

OSWEGO LAKE WATERSHED COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 10, 2020

The *vision* of the Oswego Lake Watershed Council is a healthy properly functioning watershed. This vision is of streams, wetlands, riparian forests, upland forests/trees, Oswego Lake, and other natural resources working together as a sustainable ecological system that supports good water quality, productive habitat for native plant and animal communities, and enhanced quality of life.

The *mission* of the Oswego Lake Watershed Council is to foster stewardship, education, participation, and financial support for the purpose of the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and maintenance of watershed functions that achieve and sustain a healthy Watershed.

1. Welcome and Introductions for virtual meeting: Stephanie Wagner, Mike Buck, Mark Rosenkranz, Dwight Sangrey, Jim Fisher, Mary Ratcliff, Sarah Asby, Tom Bland, Tom Berridge, Denny Barnes, Barbara Fisher along with Jack Halsey, Watershed Coordinator, and Kat Maloney, Community Outreach Specialist.

2. Operations

• Minutes:

Resolved: Minutes for March 13, 2020 were unanimously approved with Tom Bland abstaining since he was absent.

• Finance Report: Tom reviewed the 1st Quarter Financials beginning with our bank account balance of \$25,315. He said that does not count an invoice to VOL HOA for around \$2,000. With the added insurance coverage provisions for harassment and care for children/minors in our mission work, premiums have doubled. On a brighter point, Tom noted our income exceeding \$2500. We are currently spending money from the prior year so we are not at a real loss. A close look at the budget shows that we are under budget in most columns. In general, Tom confidently said we were doing quite well and in good position for “catching up” on projects post Covid-19. He will be filling out Form 990 for submission by May 15th. A few Directors still need to fill out and return the conflict of interest form to him. This is on the Drive for people to use and send to Tom.

• Volunteer hour tracking: Jack will send out link after this meeting as usual. Please report any issues you might have to him.

3. Reports

• Watershed Coordinator--Jack

• Projects: Jack began by encouraging Directors to track their volunteer hours and record these. He noted that about half are doing this and wants to see full participation. Due to the social distancing at stay-at-home guidelines, most projects are under delays. Volunteer events have all been cancelled. These do not constitute major issues, just a default in Jack’s estimation. His eyes are still focused on the future and seeing what happens as conditions warrant more group engagement.

• Email Auto forwarding: A new watershed email forwarding system has been set

up with a few Directors notified about this reset procedure.

- **Background Check Policy:** In reviewing this policy draft, Mark requested clarification in the document regarding limited volunteer activity—located in the second paragraph of the policy statement. Jack responded to the query and let Directors know that this policy was drafted and edited over the last six weeks. Mark made the motion to approve and Mary seconded.

Resolution: Directors, in a unanimous vote, approved the Background Check Policy. Jack will be conducting these through the auspices of the Lake Oswego School District but will be constricted until offices re-open.

- **State of the Watershed Video:** Kat and Jack released and posted a short video since the Watershed event had to be cancelled. It gives a fun recap of the past year with a look ahead at this coming year's engagement. Stephanie said we still have adequate funding for contracting necessary work. This will decrease our account when it actually can be scheduled. Westlake crew still plans on using contractors with social distance guidelines followed. Jack said that Wisdom of the Elders has shut down their operation. Tom raised the issue of bird nesting in terms of herbicide treatment, and Jack is checking with Matt Stein who knows regulations and protocols regarding this care. Jack will email the video link to Directors later in the day, but the video is on the website and social media platforms.

- **Outreach Specialist—Kat**

- **State of the Watershed—Virtual Event:** Kat is pursuing formation of the Neighborhood Association (NA) Urban Forest Committees. Her initial outreach will be to NA chairs and to Directors who are already involved in specific neighborhood associations.

- **Arbor Week – Tree Heroes:** Kat organized this encouragement to neighbors to pull ivy and free trees and then send pictures. She said there was lots of engagement on social media with hopeful participation in actual ivy removal. Tom Bland said that one of his Upland neighbors had requested clarity on what was needed to perform this activity. Tom gave the contact information to Kat who will follow up with him.

- **Urban Tree Surveys—help with testing:** Kat created this survey for use in the field using i-Tree and doing data testing. Directors are encouraged to participate by sending an email to Kat. On the site are questions related to trees. Kat said she had ten participants so far. Mike mentioned that Kathleen Wiens had emailed him about the possibility of each NA having its own tool inventory which could include i-Tree equipment. Mary suggested using the Library for deposit of tools that could be checked out. Mike had suggested to Kathleen the possibility of NA's utilizing the NEG funding opportunity for purchase of these tools. Kat will check out the Library possibility. Kat will make sure that liability language and awareness of risk comes with any release of such tools. And a link to show people how to properly and safely remove ivy is in the works. Jack said that OLWC has been in discussion with the LO Green Team regarding this media help. Tom Berridge said that urban forestry work would require more than one person's involvement due to safety considerations. Stephanie said that the activity would be primarily designed for people working on their own property rather than focused on natural areas. Arbor week activities will encourage participation by another yet follow social distancing guidelines.

- **City of LO Charter X Amendment:** Stephanie said this has been stalled. The Mayor gave pushback to an alternative amendment idea on the ballot. His view was that if proponents of the ballot measure received the necessary signatures, that Council would consider another amendment. But nothing is moving forward with this shut-down situation. The deadline for

signatures is the end of May. Of course, a charter amendment could still be entered at another election time. Stephanie seeks clarity from the City before continuing since the proponent of this Charter amendment can continue to bring this apparently ill-advised proposal to voters. She said that most Councilors want a better, alternative amendment. Stephanie promises to keep an eye on this.

- **Stewardship Committee update on Hope Church/Springbrook Creek Project:** Mike gave an update on this project which is in “transition” mode. He noted the successful restorative change to this habitat space and the connection to the French School staff and students. Over the next weeks, he plans to remove the remaining blackberries in the riparian area. Given the soil conditions, watering new native plantings was required during the middle to late summers over the last three years. He said this culminated in a very high percentage rate of survivors and the area is regenerating and looking so healthy compared to five years ago when it was in a downward spiral. Mulching the plants helped retain summer soil moisture also.

4. New Business

- **Do we need a policy for removing material from a natural area?** (Stephanie had to absent herself to attend a Science Fair.) Jack talked about what we wanted to accomplish with these project areas as the beginning of an ongoing discussion regarding best management practice. Denny had concerns about a fallen tree in the VOL project site. He said that neighbors saw work as more of a landscaping endeavor. Neighbors do not understand leaving trees where they fall. Jack said that though we do not have a stated policy, we do follow restoration management procedure. Snags are left due to their habitat values. A distinction is made between recreation areas and habitat areas. Jack and members agreed that the best place to work this out would be within the Stewardship Committee. Dwight commented that Mountain Park residents sometimes object or fail to see the role of detritus on the ground when that is encouraged in open space areas but may not be aesthetic. The meeting ended with a good discussion on the merits of organic debris.

5. Public Comments and Announcements: None in this virtual context

6. Meeting adjourns: 9:25am

Next Meeting virtual on May 8, 2020