

**Tri-County Lakes Administrative Commission
Board Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.**

Members Present:

Lorie Smith, Chairman	Edgar Tuck
Darrell Dalton	John Vidovich
Robert Hiss	David Wells
Neil Holthouser	Chris Whitlow

Members Absent:

Bob Camicia	David Rives
A. Dale Moore	Frank Rogers
Emily Ragsdale	Stuart Turille

Staff Present:

Kristina Sage	Christina Matrangola
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Guests Present:

David Arnold, Pittsylvania County Administration
Roy Kelley, Leesville Lake Association
Barbara Ferrell, SML Sediment Community Action Group
Jason Dunovant, Reporter
Dawn Saunders, Resident

1. Call to Order:

Lorie Smith called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. Invocation:

Edgar Tuck delivered the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

John Vidovich led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda:

Chris Whitlow made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Edgar Tuck seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes – August 8, 2023 (A-1)

Neil Holthouser asked that on page 6 of the August 8, 2023, meeting minutes, the sentence “2023 is trending higher.” be removed from the APCo report. Lorie Smith asked if there were any further changes or amendments for the August 8, 2023, meeting minutes, no further changes or amendments were proposed.

Chris Whitlow made a motion to approve the August 8, 2023, meeting minutes as amended. Edgar Tuck seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Approval of Minutes – October 10, 2023 (A-2)

Chris Whitlow made a motion to approve the October 10, 2023, meeting minutes as presented. John Vidovich seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Project Updates:

a. Wake Education Task Force Update: Kristina Sage

Kristina Sage presented the current status of the task force membership, material development, distribution, and planned distribution, as Joy Manning was unable to attend the meeting.

- Two members have left the Wake Education Task Force, so please let Ms. Sage know if anyone is interested in membership on the task force. Lorie Smith mentioned that the task force should consist of members from both counties, keeping an eye on applicant jurisdiction.
- On the website there is a new graphic with QR Code which was developed to publish a 1/3-page ad, in the Visitors Guide for 2024.
- Ms. Manning has distributed rental packets for short-term rental properties to rental companies, realtors, and real estate companies encouraging them to include this information for tourists. She will resume distribution in January and again in May when vacation properties are being reviewed for rental. Additionally, the group will continue outreach at future community events.
- Kristina provided a 2023 budget update, whereby the SMLA funded \$5,000.00 and TLAC funded \$5,000.00, as of present \$5,875.00 has been expensed. Kill switches, banners, and t-shirts are still to be purchased. The total budgeted for 2024 is \$8,124.00 which includes a carryover of \$4,124.00, SMLA contributing of \$2,000.00 and TLAC contributing of \$2,000.00. This budget proposal was developed to address the 2024 SMLA budget period which begins in January 2024.
- Mr. Vidovich asked if Ms. Manning would have a chance to present to the SMLA any updates regarding the Wake Education Task Force, which will help provide budget transparency. John also expressed the SMLA Board of Directors is interested in the task force’s future plans. Kristina stated this is on their radar and will work to firm up a date.
- Mr. Hiss stated that Bedford County will be rolling out a quarterly citizen newsletter where they would be more than happy to provide information on the Wake Education Task Force efforts in the April edition.

b. SML Sediment Community Action Group: Barbara Ferrell

Barbara Ferrell presented information regarding the SML Sediment Community Action Group as well as input on the APCo 2021 Draft Report of Sedimentation Monitoring Plan Project 2210-197. The SML Sediment Community Action Group is seeking County/TLAC consideration to achieve remediation assistance. The presentation included pictures from community action group members reflecting their shorelines prior to 2021 and present-day shoreline erosion as well as dock pictures showing changes in sediment deposits. Items presented included:

- Current Sedimentation Monitoring Process
- Locations monitored in the report
- Gills Creek and other locations on SML affected by sedimentation
- Consequences of growing land masses—Illegal hunting, littering, property devaluation
- Possible consequences of increased sedimentation
- Harmful Algae Blooms (HAB)

c. Presentation of TLAC Officers Slate: Darrell Dalton

Lorie Smith explained that Darrell Dalton and Bob Camicia collaborated to develop a list of individuals for TLAC Officers in preparation for election at the February 2024 Board of Directors meeting. Lorie Smith expressed that if anyone else is interested in stepping up for any role between now and the February board meeting additional nominees are welcome and to please let us know if you are interested. Darrell Dalton began by stating he was appreciative of Mr. Camicia's knowledge and expertise in producing this slate of individuals. The individuals selected for roles on the TLAC Board of Directors is Lorie Smith nominated for Chair, and Darrell Dalton as Vice Chair.

