

President: Karl Koenigsbauer
Vice President: Nick Dibble
Treasurer: Ann Hunsicker
Secretary: Lori Kempton
Board Members:
Ed Borden
Carol Martin
Susan McKenna
Elaine Carpenter
Mark Bechtold

ECHO LAKE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
September 19, 2024

This meeting was conducted via a hybrid model of in-person and Google Meet.

Present: Karl Koenigsbauer, Nick Dibble, Ann Hunsicker, Lori Kempton, Ed Borden, Carol Martin, Susan McKenna, Elaine Carpenter.

Welcome: President Karl Koenigsbauer called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Secretary Report: Lori Kempton

Motion was made and seconded to accept the ELPA board meeting minutes of May 16, 2024. All in favor. Approved. Please see the report on ELPA website: www.echolakeassociation.net

Treasurer's Report: Ann Hunsicker

Motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report as appended below. All in favor. Approved.

Discussion:

Color Challenge brought in \$6538.06 as net income.

Payment for use of the NorthWoods Stewardship Center building for the Annual Meeting.

Over \$86,000 in the contingency fund set up as a ladder so that the money could be available if needed. In a CD at Edward Jones and in a CD at Community National Bank.

To postpone new contingency fund goal-setting decision and decision on addition to be made to the contingency fund to the January ELPA Board meeting.

Worker's Compensation Audit occurred – thank you to Carol Martin for her assistance.

Received the first payment of \$4000 of the Watershed Grant. We have not yet received the Aquatic Nuisance Grant. Laurie Gee will be working on the final reports for the 2024 season, which must be submitted before we receive the final grant payments.

Ann and Carol reported to the board about a new law for Vermont non-profits that went into effect July 1, 2024: The Vermont Dept of Labor mandates that non-profits pay 1% of gross wages as an unemployment tax (which came to approx. \$260 for 2024) OR Risk someone filing an unemployment claim. Will have to budget this additional tax expense for 2025.

Grants: Reported by Ann Hunsicker

Received the first payment of \$4000 of the Watershed Grant. We have not yet received the Aquatic Nuisance Grant. Laurie Gee will be working on the final reports for the 2024 season, which must be submitted before we receive the final grant payments. Volunteers must report their volunteer hours to Laurie Gee. For ELPA to qualify to receive grants of up to \$21,900 and up to 75% of the financial support of the access greeter program, ELPA must demonstrate volunteer hours performed to support 25% of the greeter program costs.

Investment: Peter Bestenbostel / Reported by Ann Hunsicker

\$27,000 in the savings account. Peter B recommends to invest most of that money into a 6-month CD, which would then be available for use in the spring, should it be needed. Board discussion of amount and agreed upon \$15,000 - \$20,000 to be invested into a new CD.

School Program: Peter Bestenbostel / Reported by Ann Hunsicker

Siskin field trip did not occur this past year, therefore, that money will be available for this school year programming. ELPA bought water bottles for the Charleston Elementary School students, which should be enough for two school years.

Merchandise: Ann Hunsicker (and Holly Bull and Dawn Bechtold)

Merchandise is made-to-order. Only exception to this is that ELPA bought 50 refrigerator magnets ahead of time for 2024, and 25 of the magnets have already been sold. Discussion about putting merchandise at Morgan Country Store, however, it was felt that it may be too costly to buy merchandise that is not made-to-order.

Lay Monitor Report – Report provided by Tom Wagner and Mike Vinton

2024 was a repeat of 2023. Heavy rains and washouts made for a very turbid lake. In June our Secchi disc readings were 12 meters with the naked eye and 13 meters with the view tube. By July these readings dropped to 5.5 meters and 6.5 meters. By August 6th when our Limnologist, Mark Mitchell, spent the morning with us conducting his own additional testing, these depths were 4.25 meters and 4.6 meters. He informed me that the previous day Seymour's readings were 2.5 meters. Water quality test results will be available for release perhaps by year end. During the three-month sampling time we received 34.94 inches in 2024 vs 25.08 in 2023. We had 17.47 inches in July of this year compared to 11.2 in 2023. Ed Borden admirably substituted for Mike Vinton as our boat pilot for a late July collection.

