

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: INVASIVE SPECIES SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE: APRIL 8, 2015

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: DICKINSON
CONOVER
MONROE
FRASIER
BEATY
SIMPSON
STROUGH

OTHERS PRESENT:

KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BROCK
MERLINO
TAYLOR
BILL MCGHIE, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION/ADIRONDACK LAKES ALLIANCE
JANE SMITH, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION/ADIRONDACK LAKES ALLIANCE
ED GRIESMER, ADIRONDACK LAKES ALLIANCE
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
SARAH MCLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Mr. Dickinson called the meeting of the Invasive Species Sub- Committee to order at 10:41 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, 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.*

Commencing the agenda review, Mr. Dickinson advised it was necessary to discuss the agreement for disbursement of the \$150,000 in funding included in the 2015 County budget for AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) prevention/eradication efforts on Lake George.

Mr. Conover reminded the Committee at the March 2, 2015 Committee meeting they had allocated the funding earmarked for combating invasive species in other Lakes within Warren County in the 2015 County Budget to the Town of Chester in the amount of \$41,666.67, the Town of Lake Luzerne in the amount of \$41,666.67, the Town of Horicon in the amount of \$41,666.67 and the Town of Queensbury in the amount of \$25,000 for Glen Lake. He said the \$150,000 in funding that remained was set aside for AIS prevention/eradication efforts on Lake George.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, questioned how the funding would be disbursed. She stated the previous year's funding was disbursed to the Village of Lake George. Mr. Conover mentioned he felt the funding should be disbursed directly to the Lake George Park Commission. Mr. Dickinson questioned whether they could accept the funding directly from the County and Mr. Conover replied affirmatively, commenting that the Town of Bolton disbursed funding directly to the Lake George Park Commission.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to authorize payment of the \$150,000 to the Lake George Park Commission for AIS prevention and eradication efforts for Lake George, more specifically the Commission's 2015 boat inspection and boat washing

program, as well as to authorize an agreement between the County and the Commission, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17, 2015 Board meeting.

Mr. Conover apprised the first year of the mandatory boat inspection and boat washing had been a success. He said he was hopeful that this year would be as effective as last year.

Mr. Simpson reminded the Committee last year when they disbursed the funding to the other lakes in Warren County they had requested that the organizations such as the Glen Lake Association provide the Committee with an update as to what the funding was used for. He pointed out even though they had provided no updates to the Committee on their programs, funding for this year was allocated to them anyway. He commented with the implementation of the regional AIS program for the Adirondacks he felt it was imperative that these organizations provide an update to the Committee on their programs and how they utilized the funding from the County. Mr. Strough mentioned he would follow up with the Glen Lake Association to ensure they provided the Committee with the necessary information.

Mr. Dickinson stated he felt it was essential for the lake associations to provide the Committee with updates on their programs since it would be an oversight on the County's part to provide funding to organizations that did not have a proper strategy in place for the prevention, eradication and/or control of AIS in their water bodies. He said he would notify the Towns of Chester, Lake Luzerne, Horicon and Queensbury that an update was required on the AIS prevention, eradication and/or control efforts on the water bodies located in their municipality.

Mr. Conover requested that Mr. Monroe provide the Committee with an update regarding the regional AIS Program for the Adirondacks. Mr. Monroe stated he did not have the exact figures in front of him but he felt everyone was aware that the Governor proposed \$1 million for an Adirondack-wide AIS Prevention Program in the New York State Budget, which was approved by the Legislature. He said the NYS DEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation) was negotiating with Paul Smith's College to be the sole source contractor to manage the program this year. He mentioned that Paul Smith's College had been involved with the Adirondack Watershed Institute for a number of years, as well as managing steward programs throughout the Adirondacks. He apprised Paul Smith's College had commenced work on the program even though the contract had not been approved because they want to have a plan underway for this year. He continued, they were working with APIPP (Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program) along with some guidance from some local government groups as to where they should locate the boat wash stations. He stated a large amount of the funding would be allocated towards stewards at more boat launching locations. He advised there would be 14 additional boat launch steward locations this year along with 9 boat wash stations.

In regards to the boat wash stations, Mr. Monroe apprised that the 9 units being purchased for the program for the Adirondacks cost much less than the units utilized on Lake George. He explained the units on Lake George were full units that had the capability to recycle the water and cost about \$23,000 each. He stated the 9 units that were purchased for the program in the Adirondacks cost slightly more than \$5,000 and contained the same high pressure washer and high temperature as the more expensive units but did not have on board water with the recycling capability; therefore, he said, they required a water tank and some means of getting water and disposing of it.

