



**HALFMOON LAKE ASSOCIATION
SECRETARY'S REPORT
Minutes August 25, 2018 Meeting**

On August 25, 2018 the second annual meeting for the 52nd year of the Halfmoon Lake Association was called to order at 11:10 am by President Bill Mannion with approximately 45 members present. The meeting was held in the dining room of the YMCA Camp Mi-Te-Na and followed by a BBQ, generously provided by the camp staff and supplemented with pot-luck sides and desserts from members. As part of a fund-raiser for the Association, a supply of HMLA T-shirts and hats were on sale during and after the meeting.

Bill started by introducing the Board and asking if any new residents were present. The Association welcomed Robyn Varghesy and Brian & Jen Pittenger, both from South Shore Drive, and Joanne & Bill Hauser who are building a new home on the lake-front lot at the end of Tamworth Trail.

Bill then introduced Matt Hanson, Director of Camp Mi-Te-Na, and his staff, and sincerely thanked them for allowing us to use their facilities as well as providing a BBQ and activities for our picnic.

After all the introductions Bill welcomed the guest speaker—Marine Patrol Officer Hugh 'Chip' Dougherty—who opened his presentation with an explanation of the organization and responsibilities of the New Hampshire Marine Patrol and then followed it with a Q&A session that included a broad number of topics related to boat safety and operation. Please see addendum with a summary of Officer Dougherty's talk.

Following the presentation, President Bill Mannion reminded members that they had already received copies of the July 2018 minutes (which can be found on file on the website: <http://www.halfmoonlakenh.com>). He asked for comments or objections. None were raised, so on a motion made by Ethel McConaghy, seconded by Cliff Brown; members voted unanimously to accept the minutes as presented.

Treasurer, Linda Bramante, presented the most current HMLA Income Statement. Linda reported that to-date, the Association has collected \$1,005.00 in membership dues. However, dues payments are still pending from some members and a few local neighborhood associations. Other income was generated from t-shirt and hat sales which totaled \$220.00, but did not include sales at the meeting. It also did not include funds collected from sales at the Fernhill Colony Ice Cream Store and the YMCA camp store, both of which did a great job selling HMLA apparel items. We are very grateful to both organizations for helping to boost our income from this endeavor. The Association will continue to place apparel items in both locations early in the season next year. The Association is also expecting an annual donation of \$250 from the Town of Alton in support of our Milfoil eradication program. Linda then reported on expenses to-date which totaled \$1,355.15 and included \$100.00 for membership fee to the NH Lakes Association, \$6.75 in printing, \$155.22 for website registration and website hosting, \$460.00 for water testing, and \$633.18 in supplies and apparel items. Expenses in 2018 were below that of 2017, however one more water bill is expected to come in. Linda also noted that in the future costs for water testing and website registration are expected to increase. The final ending balance for FY 2018 at the time of this report was \$12,532.60, however it is expected to increase over the next few months as additional dues and donations are collected. Linda noted that the ending cash balance includes \$2,000 which are held in a reserve Milfoil fund which use is restricted to any future costs that may be incurred for the removal of invasive weeds. Linda also noted that the weir/dam in the cove was funded and built by the Association. As such, it represents an asset of the Association, the value of which should be included in the records. The Board agreed to investigate the original cost of the weir and determine its current value. Debbie Fedorchak made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented; seconded by Claire Bolster, and voted by members to accept unanimously.

During the Treasurer's discussion, Ethel thanked the YMCA camp for providing scholarships to Barnstead youth enabling them to attend a summer session. She encouraged members to help step up the program for both Alton and Barnstead communities by donating to the scholarship fund. For more information, please contact Matt Hanson at mhanson@graniteymca.org

OLD BUSINESS

DUES REMINDER

If you have not yet paid your 2018 dues either directly to the Association or to your Neighborhood Association, please do so as soon as possible. Your contributions go a long way to offset the costs of water testing, invasive species removal, and other important initiatives. Dues are only \$15 per year. If you are a 'non-neighborhood association' member, please mail your dues to Linda Bramante, 118 North Barnstead Road, Center Barnstead, 03225. Otherwise, contact your neighborhood representative.

