

**Tri-County Lakes Administrative Commission
Board Meeting Minutes – June 1, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
TLAC Conference Room**

Members Present:

Edgar Tuck, Chairman
Darrell Dalton, Vice Chairman
Dick Grabowski
Keri Green
Robert Hiss
Tom Lawton

Eli Meador
Steve Sandy
Vincent Shorter
Lorie Smith
David Wells

Members Absent:

David Arnold
Roy Kelley

Frank Rogers
Jeff Salmon

Staff Present:

Kristina Sage
Carly Mitchell

Christina Matrangola

Guest(s) Present:

Brannon Littleton, Appalachian Power
Rob Mann, Appalachian Power

1. Call to Order

Chairman Tuck called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

2. Invocation

Chairman Tuck delivered the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. David Wells recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

David Wells made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Darrell Dalton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Kristina Sage welcomed TLAC's new Administrative Associate, Carly Mitchell, to the TLAC Board of Directors. Carly Mitchell will assume primary administrative support for the Navigation Committee and will coordinate TLAC updates via Facebook and the TLAC website.

6. Approval of Minutes: April 6, 2026

Darrell Dalton made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 6, 2026, as presented. David Wells seconded the motion. Tom Lawton abstained, and the motion carried.

7. Project Update

a. Sedimentation Task Force Update:

Ms. Sage provided a brief update on the Sedimentation Task Force. Of the nine proposals received, EnviroScience was selected to review the Sedimentation Management Feasibility Study proposal. Upon acceptance of the proposal, the Executive Committee, consisting of the four administrators, will meet to review the information, discuss next steps, and determine the future direction of the Sedimentation Task Force.

b. Wake Education Task Force:

Ms. Sage provided an update on the Wake Education Task Force. The task force recently conducted its first group educational session at Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy for junior high and high school students, with 279 students in attendance. The task force also presented an educational program for a homeschool group of 25 elementary school students at the Moneta Library, part of the Bedford County Public Library System, covering proper life jacket fit, tow rope distances, no-wake distances, and basic boating safety. The Water Safety Round-Up was held this past Saturday, with limited attendance. The first Women on the Water training session is scheduled for June 13 and will include wake education, as well as instruction on driving, docking, parking, and trailering boats.

c. Hydrilla Remediation:

Ms. Sage announced that the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) has approved TLAC's application to release 200 sterile grass carp (SGC) into Smith Mountain Lake for hydrilla remediation. The fish are scheduled to be released in June 2026.

Residents who submitted reports in 2025 and 2026 have been notified of the approval. Following the release, TLAC will issue a press release and undertake additional media outreach to share the update with the community. The information will also be posted on TLAC's website and social media channels.

Ms. Sage reported that TLAC executive committee members representing SML met with the DWR Fisheries Department to discuss the application and the planned release of 200 SGC. Based on the response to the release, TLAC and DWR will re-evaluate conditions and determine appropriate next steps. Mr. Hiss added that a comprehensive lake survey will be conducted this fall. He noted that the decision to release 200 SGC was made in part with that pending survey in mind, and that the survey results will help inform the reevaluation and any future actions.

Additionally, Ms. Sage reported that Smith Mountain Lake Association, President John Vidovich, submitted a recommendation regarding the TLAC Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan, which is included in the meeting packet.

8. Financial Report

a. Financial Report through April 2026:

Ms. Sage reported budget overages on the Smith Mountain Lake advertising line item due to public hearings related to hydrilla remediation, as well as advertising for shoal markers at Lucky and Little Bit Island. She noted that the software budget has been fully utilized due to the implementation of Smartsheet for project management and additional website software to support more advanced communications. In the signage line item, the building sign required replacement because the lettering had faded and was beginning to run. Ms. Sage also reported that there were no notable updates regarding the Pumpout grant at this time. Navigation work orders remain active, and staff are working to close them out by the end of the fiscal year.

There were no questions or comments.

9. Action Items

a. Resolution 2026-003: Approval of FY 2026-2027 Line-Item Budget – Smith Mountain Lake (A-4)

Ms. Sage gave a brief overview of the FY2026-2027 budget. 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.