LakeWise Report – Report provided by Tom Wagner

2024 was a very busy year for our Lake Wise program.

Alison Marchione, the Vermont State Assessor visited in June and conducted assessments on 4 properties. All 4 properties were granted Lake Wise status: Matt Breton & Lori Kempton; Pam & Karl Koenigsbauer; Cindy & John Stevens; and Linda Studer, an upgrade from the Lake Wise Certificate.

As part of the Lake Watershed Action Plan 5 properties were assessed by Bevin Barber-Campbell of the Orleans Natural Resource Conservation District. All 5 properties received Lake Wise Status: Diane Colburn; Beth Mallary; Pat Moulton; Terry & Jean O'Brien; and George Thompson.

Alison returned at the end of August and assessed 5 properties. All 5 received Lake Wise status: Jeffrey & Nancie Fernandez; Dawn Tischbein; Sarah Mallary; The Allen Camp West Echo Lake Road; Danny & Yvette Marsh.

9 of the above properties received the highest Lake Wise status, the Lake Wise Award and 5 the Lake Wise Certificate. To receive the Award, properties must pass all 4 assessment categories: driveway; house & septic; recreational area; and the shoreline. To receive the Lake Wise Certificate, properties must pass 2 out of 4 assessment categories. For the 5 properties that received the Certificate, the remedies to bring them up to Lake Wise Award are relatively minor, and generally mean that more vegetation is needed. For one property it also meant implementing Best Management Practices to control water flow, such as infiltration drip edges around the house.

With these additions Echo Lake has 41 properties with the Award totaling 13,957 feet of frontage or 64.05% of our shoreline. There are an additional 10 properties that have achieved the Certificate level, and if these are included in the shoreline, we have 15,531 feet in Lake Wise and 71% of the shoreline. We have 21,792 feet of frontage on Echo.

LAKE WISE GARDEN TOUR

Our Lake Wise Gargen Tour was held in late July. It was a joint effort with Seymour Lake, and by all accounts a great success with 20ish attendees. We began with 2 spectacular properties on Seymour, and their gardens were magnificent.

The first, Ted Jewett's, was a very formal garden style, beautifully manicured and landscaped. But interestingly the owner has a naturally seeded garden that provides a long 60-foot buffer along about 400 feet of the shoreline between his lawn and the lake. He enjoys how this looks, and he will allow it to move further back from the shoreline this coming year. In other words, he will stop mowing and let nature take its course. He reported it took him 3 years to reach LW Award status because of a culvert and stream issue and lack of vegetation.

Our next stop at a much smaller site had a mixture of some formal gardens and vegetation that looks like it was always there, but as David and Nancy Bulloch told us, they are constantly either transplanting from the woods or buying trees, or shrubs to plant, so that much of the property is covered in vegetation. They reported that they planted 40 Rhododendrons this year, inspired by a high school friend of Tom Wagner's who has extensive gardens (Birchwood and open to the public) on Bailey Hazen's Notch Road in Montgomery. Much of their vegetation is designed to slow and redirect water as the property sits on a relatively steep bank. There is minimal lawn, and they

also reported attaining LW Award was a 3-year process due to lack of shoreline vegetation and some erosion concerns.

The next stop was Steve and Ann Gratton's property on Echo. While there were not the extensive gardens the first two properties had, their landscaping was designed to control water flow and erosion. They demonstrated the use of a swale to direct water into a small stream hidden in thick vegetation, and then how a series of 6 man-made almost invisible miniature dams, complete with resident frogs and toads, held back the water so that normally the 6th and final pool at the lake's edge contained no water. Their very esthetic winding path of crushed stones acts as a further barrier for water flow. They also used an excavator to drastically reduce the steepness of their property in front of their house to manage erosion, and they installed a state-of-the-art Presby septic system. In his comments to the attendees, Steve told them that he feels before attempting to attain Lake Wise, property owners should install a modern septic system. Steve and Ann achieved LW Award on their first assessment. They will be adding a large garden next year at the top of their property on a bank in front of their parking area, again to reduce the possibility of water runoff.

