

Bear Gulch Lake Watershed Management Plan Committee

May 23, 2023, Minutes

The meeting started at 1:01 pm.

Shane Nickle stated that his goal for today is to solidify the letter that will be sent out in June.

Committee membership: It was stated that the committee is now official as the Summit Town Board adopted a resolution appointing the following eleven members to serve on the committee as of May 18, 2023:

Marion Bird

Bob Coats - Alternate is Tom Lutsic

John Foote

David Jones

David Knight

Fern Kovac

John Meaney

Mark Nadeau

Wayne Stinson Jr.

Harold L. Vroman

Jesse Wilcox

Outreach letter/public notice:

Finalize Letter – Shane Nickle asked if anyone had any input for the draft of the June 7, 2023, letter. Dave Jones stated that it looks good to him. It was stated that in the first paragraph that where it says nine members it needs to say eleven members. It was also stated that there must be at least six members present to vote. In the third paragraph down, it was stated that the members would like to change the meeting day from the 4th Tuesday to the 4th Monday of every month. Shane Nickle then asked if anyone would like to make a motion to send the letter out in approximately two weeks. Marion Bird made a motion to approve sending the letter with the corrections mentioned. Dave Knight seconded the motion. Carried by all. It was stated that the county office will make a list of the property owners in the watershed to send the letter to.

Shane stated that this letter will be emailed to the eleven committee members to make sure it goes to the right people as a few of the properties have changed ownership recently.

Contact Times Journal and the Mountain Eagle – It was stated that after the letter is sent out Shane will look into putting an article in both the Times Journal and the Mountain Eagle.

Website Public Announcements – Shane Nickle stated that he would like to get the minutes and meeting notices put on the Town of Summit website with the help of the Town Clerk-Barbara VanValkenburg.

Survey to help identify key issues/concerns: Shane Nickle stated that this survey draft is the same as the one presented in the April 2023 meeting. He asked the committee members if there are any additional questions to be added. It was stated that for question (2) to add a line to ask if it is an Airbnb/rental. For question (3) add what time of year the seasonal usage is. Add, have you had any problems in the past and if it was low or no cost would you be willing to have it inspected, to question (5). Dave Knight suggested adding to (5) a question about do you know how old your system is. It was stated that the DEC does have a program to help fix septic issues but only those on a prioritized list which would not be easy to get on. For question (7) it was stated that the amount to help should not be based upon project costs as it will never be known how much money is needed. It was also stated that to get most grants you are required to match the amount of the grant and to show where the money to match is going to come from. It was stated that it should be thought about the amount being related to property assessed values. It was stated for question (9) lake clarity should be added but it was then stated that the part about water quality should cover water clarity. Marion Bird then asked how involved the state will be in helping. It was stated that New York state will not get involved unless we identify we have a need and fight for them to help us. It was stated that we need to be proactive to avoid issues with the state. It was also stated that if neighbors or others complain to the state that the state will show up and require people to complete things the state would require. This has already been seen in the current situation. For question (11) add Jet skis. For question number (12) Shane stated that the lake is private but has not been finalized yet by the attorneys working on the issue of ownership. Mark Nadeau suggested that a question about if property owners think the water quality affects their property value and another question about if the property owners think that the lake is an asset to local government. It was stated that for question (15) SUNY Cobleskill may be able to help. Dave Jones asked if the committee wants to talk about special zoning and it was stated that the committee does not want to at this time. It was stated that the watershed is not a new thing, it has been here, and it is not going to change but we can change what we do with it. There are several options available to protect the watershed or to do other things. It was suggested to put something in the survey to see if the property owners would like to see the Town of Summit adopt some land usage restrictions for those in the watershed. Wayne Stinson Jr. asked if the committee was aiming to get help from the New York state. It was stated that it is not necessarily a goal of the committee to get help from the state. Shane stated that he will work on the edits mentioned above and get a copy to the members of the committee possibly by Thursday May 25th to hopefully be able to finalize

the Survey at the June 2023 meeting. Shane also stated that now is the time to make edits or to add to this survey to avoid doing a second survey though that is an option. Shane asked anyone who had any suggestions of additions or corrections to email him before the June 2023 meeting. It was stated that this survey is to get the property owners' point of view. It was stated that if a special tax district is set up for Bear Gulch Lake, then Summit Lake possibly could set up something similar. Mark Nadeau then presented his plans for how he thinks the dam should be upgraded for the committee to look at. Harold Vroman stated that he thinks a question should be added about if property owners would like to see future construction and development on the lake to question (9). Mark Nadeau stated that he is not looking to develop for personal gain. Dave Jones suggests adding and question to ask what property owners think about cluster housing.

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.