10. Executive Director Updates: Kristina Sage

a. 2023 Vessel Pump Out Program Final Report (A-8):

Ms. Sage briefed the Board on the report that the members received previously. This year's program ended on September 10th and a copy of the final report will be submitted with the grant proposal.

b. Smith Mountain Lake:

Ms. Sage informed the Board that the 2023 YTD number of debris reports submitted to AEP for SML was 52 as compared to 56 for the same period last year, and the YTD number of navigation aid reports submitted was 39 as compared to 29 for the same period last year.

The next Aids to Navigation Technical Review Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 3 at 10 AM to review changes to the Smith Mountain Project Smith Mountain Lake Aids to Navigation Proposed Changes. Ms. Sage reviewed some of changes noting anticipated improvements in the safety of navigation on SML.

c. Leesville Lake:

Ms. Sage reported that the 2023 YTD number of debris reports submitted to AEP for LVL was 166 as compared to 85 for this same period last year. Ms. Sage stated she attended the Debris Review Committee meeting with AEP last week and discovered that all weekend debris reports should be submitted directly to AEP through the Smith Mountain

Project website. This will ensure AEP staff at the visitor center at the SML Dam on Saturdays can submit the reports in a timelier manner than if they were sent to the TLAC office which is closed on Saturday and Sunday. Leesville Lake Association agreed to copy the TLAC office on weekend debris reports to ensure TLAC will be able to manage closure.

d. 2024 TLAC Board of Directors Meeting Calendar:

A calendar for 2024 was included with the BOD meeting packets.

9. Action Items:

d. Consideration of TLAC 2024 Shoreline Management Plan Revision Recommendations & Summary Report for submission to APCO (A-7): Ms. Smith asked if everyone had a chance to review the report, and if there were any questions or comments. Mr. Kelley stated that he commends the work that went into collecting this data, the staff did a tremendous job. Mr. Hiss stated that the second paragraph on page 7 of a lack of response in communication reflects comments he receives at his office on lake matters and reinforces this key point in the report. Mr. Whitlow expressed appreciation on behalf of the localities for the work that our Chair and TLAC staff has put into this summary report. Ms. Smith asked Ms. Sage to send out the timeline schedule for the SMP to the Board members.

Darrell Dalton made a motion to approve the summary report as presented. Robert Hiss seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Consideration of Cooperative Vessel Sewage Pump Out Program for 2024 (A-5):

Ms. Sage explained to the Board that if the Board would like for TLAC to continue to provide administration for the program in 2024 as it has for the past years, the Board must approve for Ms. Sage to submit the grant proposal to the Virginia Department of Health. She explained that the SMLA Board has already voted to participate with TLAC in the 2024 program and has approved their portion of the budget.

Chris Whitlow made a motion to approve TLAC's participation in the 2024 Vessel Sewage Pump Out Program. David Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

c. Appropriation of SMLA check for the final contribution of 2023 VPOP Program – Resolution 2023-009 (A-6):

Ms. Sage informed the Board members that the Vessel Pump Out Program is a cooperative effort between the Virginia Department of Health, the Smith Mountain Lake Association and TLAC. She noted that the SMLA provides a beginning contribution and a final contribution and that the SMLA contribution equals 25% of the cost of the program. The final contribution was \$3,122.84.

Robert Hiss made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-009 authorizing the appropriation of the SMLA final contribution for the 2023 Vessel Pump Out Program. John Vidovich seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. Financial Report:

Edgar Tuck made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. Darrell Dalton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Action Items:

a. Approval of Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (A-4):

Ms. Smith stated that she anticipates this plan will undergo revision/update in 2024. This plan version has been enforced for many years, so until the plan is updated is there a motion to adopt the 2023 Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan.

Chris Whitlow made a motion to adopt the Vegetation Management Plan as presented. Robert Hiss seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

11. Reports from the Board and Committees:

a. Leesville Lake Association Report: Roy Kelley

Roy Kelley, on behalf of David Rives, Leesville Lake Association (LLA): Mr. Kelley stated that at the October 2023 Board meeting David Rives presented Information and Consideration of Leesville Lakes APCo Related Ongoing Issues. The three main concerns of the presentation are Navigation, Water Quality, and Debris Management. Mr. Rives was expecting his presentation to be an item on the December 2023 meeting agenda for discussion, as well as action items being discussed and/or completed. Roy did note that Ms. Sage posted the presentation to the TLAC website as Mr. Rives asked at the October meeting.