Lorie Smith made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-003: Approval of FY2026-2027 Line-Item Budget – Smith Mountain Lake as presented. Robert Hiss seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Resolution 2026-004: Approval of FY 2026-2027 Line-Item Budget – Leesville Lake (A-5)

Robert Hiss made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-004: Approval of FY2026-2027 Line-Item Budget – Leesville Lake, seconded by Tom Lawton. The motion carried unanimously.

c. Approval of FY 2026-2027 Work Plan for Smith Mountain Lake (A-6)

A revision to the Smith Mountain Lake Environmental Committee Work Plan was recommended to remove Item "O," which references the Pigg River. Because the item is already included in the Leesville Lake Environmental Committee Work Plan, it should be removed from the Smith Mountain Lake work plan.

Darrell Dalton made a motion to approve the Smith Mountain FY 2026-2027 Work Plan. David Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried.

d. Approval of FY 2026-2027 Work Plan for Leesville Lake (A-7)

Darrell Dalton made a motion to approve the Leesville Lake Department FY 25/26 Work Plan. David Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried.

e. Consideration and Approval of 2026 Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan for SML (A-8)

Chairman Tuck suggested that the document include a list of herbicides approved for use at Smith Mountain Lake. It was noted that AEP is updating the Aquatic Vegetation Permit and will make it easier to locate on their website. Following discussion, this item was deferred to the August meeting to ensure that all Department of Wildlife Resources approvals for the plan are in place.

Steve Sandy made a motion to table this item until the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Lorie Smith seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

f. Consideration and Approval of 2026 Aquatic Vegetation Management Program for SML (A-9)

The Board reviewed the 2026 Aquatic Vegetation Management Program for Smith Mountain Lake and discussed recommended revisions, including incorporating reference to the APCo survey, clarifying the expected timeframe for evaluating the impact of sterile grass carp, and providing for a post-implementation review to assess program effectiveness.

Steve Sandy made a motion to approve the 2026 Aquatic Vegetation Management Program for SML. Robert Hiss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

g. Consideration of Recommendation for new Shoal Marker placement at Bird's Island (A-10)

Ms. Sage reported that, following an onsite inspection, the TLAC Navigation Committee voted unanimously to recommend the installation of two (2) TLAC-maintained shoal buoys southeast of Birds Island on Smith Mountain Lake in Penhook, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to mark a shoal that presents a navigation hazard.

Robert Hiss made a motion, seconded by Darrell Dalton, to recommend the application to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources for the installation of two (2) TLAC-maintained shoal markers southeast of Birds Island on Smith Mountain Lake in Penhook, Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

h. Consideration and Approval of TLAC Aquatic Vegetation Monitoring Program (A-11)

The Board reviewed the TLAC Aquatic Vegetation Monitoring Program. During discussion, it was noted that measuring water clarity with Secchi discs, as was done in aquatic vegetation monitoring in the early 2000s, is not necessary to understand the status of Hydrilla beds in SML. This will be struck from the program. Drone imagery will be collected if possible. Ms. Green also indicated that SMLA may have funding available to support the effort.

Lorie Smith made a motion to approve the TLAC Aquatic Vegetation Monitoring Program. Darrell Dalton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

10. Executive Director Updates

Kristina led the report with information regarding resident concerns of wakes near docks at the slalom ski course on the Blackwater channel and advised that this is an APCo permitted recreation area and any concerns from residents should be discussed and then directed to APCo to ensure permit specifics are being followed. Also, at a recent Virginia Harbor Safety Committee meeting Stacy Brown, Boating Division Director, DWR, thanked TLAC and Lake Anna Civic Association for proposing the adoption of the federal child life jacket requirement in the public scoping period earlier this year. As a VA requirement, children on Leesville and SML will be protected by personal floatation devices (life jackets).

a. **Smith Mountain Lake** – Ms. Sage reported that there were no reports for APCo maintained navigation aids and no reports of TLAC maintained navigation aids in April. TLAC received ten (10)

debris reports in April. Staff has forwarded twenty-two (22) 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 one (1) debris report to AEP on behalf of residents in 2026.

