

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: INVASIVE SPECIES SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE: MARCH 2, 2015

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS DICKINSON
 CONOVER
 MONROE
 FRASIER
 SIMPSON
 STROUGH

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR BEATY

OTHERS PRESENT:

KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BROCK
 MERLINO
 SEEBER
 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
JOHN SALVADOR, RESIDENT OF THE TOWN OF QUEENSBURY
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
SARAH MCLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Mr. Dickinson called the Invasive Species Sub-Committee meeting to order at 10:55 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.*

Mr. Dickinson advised that prior to discussing the allocation of the \$150,000 budgeted in 2015 for other Lakes within Warren County, a discussion was necessary regarding the boat washing program as it related to the Adirondack Park. Mr. Monroe stated the mandatory boat washing program on Lake George last year had worked well; however, he reminded the Committee that their discussions regarding implementing a County-wide plan for prevention/eradication had stalled last year due to the lack of funding available.

Mr. Monroe advised the ALA (Adirondack Lakes Alliance) was an Adirondack-wide lake association formed in 2008 which was comprised of five regions within the Adirondack Park with two Regional Directors from each region, as well as an Executive Committee. He continued by saying the Executive Committee of the ALA met and partnered with other groups dealing with the same invasive species issue in the Adirondacks. He stated the ALA hoped to lend a voice in terms of explaining the needs of the lakes and what the lake associations were dealing with and to be an active partner to other groups in the Adirondacks dealing with the issue. He mentioned the ALA was a collective group that shared information and best practices, as well as advocated the needs of lakes in the Adirondacks.

Mr. Monroe apprised last fall he had invited the President of the New York State Conservation Council to attend a meeting with the SAVE (Stop Aquatic Invasive from Entering) Lake George group to alleviate concerns and misconceptions regarding the Boat Inspection/Washing Program. He added

once the misconceptions were eliminated the New York State Conservation Council had revoked their opposition to the Program. He stated that he and Eric Siy, Executive Director of the Fund for Lake George (FLG), had attended the New York State Conservation Council's Annual Convention in Utica, New York to give a presentation on the Program which was well received. He said the Council members were supportive of the efforts being undertaken on Lake George. He advised he had invited some of the representatives from the New York State Conservation Council to a meeting to discuss a broader Adirondack strategy and he noted the meeting had also been attended by sportsmen and representatives from the Conservation Fund Advisory Board; the Adirondack Land Owners Association; the ALA; the ESSLA; and the FLG, as well as some Warren County Supervisors; and the Chairman of the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors. Mr. Monroe opined that while significant efforts were being made to protect Lake George, more needed to be completed to protect the other waterbodies in the Adirondack Region. Other than the Lake George environmental groups, he continued, most of the burden was being carried by the individual Towns and lake associations. He commented the action taken now would determine the condition of the waterbodies in 25 years. He mentioned he was encouraged that the Governor had earmarked \$1 million in funding for an Adirondack park-wide invasive species strategy. He said he was pleased that the State government was recognizing the negative impact invasive species would have on the Adirondack economy if no action was taken, specifically in regards to the loss of property values. He stated the NYSDEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation) would work with local governments to develop a prevention/combating plan.

Mr. Monroe distributed the draft version of an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) developed for public and private organizations to sign regarding aquatic invasive species prevention in the Adirondacks; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes*. He stated that the NYSDEC had provided input for the MOU and a final copy of it would be released later this week. He advised they would be approaching other state agencies such as the APA (Adirondack park Agency) and local governments to inquire whether they would be agreeable to participating in the MOU. He requested a resolution authorizing Warren County to participate in the MOU among public and private organizations regarding aquatic invasive species prevention in the Adirondack region. He noted that it was clear that State representatives would like to have something in place this year.

In reference to the Platinum Level map he distributed, Mr. Monroe stated this particular map referenced Paul Smith's College and APIPP's (Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program) Platinum Level plan for regional boat decontamination stations and boat launch stewards, which would be ideal if there were unlimited resources available. He estimated the total cost of this particular plan to be about \$2.5 million. He advised the other map he distributed displayed the prioritized placement of regional boat contamination stations and boat launch stewards that they felt could be accomplished with the \$1 million in funding earmarked by the Governor for an Adirondack Park-wide strategy for invasive species. He stated the program could be expanded upon if they continued to receive funding from the State. He said there would be further revisions made to the map. He added once the final draft of the MOU was available it would be circulated for participant signatures. He reminded the Committee that last year there was no funding available from the State to assist with the prevention and combating of invasive species; however, he mentioned, now that there was a sense of urgency and funding was allocated to this cause, a great deal of work was being done. He mentioned he felt that Warren County and the Towns located within the municipality should participate in the MOU and noted it was not a binding contract, but rather an affirmation to work collaboratively on the prevention and control/combating of invasive species. He commented he believed more local governments would be supportive of the cause once they realized the cost of prevention was much less than that of combating/controlling them.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to authorize Warren County to participate in the Memorandum of Understanding regarding Aquatic Invasive Species prevention in the Adirondack region as per the revised draft that would be forthcoming and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 20, 2015 Board meeting.

