

LAKE WYOLA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

January 20, 2024, at 9:00 AM
Via Zoom

Members present: Catherine Hilton, Art Keene, Mary David, Dave Green, Eric Stocker, Walter Tibbitts and Mark Rivers

1. The minutes from the October 21, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.
2. Update on the 2024 Notice of Intent and 2025 Dam Inspections

Eric reported that the town has now chosen GZA, located in Springfield, MA, to be our new dam engineering consulting firm. They will be working on the Notice of Intent for the 2024 winter lake lowering and the 2025 Dam Inspection.

Walter noted that, in September of 2023, he dove into the lake to clear the trash rack which was so clogged that it severely restricted the water flow through the sluiceway drainpipe. Clogging material included leaves, sticks, fishing line, and rocks that were lining the dam wall. Walter believes that the rocks were dislodged by people swimming off of the dam. The cleaning process was repeated in December. However, at that time, the rocks which Walter had restacked no longer were contributing to the clogging. Walter's report is included at the end of these minutes.

The committee recommended that, in addition to the NOI and Dam Inspection, GZA should be asked to provide recommendations for modifying the dam's trash rack to prevent it from being clogged with leaves and sticks.

The committee decided to table the discussion of the problems related to the rock displacement until the next LWAC meeting. Options include restricting swimming around the dam house or improved signage on the dam. Also, we asked Eric to raise the issue at an upcoming Select Board meeting to get their thoughts on restricting dam access for swimming.

3. Culvert replacement project

Project complete. Eric noted that there was a cost overrun of about \$40,000 which needs to be approved at a Special Town Meeting.

Mark will talk with Howard to see if he needs to monitor the water flow rate through the culvert. If so we will need to put markings on the culvert wall to correspond to actual flow rates. The water flow meter, which is town owned, is currently stored at Mark's house but another storage location might be more appropriate.

4. FRCOG Watershed-Based Plan

The WBP was submitted to the Mass DEP in December and FRCOG is waiting for comments or approval. Mark will follow up with them prior to the February meeting. Until the plan is finalized and approved, there are no preliminary actions that we can take.

Once approved, the next step will be to work with Town staff and the other interested parties to go through the plan's recommendations and identify tasks that the Town is interested in pursuing.

5. Update on west-side stormwater design quote.

At the September 2023 LWAC meeting, several community members requested that we obtain a quote to provide a design to improve the storm water runoff on the West Side of Lake Wyola. A quote of ~ \$30,000 was obtained. The committee voted to recommend that, in the absence of a private funding source, this project be postponed until the FRCOG Watershed-Based Plan is completed and work on a design for the entire watershed can be developed.

The meeting ended at 10:15

The next meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2024.

Description of the dam's trash rack problems

Diving to clear trash rack at the Lake Wyola Dam. Includes travel to site, unloading and staging equipment. Diving to access the rack. Removal of significant amount of debris from trash rack. Test flowing output of dam sluiceway.

According to the Dam Keeper, the gate was opened up 32 inches with outflow filling less than ½ the diameter of the outflow pipe. The gate was closed and the first of many descents was made. Relatively large amount of debris was removed from the rack. This debris included leaves, sticks, fishing line, and other debris (trash). Upon completion of the first cleaning, the gate was opened and after several minutes of flow, it was inspected again. More debris was removed, mostly leaves and sticks.

There was a large amount of leaves on the bottom of the lake directly in front of the intake area. The gate was opened to about 4 inches and the debris was stirred up allowing the current to pull the leaves to the rack. The rack was monitored and cleaned as leaves built up till a point where no debris was being pulled into the rack area.

Of significant note was the fact that many rocks of various sizes were built up against the lower half of the trash rack. These rocks were once part of the training walls and the area directly above the intake area. In Walter's opinion the most likely cause of this was from people walking out to and around the intake area. As the rocks were along the top and side of a steep drop off, they were most likely disturbed by people stepping on them and displacing them, causing them to fall down against the trash rack and blocking it. These rocks were removed from in front of the rack and redistributed to the training wall area.

After all cleanup was performed, the gate was opened to approximately 6 inches for several minutes and its operation was observed. The outflow at 6 inches was observably more than the outflow before cleaning with the gate open to 32 inches.