LAKE REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Kate Brown reported on a few changes in Lake representatives: new reps include Rebecca Olive for South Shore Drive, Bill O'Neil for O'Neil Drive and Varney Lane; Ethel McConaghy for New Castle, Kent Lane, and Tamworth Trail. A complete list of representatives may be found on the HMLA website www.halfmoonlakenh.org.

LOON PROJECT UPDATE

For the third year in a row, a pair of loons built a nest on our man-made island, located in the rocky cove by Rustic Shores, and successfully mated; two eggs were laid a day apart. The first chick hatched on July 12 followed a day later by a second chick. The first born joined its parents for a swim on July 13th and the second was in the water by the 15th. It took two weeks, but the family finally made it down the lake and into the cove. Both chicks seemed to be thriving well until around August 15th. Unfortunately, a report came in that there was a struggling chick out of the water at the Rt. 28 boat ramp. John Wheeler and his grandson Joey searched for the missing chick but were unable to find it. In the future if you see problems with the loons, please report it immediately to Bill Mannion at wpmatlake@aim.com. The remaining chick is growing well, growing new feathers, learning to dive and becoming more independent. The parent loons will migrate for the winter to the ocean in the fall with the chick following later, sometimes just before ice-in. It is expected that the parents will return next year to nest once again. A tremendous thanks to our Loon Team: John Wheeler and his grandson Joey who put in and take out the nest every year; Pat and Bill Mannion who keeps a special watch over the nest; and everyone else who has taken pictures and reported on the family's whereabouts.

NORTH BARNSTEAD RAMP COMMITTEE UPDATE

A committee was formed at the 2018 June meeting to explore various issues related to the boat ramp on North Barnstead Road, most importantly its present deteriorating condition. Members of the committee include Frank Bramante, Cliff Brown, Paul Hersom, Jean Le Blanc, and Cliff Mages. The Board tasked the committee with convening a meeting to discuss the matter and report back to the membership in August with any updates. At the meeting on August 25th, Frank Bramante reported that the committee had not yet fully met, but that he and Paul Hersom had met a few weeks prior to exchange ideas. Frank came to the meeting prepared to give a PowerPoint presentation with his own thoughts and opinions on how to proceed. Kate Brown, HMLA Secretary, requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation for the records. Treasurer, Linda Bramante rejected the request and requested that the presentation and any discussion that followed not be recorded or shared publicly due to the sensitivity of the matter. She requested that the secretary and anyone else in the room refrain from taking notes for the record or sharing information with anyone outside the meeting. There was a great deal of discussion over the proper protocol for sharing information given at a public meeting. Peter Bolster made a motion that the meeting move into a 'non-public' session and that anyone present would not discuss the findings outside the

meeting. Paul Hersom seconded the motion. A vote was taken to go into private session with 17 voting members in favor and 10 against. At approximately 11:45 am, the meeting went into private session.

The private session ended at approximately 1:00 pm with a motion made by Nina Kelley to defer any more discussion until the committee had a chance to meet and report back to the HMLA membership with their recommendations in a special session. Frank Bramante then made a motion in which he stated that the committee needed to respond to Mr. Norris, so they will meet and formulate a letter to him with a response to his questions and concerns, and that the committee will present such letter to the Board for review. Jay Macklin seconded the motion. The membership voted unanimously to end the private session and reconvene a special HMLA meeting at a later date with an update on findings and proposals.

Due to the time, Bill Manion made a motion that the members break for lunch and reassemble in an hour later. The motion was seconded by Jay Macken and voted on unanimously by the membership.

VISITING BOAT TRAFFIC UPDATE

At 2:01 pm the Halfmoon Lake Association was called back to order by President Bill Mannion. John Wheeler reported that he had observed 53 boats and 26 kayaks launching into the lake this summer. Many of the power boats were fishing craft.