Ms. Sage provided a social media update, reporting that TLAC has cross-posted information related to Electric Shock Drowning awareness, Vessel Pumpout Program hiring, a 30-day buoy notice, Water Safety Month, and upcoming safety week posts. Notably the “2026 Drought at Smith Mountain Project” first published by Appalachian Power was posted by TLAC and had already reach 20,000 views. TLAC posts are being shared with Smith Mountain Lake Upcoming News & Events, Smith Mountain Lake Boating, the SML Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Instagram. TLAC is also transitioning cross-posting from the SML Business and Resident Info page that uses “and” in its name to the page using “&,” which has more followers and greater engagement. Ms. Sage also referenced information from the Take Pride in Smith Mountain Lake 2026 Final Report. Also reported the effort to Keep Virginia Beautiful for the 250th celebration. At registration, TPISML was the largest event registered. Great increase in civic organizations and local businesses as well as more HOAs and POAs.

Ms. Sage reported that the Pumpout Program is anticipated to begin on June 20. One employee is pending hire, and another individual applied on Sunday.

11. Reports from the Board and Committees:

a. Leesville Lake Association (LLA) Report:

There is no report at this time.

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

- Since the April TLAC meeting, the SMLA Board has launched several annual and new initiatives.
- The May membership drive was successful, resulting in 40 new members joining SMLA.
- In partnership with Rock Outdoors, SMLA is conducting a raffle featuring a package of lake recreation items and safety equipment. Additional details are available on the SMLA website.
- The 40th water quality monitoring season began last week. New sampling procedures required by VDEQ have increased time commitment for volunteers, and monitoring costs continue to rise, as the Ferrum costs rise. Several new volunteers joined the team this season.
- All Dock Watch locations are now sampling on an every-other-week schedule. Two new interns joined the program this week, including one student from Western Virginia Community College and one from Radford University. Low water levels have made monitoring more challenging, as volunteers are unable to measure water clarity at shallower sites. Laboratory results continue to show low levels of cyanobacteria.
- Save Our Streams Spring monitoring activities have been completed, and a mid-year report is expected in June.
- The SMLA office received one homeowner report regarding brittle naiad.
- The next SMLA Board meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2026.

c. APCo Report: Mr. Eli Meador, along with Rob Mann and Brannon Littleton, reported the following:

Mr. Meador reported that AEP's Shoreline Management Department is now fully staffed and that staff training remains ongoing. He also noted that updates to the Smith Mountain Project website are in progress and will be posted as they become available.

Mr. Meador provided an update on AEP's efforts to evaluate alternatives to the Pigg River Debris Diversion Device, which the company is no longer pursuing. He reported that AEP is moving forward with several related measures, including adding staff, purchasing equipment, and acquiring property in Pittsylvania County adjacent to Myers Creek. A surveying company has been retained to prepare permit materials for proposed property improvements. These activities are part of the first phase of the project.

Mr. Meador explained that APCo is required under state and federal permits to release water downstream from Leesville Dam to support aquatic life and maintain water quality. During drought conditions, the Water Management Plan establishes specific inflow and outflow triggers that reduce required releases to help conserve water. APCo implemented the first trigger on April 27, 2026, and the second trigger on May 11, 2026, reducing the outflow from Leesville Dam. The company will continue monitoring conditions and adjusting operations as required by the plan. Recent rains were predominantly outside the watershed that feeds SML and much of the rain soaked into the parched soil.

Lorie Smith and Steve Sandy invited Rob Mann and Brannon Littleton to join the board meeting due to incoming questions regarding lake levels. Lorie noted the 2-3 pages of Q&A recently published by APCo are very helpful in providing an explanation of the lake levels that continue to be low. County officials are being approached by citizens that expect county government to have more influence over lake levels. Brannon Littleton expressed APCo's commitment to improved communication about how the project is managed. In closing the report, Eli Meador offered to the TLAC board that APCo would be happy to present an overview of the water management plan as they did for the SMLA board recently to help build a broader understanding of the different components that impact lake levels. Brannon also explained that a capacity test is required seasonally, one in winter and one in summer, to satisfy the requirements of PJM which controls the power grid that the Smith Mountain Project feeds. The capacity test is scheduled for Thursday. Water will be returned to SML reservoir as soon as possible.

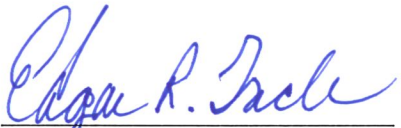
12. Calendar and Reminders for the Board:

- a. The next Board meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment:

Lorie Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Lawton seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Matrangola


Edgar Tuck, Chairman