We then headed to Tom & Amy Wagner's property, which took 4 years to attain the LW Award, because of the need for vegetation to mature. These owners realized that there was almost no vegetation on this 225-foot shoreline property where the house would be constructed, so it was designed and landscaped to add extensive vegetation. The shoreland permit stated that 3 square feet of vegetation would be removed, and 4,950 square feet of vegetation would be added. Their gardens are mostly wild and naturally seeded. Because it was a new construction, several Best Management Practices were utilized to reduce runoff. For instance, there is a large rain garden to catch water runoff from the road, infiltration drip edges, and infiltration steps.

Those in attendance expressed an interest in having a similar event next year, and several mentioned that they learned so much because of the tour. And that was the goal!!

Lakebed Survey Report – Fall 2024 Report provided by Peggy Stevens

First, thanks to our surveyors: Susan Czerepak, Tom and Amy Wagner, Lori Kempton, Holly Bull, Mary Kenison, Steve Gratton, Peter Bestenbostel and Ann Hunsicker, Hugh Hawkins, Peggy Stevens.

Now that the Lakebed Survey season is coming to a close, we can report no AIS have been sighted in our lake. Yea! This after a near-miss intercepted in September by our first line of defense Access Greeter staff. Thank you, Ryan!

Even though we were short on surveyors after we lost three veterans (Larry Martin, Patti Lennon and MaryAnne O'Brien) we have three new volunteers who we will make sure participate in VIP training next Spring so they can be certified to take on sections that need coverage. Meanwhile, Peggy provided informational resources to Mark Shattuck and Alan Brouillette to orient them to our effort. Another resource packet will be requested from Kim Jensen, our lakes and Ponds Coordinator, and provided to Beth Lecours, who has most recently offered to become a surveyor.

Peggy will request a schedule of VIP trainings from Kim Jensen for next Spring. As always, we encourage all property owners to become VIPs and to become familiar with and monitor their own lakebed for any changes in or unusual vegetation. Peggy will continue to be available to consult on any questions that may arise.

Holly Bull and Mary Kenison have covered much of the lakebed again this year, including sections once surveyed by Larry, Patti and MaryAnne; thank you!

In summary, vegetation has been reduced in some areas and has increased in others, notably in the Big-leaf pondweed (BLP) beds around the N, W and S shores of the lake. Eastern end of the lake is strangely much less vegetated in areas previously more dense.

Water clarity has improved since July flooding events, but increase in lake depth and turbidity in July and August may have suppressed growth on the lakebed from the Access around to the inlet on the S/E bed of the lake. Peter B. reports a healthy forest of BLP and clasping leaf on his end that seems to be turning color like the fall leaves? Curious!

Holly also continues to monitor water quality, including LaRosa grant sampling and cyanobacteria testing. Tom has been doing lay monitoring with Ed Borden, along with managing Lakewise. These projects complement our Access greeter and lakebed survey projects. Huge thanks to both for their efforts to preserve our A1 water quality.

Petitions to upgrade Echo's classification to A1 status and to have a permanent ban on wake boats in our lake have been endorsed by the Charleston Selectboard and both await a decision by DEC/ANR. This petition process has been prolonged, and it is hoped the outcome will be favorable for Echo. Our Water Quality Committee has been diligent in seeing these petitions through, thanks especially to Holly and Tom.

Buoys work, need more! Two buoys were deployed in the lake this year in hopes of indicating where the 200 foot "no wake zone-5mph" is. The no-wake zone is essential to protect recreational use and reduce shoreline erosion and disturbance of the lakebed which releases legacy phosphorus. Peggy observed that when the buoys were set on the Northwoods to Moulton Bay end of the lake earlier in the summer, boats were moving more slowly, consequently stirring up less of the lake bottom phosphorus in these relatively shallow waters. Once removed to the Duck Rock end of the lake, motor boats returned to going too fast in water too shallow. We need more buoys, in both places mentioned as well as on the shallow section between Birch Point and Thompsons and probably over in the Dickey Brook area. We recommend extending the Access Greeter and lakebed survey season to end of September since traffic has been steady at the access. These efforts will require increased funding.