BOATING CONDITIONS & GOOD BOATING PRACTICES

Please refer to attached summary of Marine Patrol Officer Hugh 'Chip' Dougherty talk. One of the topics discussed was the increasing practice of Wake Surfing on lakes in NH and its detrimental effect on the shoreline. John Wheeler reported that, although there are no state regulations regarding the practice of Wake Surfing, it has created several problems for Halfmoon Lake such as shore erosion and displacement of docks due to the strong wakes produced by this activity. Recently a small boat was nearly swamped when a large craft towing a wake surfer came within close distance. John made a motion that the Association create a by-law that any craft with a full ballast towing a wake surfer must remain in the center of the main lake, not operate in the cove, or go past Proctor's Point. Motion was seconded by Kate Brown and voted unanimously by membership. Bill Mannion will post advisory on website.

All members were encouraged to use safe boating practices. For many years, Halfmoon Lake has instituted a counter-clockwise direction for all boating traffic to avoid accidents. Please make sure your guests or renters are aware of this. All water Skiers, tubers, and wake surfers should abide by this practice and try to keep activities in the middle of the lake. It also goes without saying that alcohol and boating do not mix well. In fact, if a boat driver is stopped by Marine Patrol and deemed to be operating while impaired, he/she could risk losing their driver's license. So, let's keep Halfmoon Lake safe and accident free!

REMINDER MARKERS FOR DIVERS DOWN & MILFOIL

Although there has not been any evidence of Milfoil fragments on the shoreline in the cove this year, Debbie and Mike Fedorchak have both kayaked the lake and scanned the bottom of the cove with their fish finder. There were several areas that appeared as dark shadows on the fish finder, and five markers were placed so divers could investigate. On August 24th, Kate and Cliff Brown, both certified Weed Control Divers, spent three hours diving in the location of each marker. For the most part, what they found were large growths of Bladderwort which is a native plant to lakes in New England. However, near and around the third and fourth marker they both found an outgrowth of a few Milfoil plants. These were pulled by the roots and bagged for disposal. The GPS coordinates were notated so the areas can be surveyed in the spring. This is actually good news for Halfmoon Lake. Last year, the State divers, followed by the Brown's, pulled a great deal of Milfoil from the cover. Although we don't think that Milfoil is completely eradicated,

we believe that it is under control and Halfmoon Lake is fairly clear of it as compared to other water bodies in the state.

There will not be any more divers on the lake this fall, but in the spring, we hope to get out early to survey all suspicious areas. Please be on the look-out for any boats displaying a dive flag, seen below. This indicates that there are divers in the water pulling Milfoil. Please do not approach the boat; the divers may be anywhere in the vicinity and are at risk of injury from any boat that comes too close. We appreciate your cooperation.



NEW BUSINESS

CYANOBACTERIA UPDATE

On August 17, evidence of Cyanobacteria blooms were seen in the lake. Water samples were taken immediately to the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and the analysis showed the presence of Cyanobacteria. A warning was posted for Halfmoon lake advising humans and their pets from recreating in the lake until an all-clear notification. Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) are microscopic bacteria found in freshwater lakes. When algae grow too much it can form "blooms" that appear as bluish-green flecks and often clearly visible. Mike Fedorchak reported that samples were being taken on a regular basis and continued to show that Cyanobacteria was still active and that the advisory was still in effect. He advised members to check the HMLA website for updates. He also stated that even if blooms are not seen in the water, toxins can still remain, so the warning will not be lifted until water samples are clear.

UPDATE: We are happy to report that on August 31, NHDES lifted the warning, but still advise people to be on the lookout for any recurrence. Hopefully the cooler weather will help. Please note that one of the most common causes of a Cyanobacteria outbreak are the use of lawn fertilizers that contain phosphate and failing septic systems. We encourage you all to not use phosphate fertilizers within 25 feet of the lake and to have your septic systems checked regularly.

Peter Bolster reported that there was a great deal of black algae along the Fernhill Beach shoreline. This was subsequently identified by NHDES as normal decaying vegetation that was dying off early due to the unusually warm weather and washing up on Fernhill Beach due to the prevailing winds.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: For the past three years, NHDES and EPA have taken part in a pilot program aimed at creating a data base to identify the triggers that cause Cyanobacteria to bloom. A recent memo was released announcing the suspension of this program. Initially there was some confusion that the state would no longer continue to monitor and test for Cyanobacteria. Bill Mannion clarified that this is not the case. NHDES will continue with its Clean Lakes Program that will test water samples and diagnose any problems.

