**SYLVAN LAKE JOINT COMMISSION**

**APPROVED Minutes**

**September 20, 2023**

**Present:** Anne Politi, Kathy Martin, Bev Riley, Councilman Al Gubitosi, Sharon Luba, Dennis Luba, Greg Matthews

**Not present:**  Mayor Ed Bonanno, Jeff Casner, MLFarmer

**Public:**  reporter from Coast Star

1. ﻿The Minutes of August 16, 2023 were approved as written.
2. **911 Flags**. There was very positive feedback from the public on the 911 flags that were raised by both Avon and Bradley on their respective sides of the lake. There was discussion about possibly formalizing the flag raisings with a ceremony next year.
3. **Geese management.**  Services provided by Galaxy Geese Removal for September were observed to be very effective in controlling the presence of geese on the lake. The Bradley members of the Commission all noted that streets and sidewalks on the Bradley side were noticeably clearer of the presence of geese (and their droppings) during September. Councilman Gubitosi stated that he had spoken with Mayor Fox of Bradley and they had agreed to continue with the pilot program with Galaxy, and the associated cost share with Avon, subject to the recommendation by the Commission that the program be continued. **All present at the meeting agreed that the program be continued.**
4. **Living Shoreline on the Avon Side of the Lake.** Avon has received additional funding and contractor’s bids are due soon for extension of the living shoreline from Second Avenue in Avon west up to Main Street. Based on a public meeting that was held in Avon on August 14, 2023, it is understood that depending on contractor’s bids, contruction is planned to commence this fall.

The presence of phragmites on the Avon side of the lake towards Main Street was discussed, with the concern of the continued spread of phragmites to other parts of the lake. It was noted that during the above-mentioned August 14 meeting, the designer of the living shoreline (Matrix) had stated that phragmites would be excavated and removed in locations where the living shoreline was to be extended (Avon side from Second Ave to Main Street). However, Matrix did note that phragmites are very difficult to control and that it was possible that they could return even after being excavated and that other treatment methods may be required in the future (e.g., use of herbicides). During this discussion, Bradley members of the Commission had asked that consideration be given to asking the contractor if they would also address the phragmites that are present at other limited locations of the lake (including the Bradley side) with proportional cost share between Bradley and Avon. It was noted that this issue can be raised with the selected contractor.

1. **REPI funded Sylvan Lake Restoration Technical Advisory Committee (funded by DOD Department of Defense)**

The Commission discussed the status of the The Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program funding that is currently in place for planning and preliminary design of dredging and restoration of Sylvan Lake. It is understood that something on the order of $150,000 has been granted to the consortium proposing the project with that funding lasting through 2027. There was discussion about an additional funding opportunity through another program (REFI?). The same group that had obtained funding under REPI were recommending that a tactical committee be put in place to meet within the next month, and that those proposed concepts be shared with the public. More is to be learned about this soon.

There are currently several restoration and improvement programs proposed for the lake (e.g., continuation of the living shoreline on the Avon side, recommendations relating to proposed repairs of the dilapidated bulkhead on the Bradley side, sidewalk or other improvements such as tree plantings on the Bradley side, and the long sought- after dredging of the lake). **All members present agreed that these measures should be looked at holistically and that each action being planned for should be made with consideration to the other potential actions.**

1. **Memorial Tree Gift.** Avon has advised the Commission that when Megan Page's father, Mr. Ennis, passed away, funds were donated for a tree to be planted in his memory and that funds were deposited into the ‘old’ Sylvan Lake Account. The tree – a Maple Autumn Blaze - was planted in Spring 2023 on the side of the Avon firehouse, facing Main Street. Avon has made the Commission aware of the donation and that it has now received an $1,100 invoice for the balance due (attached). Avon recommended that, subject to the approval of the Commission, payment for the tree be made from the ‘old’ Sylvan Lake Account, where the donated funds had previously been deposited.  A Resolution is needed from this Commission to recognize the donation and approve the payment.

**The following resolution was passed unanimously by the voting members present:**

***Resolved: Conditioned on sufficient funds existing in the “old” Sylvan Lake Account, the Sylvan Lake Joint Commission recommends that the $1,100 balance due be paid to LB Forcellati and Sons.***

1. **Reconciling old, dedicated accounts**. Avon is in the process of reconciling several dedicated accounts, among which is the ‘old’ Sylvan Lake account. The Commission recommends that the Boroughs of Bradley and Avon work together to close out any old accounts associated with Sylvan Lake.
2. **Status of letter sent to Congressman Frank Pallone** **regarding funding for Dredging and Improvements to Sylvan Lake**. Last Fall a letter was sent to Congressman Pallone seeking assistance/funding associated with $2.6 Billion for coastal restoration included in the Inflation Reduction Act. (Congressman Chris Smith was copied on the letter). There has been no response received from either Congressman. The Commission agreed that a follow-up request for funding should be made to Congressman Pallone.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Matthews, Acting Secretary