Peggy is requesting all survey docs be submitted by Sept 30 in order to send our report to Kim.

Water Quality Report: Report provided by Holly Bull

LWAP - Our LWAP is almost complete. Patrick Hurley hopes to have the final report available by November.

LaRosa Tributary Testing - Another year in the books. The preliminary results will have to go through quality assurance protocol and should be ready to share around December. We are going to request that some of the streams along E. Echo Lake Rd., where they put in new culverts, are added as sampling sites. These streams go across the NorthWoods property.

Cyanobacteria Monitoring - We asked for, and was granted, an additional site for monitoring. The new site is Dickey Brook. We do have a colony of Gloeotrichia, which is a form of blue-green algae (mostly benign, rarely blooms). Last year, the colony showed up on September 23rd. I've recently found out that once a lake has a colony you can't get rid of it. All we can do is monitor when it shows up, its intensity, and how long it stays at the surface of the lake before returning to the lake bed.

Buoys - Our Buoy Educational Project went off without a hitch. It was well received and hopefully boaters learned something from having them out in the water.

Request to the Board: Permission to deploy the buoys again next summer. We would again target shallow areas like Moulton Bay and the south side of the lake.

Wake Boat Petition - DEC Director Pete Laflamme stated at the FOVLAP annual meeting that there are 9 petitions submitted to restrict wake boat usage. Our petition will be evaluated in November to determine if it has validity to move forward.

Greeters - Many other lakes in our area keep their greeters working well past Labor Day. For example, Lake Salem goes until the end of September and Seymour until the end of October.

Request to the Board: The Water Quality Committee is making a formal request that the Board votes to keep our greeters through the month of September starting in 2025.

Work in Progress – The WQ Committee will be working on making our public access area Lake Wise. We hope to also plant cattails or bulrush at the mouth of Dickey Brook to promote water filtration and erosion control. We're continuing to work with/encourage NorthWoods to tackle the phragmites that are growing in Moulton Bay.

Board response to the Water Quality Committee's request for the ELPA Board's permission to deploy buoys again next summer:

Ed made a motion to set out buoys again in 2025 and increase the number of buoys placed around the lake from 2 to 4. Seconded. All in favor. Approved.

Greeter Report: Karl Koenigsbauer

While a good deal of damp weather played a role in our coverage of the access for the months of July and August, I am pleased to report that the access was covered for 12 hours, seven days a week this year. Adding an additional paid greeter this year allowed us to have ideal coverage, especially on the weekends when the access is generally the busiest. Starting the program the Friday before Memorial Day, may need to be reviewed next spring given the volume of anglers who found their way to the lake that weekend. The bass fishing was excellent this year resulting in perhaps the busiest Memorial Day weekend I have witnessed in several years. We plan on assigning two greeters next year to provide additional support. We will also consider the pros and cons of starting the program earlier than the Memorial Day weekend, as well as extending the coverage to September 30. Our program closed on September 15 this year.

We are still entering data with respect to the number of inspections that our four greeters and two volunteers conducted but an early review reflects an increase compared to last year. We inspected 501 boats in the summer of 2023 and it looks like we may be over 700 plus inspections this summer. Kayakers and dedicated anglers tend to lead the way with arrivals to the access. Recreational boaters (waterskiers) and skis, round out the majority of watercraft that greeters see on a daily and weekly basis.

We had one sample of Eurasian milfoil discovered and verified that it was indeed milfoil. The sample that was dry was found inside a kayak. We assume the sample entered the kayak on a paddle and was not detected until a close inspection was made prior to launching the kayak. Much credit goes to Ryan Hryckiewicz who discovered the sample. The owner of the kayak was extremely cooperative and appreciated the way Ryan handled the matter.

I cannot end this report without a huge vote of appreciation and thanks to our greeters this summer. The access coverage was outstanding this year due to the commitment of each greeter to safeguard the lake from aquatic invasive species entering the lake. My wish is that Dean White, Josh Brien, Ryan Hryckiewicz, Cheryl Hryckiewicz and Peter Bestenbostel will return next year, as they bring dedication and a genuine appreciation for the natural beauty that surrounds the lake and assurance that the lake will continue to be free of unwanted hitchhikers entering the lake. A commitment that lake residents are extremely grateful for given the challenges of maintaining a pristine lake!

Discussion: Karl provided update on the total number of watercraft inspected this summer: 847. Concerns were raised about the issue of swimmers at the beach taking up parking space at the access. Some boaters had to be turned away due to no parking space available at the access. Discussion of possible placement of signs about parking only for vehicles using the boat access.

Board response to the Water Quality Committee's request for increasing Access Greeter Coverage for 2025 to go longer in September:

Discussion was held about potentially having greeter coverage:

*Through the end of September

*Through the end of September, possibly only Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

*Starting earlier in May due to the number of fishing boats that entered the lake for bass fishing (at least during weekends in May)

*Potential of 2 greeters at the access on holiday weekends when very busy

It was decided by the board to further this discussion and to table the decision-making to the January board meeting, at which time the financial information will be more clear.

ELPA Committees: Karl Koenigsbauer

Any questions about a particular issue should be directed to the Committee's designated Chairperson as listed below:

Water Quality: Holly Bull

LakeWise: Tom Wagner

Greeter Program: Karl Koenigsbauer

Lakebed Survey: Peggy Stevens

Lay Monitor: Holly Bull

LWAP: Tom Wagner

Membership: Elaine Carpenter

Merchandise: Ann Hunsicker, Holly Bull, Dawn Bechtold

Color Challenge: Chairperson Needed. Committee has been formed, consisting of members Ann Hunsicker, Karl and Pam Koenigsbauer, Holly Bull, Elaine Carpenter, Susan McKenna, Laurie Gee, and Bill and Lynne Mann.

Carol made a motion that committee chairpersons do not need to be board members. Seconded. All in favor. Approved.

Membership: Elaine Carpenter

82 members, 71 families, and 12 individuals have paid 2024 dues thus far. 10 new members this year. 41 members donate more, in addition to their dues.

Plans for letters to go out in October and December to those remaining members who have not yet paid their 2024 dues.

Discussion: Karl reported that a "Season's Greeting" email was sent to members in 2023. May consider sending a Season's Greeting email in Nov/Dec this year asking for donations, with the mention of a target of increasing the funds in the contingency fund to the initial goal of \$100,000. Nick to draft.

“Phragmites Phighters” (name credit to Holly Bull): A small group recently met at the west end of the lake and chopped down a bunch of phragmites, which was bagged up and put in the trees to dry out. It can take up to 15 years of consistent cutting down of the phragmites to eradicate it.

New Business:

Website: Ann to ask Holly if she is willing to continue coordinating the updating of the ELPA website with Kristen Wilson.

Better Back Roads Grant: The town of Charleston received a \$20,000 Better Roads Grant. On October 24 there will be a selectboard meeting with Patrick Hurley. Karl and Tom plan to attend the meeting. Karl plans to ask to where the funds will be allocated. Discussion about West Echo Lake Road.

Wetlands: Elaine reported that next week there will be extensive stream remediation work performed on the stream near her property. Patrick Hurley will be overseeing the project over the course of approximately 2 days. Elaine and Ann informed board that a lot of the area surrounding Echo Lake is considered Wetlands, and if there is work to be done, a wetland permit is required, in addition to the required shoreland permit.

Fall Newsletter: Lori requesting October 15 deadline for all information to her to compile the newsletter to go out around November 1.

Discussion to include buoy info and committee chairperson info in the fall newsletter.