WATER QUALITY/TESTING RESULTS UPDATE

Guy Leone reported that the June and July test results were 'Okay' but showed some trends that could be of concern. The team on the water committee takes samples three times a year. They basically monitor the individual numbers, but more importantly look for trends such as changes in pH, Chlorophyll, Chlorine, E.coli, etc.

Guy noted that although our lake is good, it's not great. Levels of E.coli and Chlorophyll were pretty good this year. However, there is a concern that trends are going up in areas near Fernhill and the horse farm. He encouraged owners to take precautions such as maintaining vegetation growth along the shoreline, refraining from using any phosphates, but using limestone instead for fertilizing. We are still awaiting the results of August testing. Results may be found on our website www.halfmoonlakenh.com/documents.

There have been several reports regarding white foam on the lake. The NHDES released a Fact Sheet that addresses this matter. Most foams observed in lakes and streams is a product of nature and is not an indicator of pollution. Please see attached copy of Fact Sheet for more information. This will also be posted on the HMLA website www.halfmoonlakenh.org/documents

Mike Fedorchak reported that NHDES/VLAP conducts a workshop on a Saturday in May which they will send out notices and registration information in April. Guy and Mike will make sure the lake officers get plenty of time to post.

NEW WATER QUALITY TEAM

As of August, Mike Fedorchak is stepping down from his role as head of the Water Quality Team. He has served in this position for many years and worked hard to assure that Halfmoon Lake waters are clean and safe. During the most recent Cyanobacteria outbreak, Mike took it upon himself to deliver water samples to NHDES in Concord on a weekly basis. In recognition of his dedication and hard work, John Wheeler gave a tribute to Mike and presented him with an HMLA Logo jacket.

The new team of volunteers now includes Guy Leone, Frank Bramante, Jim Rye, Paul Hersom, John Wheeler, Rich Perkins and Jay Macken. On behalf of all our members, the Board would like to sincerely thank this team for their willingness to watch over the water quality of the lake.

CULVERT UPDATE

Bill Manion and Linda Bramante recently met and communicated with Charlie Krautmann, the State of NH engineer who inspected our weir/dam and culverts in June. He reported that the areas surrounding the culverts are in need of repair and will eventually need attention. Based on the conversation with Charlie Krautmann, water that is flowing from Halfmoon Lake to Locke Lake is also flowing through the adjacent rock structure of the culvert. It is the Association's desire to maintain the current structure of the culverts and screening. It was anticipated that when the Town of Barnstead paved North Barnstead Road, they would replace the culverts. The Town had all culverts inspected on North Barnstead Road prior to the road being paved in July. The culvert between Halfmoon Lake and Locke Lake was deemed by the engineers to not need any repairs at this time. When the time comes to repair or replace the culvert, the Association will work with the Town. In addition, there are a few trees on the left side of the weir that may need to be removed as they are a potential threat to the weir if these were to come down. These trees will need eventually need attention.

ELECTIONS

Board members are elected for a two-year term making 2018 the end of the current Boards term. Bill Mannion asked for any nominations from the membership. None were given, so he asked each Board member if they were willing to serve for another two years and all agreed. Nina Kelly made a motion that the current officers be nominated, Cliff Brown seconded the motion, and the membership voted unanimously to reinstate the current Board.

BOAT PARADE

It was decided that the traditional annual boat parade would be held on Saturday, September 1st, beginning at 8:00 pm. All boats should line up at the YMCA camp.

FOLLOW-UP: The Boat Parade was a huge success with 15 boats participating in a dazzling display of decorations with lights, colors, and lots of noise. A big thanks to Jean LeBlanc and family for leading the parade. They did a great job decorating their boat with hundreds of lights. It looked like a Tiki Bar. Thanks to all participants, boaters and shore spectators, for this traditional Labor Day weekend parade marking the unofficial end to the summer season on our lake.

JULY 2019 MEETING

Bill Mannion suggested two dates for the first meeting of the 2019 season: June 29th or July 6th. In a show of hands, the preference was overwhelmingly for June 29th. Claire Bolster offered the facilities at Fernhill for the meeting. More news to be sent. We hope to see you all there.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Brown

HMLA OFFICERS / CONTACT INFORMATION:

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