towards eradication efforts had been very helpful. Mr. Dickinson asked which location was the most densely populated with Asian Clams and Mr. Wick replied it was an area called the South Beach Association which was just south of Basin Bay. He said they had not yet treated the area but it was believed the Asian Clams had migrated out of Boon Bay and had worked their way up the shoreline towards the South Beach Association, although no Clams had been found on that shoreline. He explained there were 300 Asian Clams per square meter in the South Beach Association area. He stated this was why there was a need to understand why some areas were more densely populated than other areas and how the Clams moved from area to area.

Eric Siy, Executive Director of The Fund for Lake George asked if the LGPC was considering alternative treatment strategies, such as selecting one site to be designated as an experimental area to try a range of different treatments in order to determine the most effective. Mr. Wick replied the LGPC did not have a viable alternative plan. In answer to a question pertaining to suction dredging as a possible treatment, Mr. Wick stated the suction dredging which had been attempted on Middleworth Bay had been a mass failure. A discussion ensued pertaining to various eradication methods.

Mr. Conover asked if there had been any additional sites for Hydrilla and Mr. Wick replied a new site had been discovered in Westchester County a few weeks prior. Mr. Monroe said the Environmental Protection Agency had reported finding Quagga Mussels in the tributaries of the Hudson River. Mr. Wick mentioned that the LGPC monthly meeting would be on Tuesday, November 26, 2013 and they planned to approve the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the associated regulatory documents pertaining to mandatory boat inspections and washing on Lake George. He said the final EIS would be made public following the meeting.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Walt Lender, Executive Director of the Lake George Association (LGA), who provided a Power Point Presentation on the Lake Steward Program; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes*. He also distributed a handout containing key information about the Program to the Committee members; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes*.

Mr. Lender said the LGA operated the Lake Steward Program to assist in keeping aquatic invasive species from entering Lake George. He informed the LGA had operated the Lake Steward Program since 2008 and to date had inspected a total of 32,030 boats. He advised the Lake Stewards operated out of the major points of entry to Lake George, such as: Norowal Marina; Mossy Point; Dunham's Bay; Hague Boat Launch; Rogers Rock; and Million Dollar Beach. He noted the Lake Stewards were only on duty for limited time frames.

Mr. Lender informed that since 2008, the Lake Stewards had removed 490 invasive species samples, including: Eurasian Watermilfoil; Curly-Leaf Pondweed; Water Chestnuts; Zebra Mussels; Quagga Mussels; and Spiny Waterfleas. He advised that in 2013 boaters had reported visiting 163 different water bodies within two weeks of arriving at Lake George; however, he added, the most common water bodies reported included: the Hudson River; Lake Champlain; Saratoga Lake; the Atlantic Ocean; Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey; and Schroon Lake. He noted many of those water bodies contained invasive species. Mr. Monroe commented these boaters could potentially carry invasive species from Lake George to other water bodies, if the boats were not properly inspected and washed.

Mr. Lender mentioned the Lake Stewards asked boaters many questions including if they had taken any measures to prevent the spread of invasive species. He said 47% of boaters reported taking at least one spread prevention measure, such as inspecting, washing and drying the boat or draining the bilge. He apprised this was a good sign that invasive species education was reaching the boaters.

Mr. Lender displayed a summary of the Lake Steward Program costs for 2008 through 2013. He noted that some funding assistance had been received and for 2013, the LGPC had offered funding to support the Program which allowed the LGA to start the season earlier and extend it until mid-October. He commented the cost of operating the Lake Steward Program in 2013 had been \$66,117, as there were more Stewards manning 6 launches for 5 to 7 days per week for 8 to 13 hours per day. Mr. Dickinson asked about the usual applicants for the Lake Steward positions and Mr. Lender replied they were mostly college students who were home for the summer. Mr. Lender added Lake Stewards were stationed at a boat launch to greet boaters and ask if they could take a few moments of their time, as the program was currently voluntary. He continued by saying that the Lake Stewards asked the boaters a series of questions, such as where the boat had last been launched and what invasive species spread measures had been taken. The Lake Stewards, he said, also inspected the boats and trailers looking for visible signs of invasive species and removed any invasive species detected.

