

# Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association

## Board of Directors Minutes – November 19, 2020

Date: 11/19/2020 Time: 5:30 pm Location: Via Zoom

### Attendance:

**Rich Adams\***  
Frank Case  
Frank DiOrio  
Larry Martin  
Maura Toole

**Bob Barton\***  
John Cooley  
**Kaitlin Fello\***  
**William McAdoo\***  
Jake Welch

**Tom Burrall\***  
Dan Corbett  
Peggy Focarino  
Jim McGinnis

Catharine McCracken  
**Kelly Coughlin\***  
**Sayre Fulkerson\***  
Bill Roege

Recorder: Jake Welch

**\*Absent**

**October board minutes** unanimously approved. Motion: Dan Corbett, Frank DiOrio second

**Treasurers report.** Frank Case advised we have some \$136,000 in our account and that we are doing well financially.

**Seneca Meadows contribution.** Seneca Meadows has advised us that they will be increasing the previous \$10,000 contribution to an amount of \$15,000. Jake has provided a thank you email confirming this nice additional help.

**Financial Report.** Bill Roege let us know that due to the successful ADAPT program and as our expenses are running fairly close to our streamlined pandemic budget that we are running about \$25,000 in the black which is sure good news.

**Annual appeal.** Peg Focarino is close to finishing up the annual appeal letter. The membership and fundraising committee met recently and revamped its approach to fit with our recent member survey results. Per the survey, people want to see us more active in stopping pollution sources and nutrient loading on the lake. We will dovetail that information into the annual appeal letter which Jake is working on and which should be ready over the next week. The annual appeal letter will go out on Giving Tuesday which follows this Thanksgiving. Like last year, there will be three attempts to obtain money from our contacts during the course of the annual appeal. After the initial letter goes out we will try to have our own newsletter focus on how we are in fact working to stop pollution sources around the lake and not just doing testing and talking about it.

**Bonus for administrative coordinator.** Frank Diorio went over his assessment review of Kaitlin's work for us over this past year. She, bottom line, achieved the highest rating of four. Based on her obvious hard work and dedication, and because we have a good financial situation at present, the board unanimously approved a \$1500 bonus which will go to Kaitlin before Christmas of this year.

**Membership survey results.** Frank D went over the highlights of the survey that was sent out to all our contacts. This initial report only addressed our members and another discussion will come up next month as far as responses from both members and nonmembers. Frank indicated that the survey may have an age bias as it was primarily filled out by members over 60 years of age. Jake, nonetheless, pointed out that these are

some of our largest financial supporters and should be closely listened to as far as commentary. Overall the survey indicated that we were doing a very good job overall. It does appear, however, that we have to continue and/or step up our efforts to curb nutrient loading in our lake by really addressing point and nonpoint sources of pollution. In contrast, there appeared to be less interest in us being involved in the education of children. Again, this could be because of age bias. We will be using the final survey results that Frank will fill us in more on next month. This is highly important feedback as we go forward with programs over the next year or two. Frank was commended on coming up with the survey idea which he and Kaitlin pulled off admirably. Jake indicated how helpful it is to not work in the dark on behalf of those members who generously support our organization. The entire survey should be reviewed by board members —there not being sufficient space here to address all items.

**Executive committee discussions.** Jake reviewed the results of the first of two executive committee meetings designed to give direction on where we will be going with our programs over the next one or two years. The full minutes are available on the board website. In short form, the committee recommends to the full board that we strengthen the nominating committee which now also includes Peg, Frank, Dan and Kaitlin. The committee will now meet on a more routine basis to get people properly assigned to committees as well as adding additional board members. The committee is also recommending that each officer and committee chair have a successor named within the next two months. Under fundraising, Jake mentioned the concern that we may or may not be able to host an annual dinner in 2021 due to the pandemic. He also mentioned that his letters, that brought in \$15,000, mentioned that it would be a one-time request for money to bridge us over during the pandemic. That 15k deficit, however, could be softened by the additional \$5,000 recently pledged by Seneca Meadows and the \$25,000 in black as mentioned by Bill above. We will try to diversify our fundraising efforts and are discussing how we might approach wineries and/or have a pilot program targeted toward large donors. Under increased awareness of what we do, we will be having the communications committee work on a marketing program. We will continue our webinars and start increasing social media connections through Instagram. Jake and Dan will also continue with a political education committee of the Finger Lakes regional watershed alliance informing governmental representatives as to the economic importance of our lake for tourism as well as it, and other lakes, being a drinking source for countless upstate New Yorkers. The idea of a K – 12 education program was put on hold due to it coming with a high price tag and with financial resources being limited due to the pandemic situation. Under partnerships, Jake explained that this will be the year of helping SWIO achieve funding under its fair share program. This could be a tough haul as presently only seven of the 40 townships have said yes. Rich Adams will be working on approaches to additional townships on an ad hoc basis and will be contacting our board members and others who may help us get fair share on town board agendas with us backing up this plan. We recently did this with Starkey and had success with our folks being in attendance and lots of emails we requested being sent in support.

**Greenidge update.** Jake reported that since the last board meeting the Town of Torrey declined to either reject or accept our proposal; to wit, advising the planning board to take another close look at their approval of Greenidge expansion. In addition, the Torrey Town board also failed to either accept or deny the application of the Committee to preserve the Finger Lakes to have a three-month moratorium to allow additional investigation into the site plan application. The site plan expansion was also brought back before the Torrey planning board for additional review after the 30-day public comment period. There was no change whatsoever in the past approval position even though some 400 emails were sent to the town asking that it slow down and take a closer look and first study excessive thermal discharge as well as lack of screens that protect fish at the water intake area. Larry Martin, who is on our board and the town of Torrey town board,

noted that because the letters were similar to one another that there was not much in the way of impact. Nonetheless, some 400 people cared deeply enough to respond and indicate their dissatisfaction with the lack of environmental study. That is not a small number. Greenidge should be presumed as harming the lake and fish as their actions in both areas are in clear violation of DEC standards. Only a study can refute that and it is being delayed some five years by Greenidge. Jake will send out an email to the 180 Pure Waters contacts that kindly responded to our own request to object. A lawsuit is being seriously considered by the Sierra Club and others who have raised opposition. Jake noted that if we become involved in litigation that he will make sure there are protections in place so that our limited assets are not drained. We will also continue to work with The DEC concerning the Greenidge permit renewal which comes up in 2022. Jake has advised the Committee for the Preservation of the Finger Lakes that we will take on that portion of the strategies now being employed by concerned environmental groups. No objection was stated by anyone on the board as far as steps we are taking or not taking following Jakes report on Greenidge.

**Lake Friendly Living.** Maura advised that she plans to do additional work this Spring with both our lake and other lakes in reaching out to the public and getting more members involved in this program. Jake advised that the Finger Lakes regional watershed alliance voted to place the lake friendly living program on their website as a central way of coordinating this program. Nice to see it slowly but surely growing not just here but elsewhere as well.