Mr. Monroe mentioned as a result of a meeting that took place a few weeks ago in Ray Brook, New York, Paul Smith's College was working with local government and lake associations to assist with the 9 sites for the boat wash stations. He commented he was volunteered to assist with the Tupper Lake

location, as well as the one located in Colton. He said they were making progress on these locations; however, he stated, there were back-up locations in place in case you were unable to locate the correct site. He added the APA (Adirondack Park Agency) was involved with the process because they had rules in regards to disposing of the water.

With respect to how the \$1 million in funding was being disbursed, Mr. Monroe advised a large portion of the funding was being allocated towards the contract with Paul Smith's College for administering the program. He continued, the bulk of the funding was being disbursed for the 14 additional boat launch stewards. He added \$50,000 in funding was being allocated to the 9 boat wash stations and the remainder of the funding would be allocated to the operation.

Mr. Conover stated he believed it was necessary to request that representatives from APIPP provide an update to the Committee on the program at some point in the near future. He said he was pleased that they were moving forward with the program rather quickly. Mr. Monroe mentioned there would be a panel at Local Government Day on April 16, 2015 with Kathy Moser, Assistant NYS DEC Commissioner for Natural Resources, who was in charge of overseeing the program for the NYS DEC. He added Brendan Quirion, Program Coordinator for APIPP, and Eric Holmlund, Ph.D., Paul Smith's College, would also be participating in the panel.

Mr. Conover advised the meeting that took place in the Town of Chester regarding the program was well attended, as there were representatives from the State, several municipalities and organizations. He added representatives from other Counties who were unable to attend were able to participate via phone conference. Mr. Monroe apprised the President of the New York State Conservation Council, who had expressed concerns with the Lake George Program appeared to be supportive of the program for the Adirondacks, provided it was not mandatory. He said the New York State Fish and Wildlife Board were also supportive of the program as long as it was not mandatory. Mr. Conover commented that putting an Adirondack-wide program into place was a daunting challenge due to the involvement with a number of different water bodies, municipalities and organizations.

Mr. Monroe mentioned one of the tasks they struggled with was whether to focus on ensuring they kept out AIS that were currently not located anywhere in the Adirondacks or to focus more on preventing the internal spread of them from one water body to another. He said what they did to address this concern was develop a hybrid program with some of the boat wash stations located at the perimeter of the Adirondacks and others located within the interior. Mr. Conover commended the efforts put forth by Messrs. Monroe, Dickinson, Merlino, Simpson, Strough and Lake George Village Mayor Robert Blais in their municipalities towards the AIS effort. He said he was pleased with the progress that had been made in developing an AIS Program for the Adirondack region and welcomed the support from the Governor with the allocation of the \$1 million in funding.

Mr. Monroe apprised the Town of Chester applied for grant funding for the Schroon Lake Watershed, which encompassed the Towns of Chester, Horicon and Schroon Lake. He said last summer they requested that the grant be repurposed to pay for half of the cost of a boat wash station for Schroon Lake. He reported that the request was approved and they were awarded grant funding to pay for the total cost of the boat wash station rather than just a portion of it. He surmised that the Towns of Chester and Horicon would be willing to contribute towards the operation of this wash station because it was not one of the sites selected as a priority site for the \$1 million in funding from the State. He mentioned he had met with the Town of Schroon Lake last week to inquire whether they would be willing to contribute toward the operation of the boat wash station, as well. He commented they were

hoping to install the boat wash station at the State boat launch site on Schroon Lake since about 3,000 boats launched there last year.

Mr. Dickinson stated he was encouraged that AIS efforts were on-going throughout the Adirondacks. He said the ultimate goal was to have a State-wide program in place. He advised he was pleased that there was a mandatory program in place on Lake George. He commented the implementation of a regional program was a step in the right direction. He apprised the program had identified key access points in the Adirondacks, which he believed was essential. He added it was critical that some of the boat wash stations were located internally since there were several water bodies in the Adirondacks with AIS present in them.

Mr. Monroe questioned whether Mr. Dickinson was aware of whether there was a frozen boat/tag program in place for Lake George for this year and Mr. Dickinson replied in the negative. Mr. Conover stated he felt this was due to the Lake George Park Commissions success in tagging an abundant amount of boats that were disembarking off of the lake, which was an improvement from the previous year of the program. He said the tagging program made it easier for boaters to launch their boats into the lake the following year because the tags notified the boat inspectors that the boat had already been inspected. Mr. Monroe advised the representatives from Paul Smith's College and APIPP were not receptive to including a frozen boat/tagging program within the regional AIS plan for the Adirondacks. He stated The Fund for Lake George committed \$50,000 in addition to the \$1 million in State funding to the program. He continued, one of the thoughts was that the \$50,000 could be utilized to institute a tag system because although you should have the approval from the NYS DEC for the tag system it was not required. He commented the lake associations had volunteered to tag the frozen boats before they thawed.

Mr. Dickinson advised an advantage of the frozen boat program was the information that was gathered for it. He said not only was the boat tagged but also the boat number, the location of the boat, as well as the name and address of the boat owner was recorded so that it was available for the following year. He stated if the program was continued the individuals charged with recording the information would attempt to capture any boats they may have missed the previous year.

Mr. Brock queried whether anyone had reviewed how many boats were noncompliant. Mr. Dickinson apprised generally speaking most individuals were cooperating with the program. He pointed out even when the program was voluntary they only had three incidents, of which one was rather serious. He explained a boat owner launched his boat before it was washed and inspected and it did have invasive species on it; however, he said, they were fortunate to not have any significant consequences from this instance. He commented he was pleased that of the 20,000 boats they inspected there were only 3 incidents.

Mr. Brock asked whether the 1 boat that bypassed the inspection could potentially have infected Lake George with a new form of AIS. Mr. Dickinson stated that they missed invasive species on 1 out of every 1,000 boats that were washed. He said it was inevitable that some would be missed; however, he advised, the program ensured individuals were aware of the AIS issue.

Mr. Brock questioned what the most effective method was for preventing the spread of AIS into Lake George was and Mr. Dickinson replied regardless of whether it was an invasive plant or species the frozen boat program/tag system was the most effective method for prevention. He explained the AIS could not survive the cold winters present in Upstate New York. He stated theoretically the boats could

be brought into a deep freeze by flash freezing them instead of washing them, as he believed this was the most effective method for prevention.

Mr. Simpson stated that he felt the information they gathered from the program would assist them with improving the process to make it more effective. He pointed out AIS infestations took a number of years to manifest themselves before anyone became aware of them. Mr. Brock said instead of only concentrating on enforcement they should also gather all the information necessary to ensure the safety of the lake.

Mr. Dickinson mentioned the information gathered played a significant part in the program. He pointed out a portion of the funding was utilized for educational purposes. He noted all of the information collected was recorded to provide informational statistics. He said the information that was assembled assisted with making improvements to the program each year. He stated the Lake George Park Commission was able to utilize the information gathered from the first year of the program to reorganize and make it more effective the following year while saving about \$50,000, as well.

Mr. Conover apprised the boat wash station located at the transfer station on Lake George was one of the busiest sites on the lake this year even though it was not a launch site. He said this proved that individuals had a keen awareness of the program and where the sites were. Mr. Dickinson stated he felt this was due to the change from a volunteer program to the mandatory program. He explained when the volunteer program was in place they had to chase boaters down to participate; however, he noted, boaters were now tracking the locations of the wash stations. He commented boaters readily admitted the process was not as onerous as they had assumed it would be.

Mr. Monroe advised one of the positive outcomes from the meeting that took place in the Town of Chester last week was the emphasis on the education program. He stated the following three entities volunteered to work on education: New York State Conservation Council; The Adirondack Lake Alliance; and Tom Williams, President, Adirondack Landowners Association. He said Mr. Williams was instrumental in having the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles include information regarding AIS on all boat and trailer license renewals. He commented a possible use for the \$50,000 in funding received from the Fund for Lake George could be for more education. He mentioned Mr. Williams pointed out the boater was the one who determined whether or not to launch on waterbodies without stewards present.

Mr. Brock suggested contacting the New York State Department of Education to inquire whether this could be included as part of the science curriculum taught in schools, as he felt children would ensure their parents were aware of the matter. Ed Griesmer, Adirondack Lakes Alliance, pointed out the New York State Boaters Safety Course included information on AIS as part of the course.

As there was no further business to come before the Invasive Species Sub- Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strough and seconded by Mrs. Frasier, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board