Referring to the chart entitled "Invasive Species Removed From Boats", Mr. Monroe noted there had been 10 Spiny Waterfleas in 2012 and he asked how this species had been detected by the Lake Stewards. Mr. Lender responded they had been found on fishing equipment as Spiny Waterfleas tended to collect on fishing lines, making them visible.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Monroe stated that in excess of \$7 million had been spent on the eradication of invasive species and he felt the problem would continue for some time. He advised the Committee would need to make decisions pertaining to the allocation of the \$300,000 earmarked for invasive species in the 2014 County Budget. He proposed a resolution to allocate \$150,000 to Lake George with the remaining \$150,000 to be distributed among other Warren County lakes at a future date. He said there was still concern pertaining to managed access and control at the State Boat Launches and

he would suggest the allocation of \$150,000 to Lake George be conditioned upon some resolution of the issue. Mr. Bentley questioned how the remaining \$150,000 would be divided and Mr. Monroe responded that Lake George was at a critical stage but he felt there was time to decide on a fair allocation for the other Warren County lakes.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to allocate \$150,000 of the Invasive Species funding in the 2014 County Budget to Lake George conditioned upon some resolution of the issue pertaining to managed access and control at the State Boat Launches, and the remaining \$150,000 to be divided among other Warren County lakes with the allocation of same to be determined at a later date. *The necessary resolution was authorized for the December 20, 2013 Board Meeting.*

Mr. Dickinson said the last item on the agenda was to review the proposals for consultant services regarding the preparation of SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) documents and an Environmental Impact Statement relating to mandatory boat washing and inspections on all bodies of water in Warren County. Martin Auffredou, County Attorney, distributed copies of the Bid Tabulation Sheet resultant of the Request for Proposal (RFP); *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.* He noted there were four proposals which ranged in cost from \$82,019 to \$298,710. He said the County had modeled their approach to this matter after the process undertaken by the LGPC. He advised the RFP had been entitled "Preparation of a Strategic Action Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention for Navigable Bodies of Water in Warren County". He said he had reviewed the proposals and had copies available for the Committee members. He recommended the Committee arrange interviews with the four firms, as there would be a lot to be learned by meeting with each individual firm.

Mr. Auffredou reviewed the names of the firms and the dollar amounts of their proposals with the Committee members. He explained the RFP had called for an inventory of navigable water bodies in Warren County, the identification of invasive species which could be introduced to the lakes, the gathering of the current research completed by other agencies and communities and the development of the best proposal for addressing the concerns on navigable water bodies in Warren County. He defined a navigable water body as a body of water accessible by vessels as defined in the Navigation Law. He noted this meant the proposals would not extend to bodies of water which were only accessible by canoes and row boats, although he noted the scope could be extended during the process. He reiterated his recommendation for the Committee to interview the four firms and he stated the County could fine tune the work to be completed by the selected firm prior to selection.

Mr. Conover agreed it was a good idea for the Committee to interview the four firms and he suggested the preparation of an outline of questions for the interview process in order to ensure consistency. Mr. Auffredou said the outline of questions was a great idea and noted some of the firms had included more information in their proposals than others. He advised the RFP had requested five informational sessions of public outreach be included in the proposals. He noted the selected firm would need to work very closely with the stakeholders (LGA, LGPC, The Fund for Lake George, etc.). Mr. Monroe asked if the RFP had requested analysis of all of the options including the "do nothing" option and Mr. Auffredou replied affirmatively. Mr. Auffredou commented the proposals would include an Environmental Impact Statement which he felt would make the process more defensible. He noted the Environmental Impact Statement would include all of the alternatives including the "do nothing" approach.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to schedule interviews with the four firms that responded to the RFP, utilizing an outline of questions to be prepared prior to the interviews.

Paul Dusek, County Administrator, pointed out this item had not been included in the 2014 County Budget and he recommended the issue be referred to the Budget Officer and the Finance Committee to determine a source of funding. Mr. Conover noted there would be a considerable amount of work to be completed prior to the SEQRA process. Mr. Auffredou commented that some of the firms had given specific time lines for completion of the process and he noted one of the firms had a completion date by late summer of 2014 and one firm had listed a completion date that was sooner than that. Mr. Bentley questioned the need for a referral to the Finance Committee as the cost of the consultant would be unknown until the Committee selected a firm. Mr. Dusek clarified his recommendation was to refer the issue to the Finance Committee in order to begin having discussions about a possible source of funding. Mr. Conover asked Mr. Dickinson to attend the next Finance Committee meeting in order to assist with the discussion and Mr. Dickinson agreed.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to refer the issue of a source of funding for consultant services for the preparation of a Strategic Action Plan for aquatic invasive species spread prevention for navigable bodies of water in Warren County to the Finance Committee for consideration.

As there was no further business to come before the Invasive Species Sub-Committee, on motion made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mrs. Frasier, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist