

Adirondack Underground

Town of Long Lake
Clark J. Seaman, Supervisor

Recently our Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director, Alex Roalsvig, asked me for ideas and input to compile a list of things to do in and around Long Lake to promote the web site. She said “this is a work in progress and whatever comes off the top of your head would be appreciated”. I replied I would work on this in my spare time but warned her that the only thing coming off the top of my head for the past several years has been my hair. ☹

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you, the Long Lake and Raquette Lake citizens, informed as to what is occurring in local government and, on a broader scale, around the region. Currently there are two primary local issues that have occupied the majority of my time since taking office.

As many of you know, the Town Board agreed last fall to terminate the Affordable Housing Project. We could debate the multitude of reasons why it failed, what went wrong, etc. but that would be counterproductive. In October last year the Office of Community Renewal denied a request to extend the Contract and they have requested repayment of most of the grant monies we received that covered project expenses. We could also debate, as we did at a recent Board meeting, OCR’s legal right to request repayment; the Town’s attorney, as well as an attorney contacted by a concerned citizen, have opined that OCR can require repayment. It’s time to move forward to resolve this issue and avoid having the town declared in default of this grant. At the January 27th Board meeting I presented various options to the Board that are available to us. The Board unanimously agreed to sell portions of the housing property on the open market and use those proceeds to repay the grant.

There are several steps required by law that the Town must follow as we proceed with the sale of this land i.e. appraisal, SEQRA, permissive referendum, list with a Broker, etc.. The Board approved an RFP (Request for Proposal) for an appraisal, subject to attorney review, at our February 10th meeting. This is the first required step in this process and the appraisal will help the Board determine the best course of action in selling portions of the property. Be assured we recognize that we have a fiduciary duty and we will do our best to recover as much money as possible as we liquidate the property; in fact we anticipate that revenues derived from the property sales would at least cover if not exceed the repayment amount.

The second project that has required my attention is our water project. The original project was to develop wells on the Bissell Pit property, replace approximately 4000’ of water main along Route 28N and construct a storage tank on the housing property. Last fall the Board approved a modified water project that included the purchase of property on Tarbell Hill for additional wells and install said wells, the replacement of an additional 5000’ of water main on Route 28N and the replacement of three existing pump stations with new modular units. Early this month I requested a meeting with the Department of Health representative, our engineers, the Town’s surveyor, our Water Dept. Superintendent and others to clarify some issues regarding well head control at Bissell Pit. While not yet resolved, these issues were discussed and provided clarity for me as we move forward on this project. I anticipate construction will begin on the Bissell Pit wells this spring and the storage tank this summer.

FYI, during the above noted meeting the question came up of using Lake Eaton as a water source rather than the proposed wells in the current plan. Both our engineers and the DOH representative expressed that using Lake Eaton as a town water source would be two to three times **more** expensive than our current plan **if** we could get the necessary permits. DOH pointed out that it is questionable whether or not we could even get a DEC permit to pump from the lake and it was doubtful that she would approve a surface water source such as Lake Eaton for our local water supply due to current regulations regarding surface water. Consequently, it became clear to me that we are pursuing the right course of action to upgrade our water system in Long Lake.

Regionally, we continue to face expanding APA intrusion on property owner’s rights as well as regulations that negatively impact local businesses along with a shrinking State budget that could impact local revenue. Recently it was brought to my attention that DEC was planning to close Lake Eaton Campsite following Labor Day this year. Lake Eaton has in recent years been kept open until Columbus Day weekend. Consequently I wrote a letter to DEC Commissioner Grannis requesting he reconsider closing Lake Eaton early due to the negative impact it will have on the local economy especially as we try to expand tourism during the “shoulder seasons”. Additionally, I’ve also sent a letter to Governor Paterson regarding the APA and proposed budget cuts detailed below.

On February 11th I attended the Region 5 Fish and Wildlife Management Board meeting as the elected supervisor from Hamilton County. Tom Martin, Senior Forester for DEC Region 5, reported that the state budget as currently proposed, will cut 40% of DEC's NPS (Non Personal Service) funds. NPS funds pay for items and services like heat, lights, telephone, equipment, gasoline, fuel, etc. Tom further reported that last year's NPS funds were cut 30% so this additional 40% cut will be extremely difficult for the department. During the break I spoke to Tom directly and expressed my concerns regarding the early closing of Lake Eaton. In short Tom's reply was not good. He informed me that the plan as it stands right now, is to close all state campsites that operated at a deficit last year. That means not opening them at all! I called DEC Region 5 Director Betsy Lowe regarding this, but currently she doesn't know which campsites will be included in the plan. I asked that she keep me informed as information becomes available. Be assured I will do all I can to persuade the DEC and our elected State officials to keep all campsites in Long Lake and Raquette Lake open. I will keep you informed about this in future newsletters.

In addition to the above letters to the Governor and Commissioner, in my "spare" time I've emailed the Governor and called key staff at his office regarding the Hornbeck appointment to the APA, submitted a resolution to the Board opposing this appointment as well, submitted a resolution to the Board opposing the proposed Jessup River UMP which would close snowmobile trails in that area and could be used as a precedent affecting us in the future, circulated petitions locally opposing this UMP, hand delivered these petitions to NYSSA staff in Speculator to ensure they would be included with others submitted to DEC and submitted a resolution to the Board opposing the Governor's proposal to raid the snowmobile trail fund which is used in part to pay the Town for trail maintenance. These resolutions have been forwarded to the Governor, Senator Little, Assemblywoman Sayword and other key "players".

Finally, as many of you are aware, I would like to establish key advisory committees to explore certain issues facing our community. To those of you who have expressed an interest in serving on a Senior Advisory Committee to address issues facing our seniors including senior housing, a Mt. Sabattis Development Committee to explore options to expand recreational services on Mt. Sabattis, a Town Beautification Committee or a Snowmobile Expansion Committee to explore options to increase snowmobiling access to and from Long Lake and Raquette Lake please contact me by calling the office at 624-3001 or email me at llsuper@adironackacres.com. I hope to have these committees established and meeting by early spring.

Until my next newsletter, feel free to contact me anytime regarding any issues of concern to you.

And remember "The only reason that anything ever gets done is because there are pockets of competence in every command. The key is to find them ... and then exploit the hell out of 'em." CDR (CENTCOM)

Sincerely,



Clark J. Seaman, Supervisor