2025 DATES FOR ECHO LAKE ACTIVITIES:

- *Color Challenge – Sunday July 6, 2025. 10:00am start, 9:00am start for volunteers.
- *Annual Meeting – Saturday July 19, 2025 at 9:00am at NorthWoods.
- *Annual Picnic – Saturday August 9, 2025 at Engels’ property at 4:30pm.
- *2025 Board Meetings – January 16, 2025 at 6:00pm online
May 15, 2025 at 6:00pm at Karl’s and online
Sept 18, 2025 at 6:00pm at Karl’s and online

Meeting Adjourned: At 8:00pm

Submitted by Lori Kempton, ELPA Secretary, on September 30, 2024.

BALANCE SHEET 9/19/2024

ASSETS

Cash and Bank Accounts

Savings Account \$27,329.60

Checking Account \$8,412.85

Payroll Account \$179.27

Contingency Fund CD - Edward Jones matures August 8, 2025 4.7% \$59,000.00

Contingency Fund Edward Jones mutual fund \$637.02

Contingency Fund CD - CNB matures May 8, 2025 4.75% \$26,545.67

\$86,182.69 Total in Contingency Fund

Total Cash and Bank Accounts \$122,104.41

TOTAL ASSETS \$122,104.41

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

LIABILITIES

Payroll / Taxes

TOTAL LIABILITIES \$0.00

EQUITY \$122,104.41

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY \$122,104.41

	Actual 1/1/21- 12/31/21	Actual 1/1/22- 12/31/22	Actual 1/1/23- 12/31/23	2024 Budget	Actual 1/1/24- 9/19/24
CASH CARRIED FORWARD FROM PRIOR YEAR	73,958.66	82,336.14	94,829.70		125,274.45
INCOME					
Dues	4,475.00	4,625.00	4,525.00	4,200.00	3,850.00
Donations	10,000.00	6,425.00	6,150.00	4,500.00	6,478.00
Color Challenge (net)		7,249.00	11,515.27	4,000.00	6,538.06
Charleston Appropriation	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Watershed Grant - 1st payment	3,200.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Watershed Grant - 2nd payment	800.00	1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Aquatic Nuisance Grant - 2nd pymt/prior yr		6,680.40	11,308.00		
Aquatic Nuisance Grant	4,453.60		10,479.00	21,930.00	
VCF Grant	2,400.00				
Map Sales	120.00	26.00			
Amazon Smile	54.70	251.59	88.41		
ELPA merchandise (net)			1,219.10	750.00	316.12
Interest from Savings	348.24	212.49	2,512.01	3,600.00	3,409.92
TOTAL INCOME	26,851.54	31,469.48	52,796.79	44,980.00	26,592.10
EXPENSES					
Payroll Costs	13,138.54	12,376.79	16,853.67	24,670.00	25,975.54
Access Monitor Expenses		347.07	85.50		
Liability Insurance	550.00	550.00	575.00	575.00	575.00
Workers Comp. Insurance	1,296.00	1,296.00	1,297.00	1,282.00	1,282.00
Printing	58.50	381.65	75.96		
Postage					
Color Challenge Expenses	-22.00	75.00			
P.O. Box Rental - 1yr.	56.00	62.00	68.00	72.00	72.00
Web Site Costs		616.68	112.01	21.85	21.85
Picnic	380.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00

Paypal Expense	47.02	65.57	87.93	100.00	69.42
Misc.	20.00		371.97		101.00
Charleston School Program	2,700.00	2,780.16	2,400.00	2,400.00	1,140.33
NorthWoods donation	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	200.00
FOVLAP membership	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
MWA membership		50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
VCE donation	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	18,474.06	18,975.92	22,352.04	29,545.85	29,762.14
GAIN/(LOSS)	8,377.48	12,493.56	30,444.75	15,434.15	-3,170.04
TOTAL CASH ON HAND	\$ 82,336.14	\$ 94,829.70	\$ 125,274.45		\$ 122,104.41