Ed Griesmer, Executive Director of the ALA, advised the ALA had been charged with advocating for the needs of the lake associations within the Adirondack Park. He said he was pleased that the State recognized the urgency to protect the waterbodies located within the Adirondack Park and allocated \$1 million towards the cause. He commented he felt the research performed by Paul Smith's College and APIPP regarding the significantly negative impact invasive species posed to the Adirondack Park regions economy played a major role in the funds being allocated by the State to the cause. He mentioned Lake Associations have been committed for years to ensure their waterbodies remained safe and clean. He pointed out these associations had been dealing with the invasive species issue for years; however, he said, they could no longer manage the problem on their own. He mentioned some financial assistance was provided by the Towns but the issue was growing beyond the abilities of the Towns to help without the financial assistance of the State and Federal Governments. He added he felt Warren County could provide a model for other counties, as there were programs in place on several waterbodies located within the County such as Lake George. He noted successful programs were created by interaction between lake associations and local government. He stated he welcomed the support in managing the invasive species issue in the Adirondack Park. He pointed out two out of every three waterbodies located in the Adirondack Park were free from invasive species. He said the ALA was committed to the prevention and/or control of invasive species.

Mr. Dickinson thanked Mr. Griesmer for the time and the efforts he put forth toward the issue. He advised he felt the Lake George Park Commission's mandatory program on Lake George played a role in preventing invasive species from spreading throughout the waterbodies located in the Adirondack Park.

Mr. Conover apprised he was encouraged by the fact that the State was providing resources and funding for an Adirondack park-wide program. He said although he felt the municipalities located in Warren County with programs in place were doing their part to manage and/or prevent the spread of invasive species, it would not be possible to fully protect the waterbodies in the County until an Adirondack-wide plan was in place. He commended the efforts put forth by Messrs. Monroe, Dickinson, Merlino, Simpson, Strough and Mayor Robert Blais in their municipalities towards the invasive species issue. He commented he was fully supportive of Warren County participating with the MOU.

Mr. Monroe surmised the final draft of the MOU would be available and circulated later this week. Mr. Strough asked where the local municipalities should send their resolutions authorizing their participation in the MOU and Mr. Monroe replied they should be forwarded to his Office and he would share with the appropriate parties. He stated should there be a press conference scheduled regarding the MOU, and he would encourage any representatives of the municipalities participating to attend.

Moving along, Mr. Dickinson apprised the next item on the agenda was a discussion regarding the allocation of the \$150,000 budgeted in 2015 for other Lakes within Warren County. Mr. Merlino questioned whether the allocations would be the same as they were last year and Mr. Dickinson said he was unsure. Mr. Merlino pointed out this was another example of the financial burdens being placed upon smaller Towns, as the Town of Lake Luzerne spent a significant amount of money each year to control invasive species in their lake. He continued, it was an ongoing battle with their costs

increasing every year. He added any amount of financial assistance provided was welcomed.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, advised she thought the reason this matter was included on the agenda was to discuss what the allocation to the Towns for 2015 would be. She stated Resolution No. 120 of 2014 had authorized allocating the funding earmarked for combating invasive species in other lakes located within Warren County in the 2014 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 for Glen Lake in the amount of \$25,000.

Mr. Merlino queried whether Glen Lake required funding for their efforts, as he thought their funding request last year related to a one year project. Mr. Strough interjected that Glen Lake expended \$40,000 a year to cover the cost of the chemicals; therefore, he said, any funding received from the County was welcomed, as they would utilize it for hand harvesting. Mr. Dickinson pointed out part of the criteria to receive funding was whether there were continuous efforts being put forth to prevent further infestation.

Mr. Dickinson asked what type of invasive species were present in Glen Lake and Mr. Strough replied their main issue was with eurasian milfoil; however, he said, there was also another invasive plant present in the lake. Mr. Dickinson queried whether eurasian milfoil was present in the inlet by the Great Escape and Splashwater Kingdom and Mr. Strough replied that he believed milfoil was present there but he was unsure of whether it was invasive or natural. He said he would report back to the Committee at a later date whether Glen Lake required funding to continue their efforts. He reminded the Committee although Lake Sunnyside had a formal plan in place they were denied funding because there was no public access to the lake, which was part of the criteria to be eligible for funding.

Mr. Conover suggested proceeding with the funding as planned and have Mr. Strough report back as to whether or not Glen Lake required the funding; if the funding was not necessary it could be reallocated.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to allocate 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 and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 20, 2015 meeting.

Jane Smith, East Shore Schroon Lake Association/ALA, advised that the funding provided by the County has assisted them with doubling the number of lake stewards present on Brant and Schroon Lakes. She added the funding assisted them with sustaining their efforts and expanding them to form the ALA.

Mr. Simpson advised that the Town of Horicon was allocating 15% of their tax levy towards efforts to prevent/control invasive species in waterbodies located in their municipality. He commented without the funding assistance from the County and the ALA their efforts would become unsustainable.

A brief discussion ensued during which Mr. Monroe noted that the map distributed earlier in the meeting pertaining to the \$1 million plan was a draft that was far from its final form. He stated the goal was to focus their efforts in the best locations for prevention and the revisions made to the map

would be reflective of this.

It was the consensus of the Committee that Mr. Monroe should provide updates on any revisions to the prevention plan for the Adirondacks at future Committee meetings. Additionally, the Committee indicated a desire to receive year end reports, updates and details on the 2015 Plan from Walt Lender, Executive Director of the Lake George Association and Dave Wick, Executive Director of the Lake George Park Commission.

As there was no further business to come before the Invasive Species Sub-Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strough and seconded by Mr. Conover, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:28 a.m.

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