b. Smith Mountain Lake Association Report - John Vidovich

- Year-end membership is forecasted at 1,050 individual, family, and business partner members; approximately a 30% increase over last year.
- Elections were held last month for 14 open positions on the Association's Board of Directors. Four new members will join the Board in 2024; bring the total number of Board Member to 23 (the Board's capacity).
- The Association developed a workplan to address the 2023 Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) affected coves of the Blackwater. The plan was shared with DEQ, Virginia Tech and Ferrum College.
- The Association is asking Governor Youngkin, the General Assembly, and Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to support a budget amendment that would fund a two-year study by Virginia Tech to investigate and respond to HABs at SML.
- The Association is launching a fundraising campaign, "***make a SPLASH,***" to help keep SML clean and safe. The following are examples of how funds will be used:
 - Purchase laboratory grade microscopes and supplies for identification of cyanobacteria,
 - Set-up a local HAB monitoring program for rapid response to HAB reports,
 - Expand SMLA's water quality monitoring program with more testing locations and sampling, and
 - Amplify the importance of safe boating so everyone at the lake can safely enjoy it.
- The Save our Streams program completed its 2023 monitoring season with overall results similar to last year and better than the average quality of Virginia's streams and rivers. Two additional streams were added to the program this year for a total of 17 tributaries that flow into SML.
- A Day at The Lake is scheduled for June 8, 2024, at Crazy Horse Marina.

c. APCo Report – Neil Holthouser reported the following:

- Aids to Navigation:
 - On December 8, 2023, Appalachian consulted with its Aids to Navigation Technical Review Committee regarding the removal, relocation, and addition of new lateral marks on Smith Mountain Lake. Written comments are due within 30 days.
 - An Aids to Navigation Technical Review Committee meeting is scheduled for January 3, 2024.
- Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (AVMP):
 - The annual aquatic vegetation survey was conducted. A conference call was held with the Aquatic Vegetation Management Technical Review Committee (TRC) to discuss the results; there was consensus to postpone 5-Year Survey. An extension of time to conduct the 5-Year Survey until such time the TRC determines it necessary was filed with the FERC. Report regarding survey results report forthcoming.
- Debris Management Plan:
 - A copy of the October/November Debris Report is attached. This is the final report until April 2024 unless there is a high flow event.
 - As of November 30, 2023, 3,760 tons have been removed from the Smith Mountain Project (1170 tons from Smith Mountain Lake and 2,590 tons from Leesville Lake).
 - Lake crews continue to remove debris from Leesville Lake, shred and haul debris stored at Leesville Dam.
 - Pigg River Debris Diversion Device: Appalachian continues with its exploration and evaluation of the device's environmental and engineering considerations. In accordance with the Debris Management Plan, "The evaluation of the sites including the potential for providing debris diversion and collection devices will include an engineering and cost-benefit analysis, along with considerations for effects on surrounding property owners, navigation, safety concerns, permitting implications, environmental impacts, and access. Should it appear feasible to consider the installation of a debris diversion and collection device at a dedicated debris offload/disposal site after review of the above described environmental and engineering considerations, a joint pilot project supported by Appalachian, TLAC, LLA, and other stakeholders will be considered. Appalachian will report on the evaluation of any sites for possible debris diversion and collection devices in its annual report as detailed in Section 5.0."
 - Myer's Creek Public Boat Access Facility Expansion: Appalachian continues to pursue the purchase of off-water property to store/chip debris removed via the Myer's Creek Public Boat Access Facility.
 - TLAC, LLA, and Appalachian participated in a conference call on December 7, 2023. The parties discussed potential improvements to the reporting and retrieval processes, the public's ability to tie off debris, and improved coordination and efficiencies on Beautification Day. Meeting notes forthcoming.
- Erosion/Sedimentation Monitoring Plan:
 - Appalachian filed the 5-Year Sedimentation Report with the FERC on October 31, 2023.
- Habitat Management Plan:
 - Appalachian and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources deployed artificial habitat in Smith Mountain Lake on December 12, 2023.
- Shoreline Management Plan (SMP):
 - Appalachian consulted with required stakeholders on a plan and schedule for the SMP 10-Year Review on December 8, 2023. Stakeholders have 30 days to review and comment. Appalachian's deadline for filing the plan and schedule is January 29, 2024.
- Water Management Plan:

- As of 0500 hours this morning Tuesday, December 12, 2023, inflow to the Smith Mountain Project was 2055 cfs and the discharge from Leesville 480 cfs. The adjusted reservoir elevation was 794.3.'
- Water Quality Management Plan:
 - October 2023 Water Quality Report was distributed on December 5, 2023.

12. Calendar and Reminders for the Board:

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2024.

13. Adjournment:

Darrell Dalton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Matrangola