LAKE MASPENOCK WEED MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL ADVISORY GROUP

HOPKINTON MA 10748

PUBLIC FORUM #1 MINUTES

February 9, 2016

Note: Meeting was filmed in its entirety by HCAM

Committee Members in Attendance:

John Westerling, Dept. of Public Works

Jeff Barnes, Conservation Commission

Cynthia Esthimer, At Large/Vice Chair

Jamie Goncalves, At Large/Chairman

Drew Logan, At Large/Secretary

David Mitchell, Environmental Consultant

Eric Sonnet, Parks & Rec. Dept.

John Westerling started the meeting promptly at 7:00 pm by introducing the members of the committee and welcoming the attendees in the audience. Approximately 15 people were in attendance in addition to the committee. Jaimie Goncalves again thanked those in attendance, explained the purpose of the forum and turned the meeting over to Jeff Barnes who presented a detailed presentation. (attached) Comments and questions from the audience were held until after the presentation was complete.

Questions/Comments from the audience, in order:

* What is the timing for the committee to make its recommendations to the town? Specifically, will recommendations requiring funding be made in time to have a warrant at this year’s Town Meeting. Committee: yes, it is our intent to complete our work and submit any funding requests, if needed, in time for Town Meeting.
* A concern about drawdowns was expressed. The drawdowns seem inconsistent each year, may have a negative impact on quality of life and property values for homeowners. Additionally, a question was asked about whether anyone has measured the effectiveness of the drawdown as the questioner could not find anything on public record. Impact on West Main Street area was noted. Committee: weed surveys conducted over the last several years have shown a positive effect of the extended drawdowns on controlling the invasive species. These surveys are available at [www.LMPA.org](http://www.LMPA.org), the Lake Maspenock Preservation Association website. The variability of drawdowns is explained 2 fold; first, the extended drawdowns (up to 8’) are conducted every 3 years according to the Order of Conditions. In other years, the drawdown is scheduled for up to 5’. These have historically been done in order to allow for repairs on structures such as seawalls, around the lake. Precipitation levels over the time period have a major effect on the levels of drawdown any given year. Shallower areas, such as those around W Main Street, will be more significantly impacted by the drawdown, however those are also the areas most impacted by weeds.
* Why wasn’t aeration included in the list of considerations since that has been discussed previously? Committee: it was discussed and considered, we will put it back on our list to show that. Via regular water testing, we noted the level of dissolved oxygen in the lake is not at levels in which aeration has been shown to be effective.
* The committee should reconsider dry dredging. We need to get rid of the muck which contains the nutrients feeding the weeds. The other treatment options will only be band aids.
* There are many owners on the lake that still use commercial fertilizers. The town should ban their use on the lake. Committee: in addition to treatment options, the committee will also include recommendations for education and non-treatment activities that will assist with weed control. It’s tough to regulate something like fertilizer use, but we have to keep educating.
* We need to convert the remaining septic systems to town sewer. Committee: The lake surveys have shown considerable improvement in water quality after the majority of Hopkinton homes were put on town sewer. The lake quality today is actually quite good in terms of phosphorous and clarity. Although septic systems still remain, they have been improved over the years.
* After Cynthia Esthimer reviewed the interim results of the lake survey (almost 90 participants thus far), a comment was made encouraging the committee to not only consider the impacts to human health and recreational uses of the lake but also the environmental ecosystem.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.