

Flowage Preservation Alliance



Little Tamarack Flowage Baker Spring Lake District

Annual Meetings - July 7, 2014 - Conover Town Park

The **Flowage Preservation Alliance Annual Meeting** was held at 10:00am, attended by over 70 people.

Three Board Members' terms were expiring, and they were unanimously re-elected to serve for three years: Rich Ruffalo, Jay Richman, and George Holloway. Ken Gurski gave the Treasurer's Report, and members were reminded to pay their 2014 dues.

President Rich Ruffalo explained the need to continue supporting the Alliance, even though the Lake District has now been formed. The Alliance has legal non-profit status, and contributors can benefit through tax deductions. In addition, the Alliance is a much larger group of individual members with varying talents that are important to the Flowage effort, many of whom are family members of Lake District property owners, or local people who enjoy the Flowage and want to help preserve it.

A matching funds challenge was announced: tax deductible donations to the Alliance up to a total of \$2500 will be matched by an anonymous donor, any time before September 4, 2014. At the meeting several substantial donations were made.

Funds raised will be donated to the Lake District to "get the ball rolling", even before tax revenues begin to flow in January 2015, to resolve easement, legal, and financial issues, and begin engineering consultation.

Rich thanked those who were instrumental in the formation of the Lake District: Bob & Clancy Senechalle, George & Sue Holloway, Bill & Joanie Green, Tom & Karen Christofferson, Jim Hedburg, Steve Rhode, George Champeney, and Karl Jennrich. Rich Ruffalo himself was also thanked. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30am.

The first **Annual Meeting of the Little Tamarack Flowage Baker Spring Lake District** was called to order immediately following the FPA Meeting. Over 50% of Lake District property owners were present, among a total turnout of over 70 - an excellent representation. Karl Jennrich, Chairman of the Lake District Board of Commissioners, emphasized that the Alliance is the action and fund-raising arm of the Lake District, a large group which has already proved over 5 years that it is able to get things done. Cooperation between the Alliance and the Lake District will be of invaluable in helping to save the Flowage.

Karl also reported that - due to Alliance actions during the Floodplain zoning effort, the dam hazard rating will almost certainly be reduced to "low hazard", making the cost to repair and maintain the dam realistic.

Bob Senechalle reported that he will meet with the County Attorney and Land and Water Department to investigate the transfer or acquisition of flowage and "fill" easements, and report progress to the Lake District Board at its September 9th meeting.

The Lake District Property Owners voted to create a "non-lapsable fund", enabling the District to save funds for construction/repair and maintenance of the dam.

The Budget of \$25,000 for the coming year was explained by George Holloway, and was approved unanimously. The expenditures will begin to cover the first 12 months of activity: \$5000 for professional services relating to flowage easements, \$2000 for dam permit and plan approval, \$5000 for professional engineering services, \$3000 for clerical and accounting services, and \$10,000 into the non-lapsable fund for future construction/repair and maintenance of the dam.

The tax levy corresponding to this \$25,000 budget is 2.5 mills, which was again explained by George Holloway. Discussion included future plans to apply for dam safety and maintenance grants. However, they may not be available until the dam has an owner (The District) and a permit to "operate". Until then, fund-raising is the only alternative. After discussion, by unanimous vote, the Lake District approved the tax levy - the maximum allowed by statute. It was a very encouraging vote, and a testament to the value of this body of lakes and wetlands.

The next order of business was to elect the new governing body for the Lake District. Our Conover Town Board got the District up and running, according to Statute. Upon petition by 20% of Lake District Property Owners, the form of government is being changed to a 5-person Board of commissioners. Three of the Commissioners will be Lake District Property Owners. Nominated were: Rich Ruffalo (three years), Clancy Senechalle (two years), and George Holloway (one year). After a required secret written ballot was counted, all three nominees were elected for their terms. The two additional Commissioners are appointed by the Town Board and the County Board. They are: Karl Jennrich for Conover, and Art Kunde for the County.

The New Lake District Board of Commissioners had their first meeting immediately following, to organize the Board of Commissioners. Karl Jennrich agreed to continue as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners for another year. Clancy Senechalle will take the job of Secretary, and George Holloway will take the Treasurer's role. Their next meeting will be September 9th at 6pm.

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After five years of effort, we (the Flowage Property Owners) finally have a voice. We are putting our tax dollars into action, but we are also eligible for State, Federal, and Corporate assistance to help solve our largest financial burden. Pat yourselves on the back!