

OSWEGO LAKE WATERSHED COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, February 12, 2021

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: (Online attendance) Stephanie Wagner, Larry Zurcher, Dwight Sangrey, Mike Buck, Mary Ratcliff, Jim Fisher, Barbara Fisher, Tom Bland, Thomas Benson, Denny Barnes, Mark Rosenkranz, Tom Berridge, Mary Ratcliff; with Jack Halsey, Watershed Coordinator, and Kat Maloney, Community Outreach Specialist.

2. Operations

- **Minutes: Resolved: Minutes for January 8, 2021 were unanimously approved.**
- **Finance Report:** Tom mentioned the link for the **2020 Year End Financial** statement that was posted in the agenda. He reported a current balance of \$32,157 but disclosed we had used up our unrestricted funds so we came up short \$400-500 even with donations. Tom's revelatory lesson for us: We need to raise more unrestricted funds through increased fundraising activities or marketing. Financial outlays on Education and Outreach, for example, Kat's planning labor for the Tree Summit, newsletter formation, etc., comes from unrestricted funding. Some staff time and a few miscellaneous activities also falls under this umbrella. Stewardship Committee meeting time can be related to project grants and Equity Action can come under CSWCD funding. CSWCD requires a report on how grant money was spent in the unrestricted categories. Tom further clarified that our Board's work on Strategic Planning also falls under unrestricted or general funds. So developing partnerships, site visits, stakeholder relationships, etc. all become channels for engagement and future contributions hopefully. A \$397 plant reimbursement by the High School Green Team coming will be received soon. Our cash flow, according to Dwight, is very good. He thanked Jack and Stephanie for applying for a \$5000 COVID-19 grant. Bottom line: more serious efforts have to be made in fundraising or we stop doing things unrelated to projects.
- **2021 Budget:** Tom said that in some of the grants, the City pays us upfront for activities that we have not yet performed. That cash is carried over and reflected in a slightly later version of the budget. Jack said that the most significant changes that occurred between versions of the budget reflect real end of year numbers (the earlier version was estimated balances) for carry-in. Adjustments were made to balance between activities the expenses like payroll taxes. Lesson on fundraising according to Tom going forward: our target for bare minimum individual fundraising is \$15,000. We need to beat that for 2021. Currently we have no reserve per se according to Jack. All the money that comes in this year will be spent. Ideally, we have to raise more than this. Dwight moved for accepting the budget. Stephanie asked for one amendment: a reclassification to separate the corporate donations out from donation income. Tom seconds.

Resolved: Budget accepted for 2021 in a unanimous vote.

- **Board Hours Tracking:**
- **Site Report: Village on the Lake by Stewardship Coordinator, Mike Buck--**Mike highlighted certain

objective ecological functions that are indicative of restoration improvement. While mentioning that assessment of planting and reseeding work were hard to evaluate in the middle of winter, his report focused mainly on the hydrological improvement that had occurred and how ongoing maintenance will increase water quality. With residential development surrounding this micro-watershed system, water artificially enters faster from the surrounding impervious structures of houses and streets. Grasses and sedges as well as cuttings and bare-root plants have been inserted to help slow and filter the water conveyances. Culverts have been cleaned and kept running free of obstacles. Having neighbors cooperate by not throwing landscape debris into these drainages will help prevent impairment. 90% of the invasives have been removed but some selective herbicide treatment will be needed where poison oak thrives. With springtime emerging, a more thorough assessment on supplemental planting will be needed. Mike highlighted the unique characteristics of this area and hopes to see renewed life forms after reversing the invasive dominance. Rose family species, as part of a larger natural diversity, is particularly desired for habitat value. Mike continues to look at the ecosystem services this area provides and is vigilant about minimizing threats to its integrity. Cooperation with partners and stakeholders is key so that neighbors form a relationship to the land and value its role in community health.

(**Secretary's Note:** Mike had to leave this meeting for an Urban-ERC Conference. The following minutes were taken by Dwight. Very grateful!)

3. Staff Reports

Watershed Coordinator--Jack

- **Westlake Project Updates:** Tree work has begun at **Westlake** with about 50% now completed. Signage has been installed and there have already been some responses. There was then discussion about the potential to engage and involve representatives from Indigenous groups who could advise us on ways to incorporate cultural elements in this project, especially if the potential for this becoming a demonstration site is realized.
- **Annual Report:** The **Annual Report** is being prepared with a target date for completion in March.
- **Green Team:** Students participated in a project at Westlake in January.
- **Kat's Job Review:** Kat Maloney has been with us for one year. Jack is coordinating a staff review and will be sending an evaluative form to Board members.

Outreach Specialist--Kat

- **Urban Forest Committees:** Kat has met with the **Urban Forest Committee** that will be having monthly meetings. The committee is looking for increased representation from the Neighborhood Associations, and Kat would welcome Board Members' help in finding people.
- **Arbor Week/Month:** April is **Arbor Month**. The City is looking for suggestions on agenda items to celebrate this event.
- **Newsletter:** Kat will be preparing a **Newsletter** and requested suggestions for input.

Work Plans 2021: Jack reported on and distributed a draft **Work Plan** with a request for Board review.

4. Committee Reports

- **Stewardship Committee Report--Tom Berridge (no report given--see addendum email from Stephanie below)**
- **Education and Outreach Committee--Stephanie (no report given--see below)**
 - **Soil Your Undies--April/Earth Day:**
- **Equity Action Team--Mark**

5. Old Business

- **Strategic Planning Update--Review and be ready to adopt in March?**

6. New Business

- **LO Reads--invitation to participate**

7. Public Comments and Announcements: Denny reported on a project to propagate Pacific Yew trees.

8. Meeting Adjourns: 9:50am

Next Meeting: March 12, 2021 8:00am - 9:30am

Email to Board from Stephanie post meeting on 2/12/21:

Thanks again for a good meeting this morning. Here are the updates from the Education and Outreach Committee:

February 2021 Newsletter: To be distributed on Feb. 23rd. Articles submitted to Kat for formatting by Feb. 16th.

Articles:

- 1. Book Review - “the soil will save us” - Stephanie (in preparation for April Soil Your Undies Kick Off)**
- 2. Mason Bees - Sharon (information on how to get ready to introduce mason bees into your garden. Emphasis on no-pesticide gardening.)**
- 3. Green Team Update - Nate**
- 4. Featured OLWC Project - Need to check with Stewardship Committee**
- 5. How You Can Be Involved - Volunteer Calendar and Urban Forest Committees**
- 6. Friends Group Highlighted? Assigned?**

Soil Your Undies Events - Month of April

- 1. April 8th - Kristen Ohlson speaker on soils and climate action. Part of the LOSN Community Forums programs held monthly. We need to help publicize and find discussion leaders.**
- 2. April 22nd - Soil Your Undies - Healthy Soils Forum. Program explaining what makes up healthy soil and how Soil Your Undies works. Zoom - presented by OLWC. Need to develop format and develop materials for discussion group leaders. Publicity and sign ups need to start by the first of March.**
- 3. April 24th - tighty whitey handout at local high schools in the morning.**
- 4. July 13th - Revel your Undies Event on Zoom - organized by OLWC.**

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Many thanks,

Stephanie