

**Tri-County Lakes Administrative Commission
Board Meeting Minutes – April 6, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
TLAC Conference Room**

Members Present:

Edgar Tuck, Chairman	Jeff Salmon
Darrell Dalton, Vice Chairman	Steve Sandy
Keri Green	Lorie Smith
Robert Hiss	David Wells
Roy Kelley	

Members Absent:

David Arnold	Eli Meador
Dick Grabowski	Frank Rogers
Tom Lawton	Vincent Shorter

Staff Present:

Kristina Sage	Christina Matrangola
Jeanne Harvey	

Guest(s) Present:

Joanne Houpt, Chair, Environmental Committee
Scott Bull, Member, Environmental Committee
Harvey Leist, Biochar Carbon Environmental
Robert Houpt, Resident
Kevin Tikalsky, Resident
Theresa Kelley, Resident

1. Call to Order

Chairman Tuck called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. Invocation

Mr. Robert Hiss delivered the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Darrell Dalton recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

Jeff Salmon made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Keri Green seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment

Mr. Harvey Leist of Biochar Carbon Environmental provided information on Biochar in water treatment and environmental remediation, stating that Biochar absorbs phosphorus from the

water, to prevent plant growth. Biochar is made of trash wood, in an industrial setting out of Floyd, VA. It is a porous material that is put into socks and can be hung in the water column where the water passes through the carbon. Phosphorus in the water attaches to the carbon and is not released. Mr. Leist provided a picture of what Biochar looks like under a microscope, as well as what a small bag of Biochar Carbon looks like. Mr. Leist can provide a quote for those interested.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chairman Tuck asked Ms. Sage to review the items on the consent agenda. Mr. Tuck inquired if there were any questions on the consent agenda or if any items needed discussion. The Board had no questions.

David Wells made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Darrell Dalton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously as follows:

- a. Approval of minutes: February 2, 2026 (A-1)

7. Project Update

- a. Environmental Committee: Proposed Approach for Responding to Hydrilla in SML (A-2):

Ms. Houpt, Environmental Committee Chair, presented highlights of the Proposed Approach for Responding to Hydrilla in SML which included: Background of Hydrilla and Sterile Grass Carp (SGC), past remediation at SML, costs, monitoring, future control considerations, as well as a map of the Hydrilla risk area based upon 2025 reports from shoreline property owners.

Ms. Green, Vice President of the Smith Mountain Lake Association (SMLA) provided a statement to the TLAC Board. This can be found in the packet behind Attachment (A-8).

Ms. Smith proposed that TLAC consult with Mr. Ryan Brown, Executive Director of the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR). Ms. Sage will contact Mr. Brown of DWR to schedule a meeting.

Chairman Tuck asked that Action Item 9b. be moved up following the discussion, there were no objections from the board members.

9. Action Items

- b. Consideration of Recommendation of RFP for Sterile Grass Carp – Resolution 2026-002 (A-5)

After discussion, the Board decided that 700 sterile grass carp will be adequate as an initial stocking into Smith Mountain Lake in 2026. This quantity is 12% of the 6,000 sterile grass carp that were introduced in 2013. **On the motion of David Wells, seconded by Darrell Dalton, and with the motion carried by a vote of 8 to 1, the Tri-County Lakes Administrative Commission will issue a Request for Proposal for the purchase of up to 700 Sterile Grass Carp to be released into Smith Mountain Lake in the last week of May 2026.**

7. Project Update Cont.

- b. Sedimentation Task Force Update:

Ms. Sage provided a brief update on the Sedimentation Task Force. There are currently six (6) responses received in response to the request for proposal which will be evaluated. The task force will meet on Friday, April 10, 2026, to review the six (6) responses and will decide on a final selection. Ms. Smith stated that she requested that the task force provide her with a recommendation. Following the meeting, Kristina will organize an Executive Committee meeting, comprised of the four administrators where the information will be disseminated and discussed to determine next steps and direction for the Task Force to take.

c. Wake Education Task Force:

Joy Manning provided an update regarding the Wake Education Task Force, stating that the task force is on track with the educational program and is very excited to hold their first group session this week at the Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy. This education session will be for junior high and high school students, which will be around 300 students. After this session, the task force is scheduled for to provide education to a homeschool group on April 23, 2026, at the Bedford Public Library, Moneta. The task force has been in touch with many of the marinas to schedule training sessions for the 2026 boating season. Last year a training course was held for the Goodhue Boat dock staff, and Goodhue has invited the task force to conduct training for their staff again this year. The task force has been working to get Marina 66 and Bridgewater onboard to provide training for their staff as well. A Women On the Water training session will be held again this year, to include wake education in addition to skills to drive, dock boats, park and trailer boats. The task force is looking to tie in training as a part of an angler association on the lake. Last year coloring placemats were created for children to use during the summer season. The placemats were initially distributed for Pirate Days. This year the task force is looking for sponsorships to help contribute to task force funding.

8. Financial Report

a. Financial Report through February 2026:

Kristina Sage reported that we are awaiting wake education funds from the Smith Mountain Lake Association (SMLA). Keri Green, SMLA, offered to confirm the status of the transfer of funds. The "Other Service Charges" line item consists of AEP billing where a payment was late on 2 occasions due to mail delays. The AEP account has incurred a deposit fee of \$500.00 for 24 months. We will be refunded with interest at the time the electric service is discontinued or after 2 years upon request.

There were no questions or remarks.

9. Action Items Cont.

a. Consideration of 2026 VDH Vessel Pump Out Contract – Resolution 2026-001 (A-4):

Keri Green made a motion to approve the 2026 Vessel Pump Out Contract – Resolution 2026-001, Jeff Salmon seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

~~**c. Consideration of Recommendation for a new Shoal Marker placement at Bernard's Landing (A-6):**~~

This item has been deferred to the June meeting, as the Navigation Committee will be conducting an onsite inspection of the location on April 22, 2026.

d. FY2026-2027 Budget – Preview (A-7): Ms. Sage gave a brief overview of the FY2026-2027 budget. She stated that this is only a preview of the budget and that it will not be voted on until June 2026.

Notable items were custodial supplies and computer equipment line items will be increased, as well as providing adequate budget in the event the copier fails as TLAC has had the equipment since 2019.

10. Executive Director Updates:

- a. **Smith Mountain Lake** – Ms. Sage reported that there was one (1) report for APCo maintained navigation aids and one (1) report of TLAC maintained navigation aids in March. TLAC received eleven (11) debris reports in March. Staff has forwarded twelve (12) debris reports and three (3) navigation aid reports total to AEP on behalf of residents in 2026.
- b. **Leesville Lake** – Ms. Sage reported that staff has filed two (2) debris reports to AEP on behalf of residents in 2026.

Ms. Sage thanked Bedford County for printing an article regarding Take Pride in Smith Mountain Lake (SML) in the *Bedford County Community Connection Spring 2026*. Additionally Jill Kurtz, Kurtz Digital Media, has gained recognition for Take Pride in SML 2026 in the *Living at SML* section of the Spring 2026 *SML Insiders* magazine and the *Bedford Bulletin*. Take Pride in SML banners have been placed in front of this plaza and at Mango's dining court. Current volunteer registrations are at 235.

The Smith Mountain Striper Club meeting was held on March 14, 2026, TLAC, Darrell Dalton, Keri Green and Scott Bull of the Environmental Committee were in attendance. A great presentation from Dan Wilson, Fisheries Biologist at the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) regarding the annual update on the vitality of the SML striper fishery. He noted that average fish catch at SML is around 28", making the lake a top destination for anglers. Nathan W. Smith, Coastal Carolina University graduate student, presented the results of his 2-year study on catch & release mortality during summer months at SML. One in four (25%) released stripers will die. This is lower than the 50%-70% mortality found in lakes further south, where water is warmer and holds less oxygen.

11. Reports from the Board and Committees:

- a. **Leesville Lake Association (LLA) Report:** Mr. Kelley reported the following:

Mr. Kelley shared that activity at the lake is relatively quiet. Leesville Lake remains clear of debris. The Leesville Lake Association will hold the quarterly membership meeting on April 11, 2026, at 10:30am at the Altavista Train Station. Beautification Day is set for June 13, 2026, from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

- b. **Smith Mountain Lake Association (SMLA) Report:** Ms. Green reported on the following matters:

SMLA Board Updates:

The SMLA Board has approved a new appointment, Jon Anderson, will join SMLA as an appointee made by President John Vidovich. Mr. Andersen is currently the vice president of the SML Striper Club and is a strong advocate for the striper fishery. He will be an excellent addition to the SML board.

Committee Work:

- **Lake Days:** Over 30 volunteers from SMLA worked with all three Bedford County high schools to bring the 9th grade Environmental Science classes to the SML State Park for 3 days of learning about the lake. Approximately 180 students participated in the

program which got kids into the stream on site to learn about Save our Streams, showed them Water Quality monitoring tasks at the state park docks, explained and demonstrated how the hydropower project works and showed them water quality sampling tasks. Each student had the opportunity to take home a paper FoldScope microscope and hand lens for closer examination of insects.

- The Dock Watch program has released the 2025 Annual Report after providing an update to the volunteers about results from last year. The SMLA also provided 2 refresher training events. Dock Watch is looking to expand by 2 to 4 more docks this year. And 2 interns will be joining the program again this summer from Virginia Western Community College. Full sampling of the 22 summer season docks begins April 1st.
- The Water Safety Council is planning a Water Safety Roundup for May 30th, at Goodhue-Blackwater.
- The Buffer Landscaping Committee is expanding its BLAST teams this year to be able to provide advice to homeowners looking to improve how water leaves their properties.
- The Save Our Streams Committee is kicking off its first monitoring period of the year during April as well as helping out at Lake Days and at Creek Week at Benjamin Franklin Middle School in Franklin County.
- SMLA is holding a Membership Drive in May. New members who sign up in May qualify for a \$10 gift card to the Coffee Shop at Bridgewater Plaza.
- The next SMLA Board Meeting is on April 14, 2026.

c. **APCo Report:** Mr. Eli Meador was not available to attend the meeting. No update at this time.

12. Calendar and Reminders for the Board:

a. The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment:

Jeff Salmon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Darrell Dalton seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Matrangola


Edgar Ruck, Chairman