**Leesville Lake Association – Winter Meeting – 10:30, January 13, 2024**

1. Call to Order - the meeting was called to order at 10:31, by President Roy Kelley.

2.      Introductions – Roy Kelley introduced the Leesville Lake Association officers and committee chairs. Present were Chip Zimmerman – Vice President, Edwin Hanson – Treasurer, Debra Kiraly – new Secretary, Cynthia Coleman – Membership, Glenn Coleman – Navigation, Jeff Markiewicz – Water Safety and Education, Charlie Hamilton – Water Quality, Dave Waterman – Communications, Mary Loiselle – Finance Committee, Dave Rives – Past President, Teri Thomas – Nominating, Pam McMillan – Debris. Absent – Bill Beckett and Dannie Smith.

A signup sheet was provided for all members, guests, and attendees to sign in.

3.      Treasurer’s Report:  Edwin Hanson reported that the association taxes have been filed, and our finances are strong. A special thank you to the donors who contributed above and beyond the membership rate of $25.00. It’s the extra donations that allow us to keep our rate at $25/year and sell calendars at or below cost. For those not familiar with rates at our other lake, SML charges $25 for the first year and then $50-$500 for subsequent years depending on the services or status you want. Keep in mind, even your membership dues are tax deductible contributions. Calendar and T-shirt purchases are not.

If you ever wonder if you are getting your money’s worth from your association, remember that without the association, we would each be trying to do all this on our own and the water quality and debris would be disastrous. Lake cleanup and monitoring of the quality of our water to make sure it is healthy and safe for both wildlife and us continues to be our primary expense throughout the year.

We are working on a lower risk charge card program using pre-paid cards. These cards will be used by officers and committee chairs to purchase items like office supplies, fuel and repair parts for the pontoon, meeting supplies, postage, etc. Currently most of these items are purchased by members and then receipts are filed for reimbursement.

We are also looking into putting a portion of our funds that we have identified as a reserve or emergency fund into a CD to collect a high interest rate.

Edwin’s personal story is in the newsletter, so if you wish to know more about him and his wife Leanne, check your e-mail. If you don’t currently receive the newsletter, send an email to membership, communications or any other of the board members and we will make sure the right people receive it.

4.      **Full**Committee Reports:

*a.*      **Executive (Standing Committee)** – Roy Kelley expressed appreciation to those who have volunteered, specifically Edwin Hanson as the new Treasurer and Debra Kiraly as the new Secretary.

b. December 7 APCO Meeting – Roy reported that along with TLAC, he wanted to understand where we were with debris management and how to improve the debris reporting process. Timeliness is an issue, as debris moves. Barge personnel were present at the meeting, and able to comment. Currently our reporting that goes to TLAC, if on a weekend, does not get reported until Monday, so if you report debris, it should also be sent to APCO. It was suggested to look at a change in the reporting process, so that it would make reporting debris faster and more accurate.

Debris reports should be more accurate in their description of debris, the amount and location of debris – this was requested by APCO.

Would APCO designate tie up locations? - it may be possible as APCO owns property on the lake – APCO to investigate this.

Could we have additional Beautification Day drop off locations? There may be additional drop off locations – and a second barge was requested, as the one barge was full early in the morning. LLA would also like to offload at the Myers Creek location, so that boats could and or the barge could come back out to the lake and pick up more debris. APCO will consider the second barge.

There was a Fall low pond period in November – and LLA asked to be notified of these low pond events, so that they could let membership know that it is a time to police their own shorelines. APCO was a no to running the barge for shoreline cleanup during low pond events, but a Yes to advising of low pond period, but sensitive to competition.

Because debris moves so quickly with the water level changes, it was requested that APCO schedule the barge to operate when dam is scheduled to run water.  APCO was reluctant but will consider.

c.  **Beautification Day** – Roy Kelley stated that Beautification Day will be June 8th, 2024. We need boats, chainsaws, and committed members.  As a result of the APCO meeting, we may have new drop-off locations.  Save the date, spread the word, and get your neighbors to volunteer.

**Question regarding Beautification Day** – is there a tie-off location at Mile Marker zero (0) that you could drop the debris? Near where the APco debris removal Barge ties up.

AEP restrictions on trees out over the lake include – if the roots are still attached, then AEP won’t clean up, and this could be a fish habitat. It should be cleaned up only if it is loose and floating.

**Question regarding shoreline management** – AEP will entertain questions regarding shoreline management, you would need to send pictures, etc., to obtain requirements to replace trees.

**Question regarding Three Pipes** – Cynthia Coleman noted that there is sometimes a location there that is used to off-load, could this be used during Beautification Day?

Question regarding the Pigg River issue – Sam Skillman requested an update on the Pigg River debris issue and any progress that has been made. There is to be a full update in Spring of 2024.

5. **Vice President Update** – Chip Zimmerman had no report at this time.

6. **Communications Update** *–*Dave Waterman reported the Communications Committee generally provides background services to all the other committees. These include: Maintaining our website – <https://leesvillelake.org> which means installing and maintaining numerous software components to create and deliver website pages to visitors, backing up same on a monthly basis and updating various pages as changes occur within the organization or planned events need publicizing.

We maintain an email service on Google to provide role-based email access to board and some committee members. This helps maintain some degree of privacy for personal email addresses and provides continuity for any work in progress when board membership changes occur.

We publish a quarterly newsletter to the membership to let everyone know the status of various activities, along with publishing special request emails to let the membership know about events requiring a sign-up or calendar availability.

We also maintain a Facebook presence at <https://www.facebook.com/leesvillelake.org> to allow an interactive media platform for whatever subjects interest the participants, and are involved in producing a yearly calendar that is focused on our lake. Updates to the website are coming.

7. **Debris Update** – Pam McMillan –

According to Appalachian’s license agreement- with the exception of high flow events, regular monthly surveys are not performed October through April.  However, AEP project manager Liz Parcel indicated that debris removal activities will continue as needed and as weather and availability permits.

-As a reminder the Pigg River is our main source of debris intake and under normal conditions it runs at a height between 2 and 3 ft.

According to Appalachian’s latest report dated 1/11/24:

-There was 1 high flow event on December 18th when the Pigg River crested to 6.03 ft.

The debris assessment revealed approximately six to eight free-floating, isolated, medium-sized logs as well as small sticks observed widely scattered and randomly located throughout the main channel between MM8 and MM13.  The total volume of free-floating debris observed was low.

Then on January 10, 2024, the Pigg River crested to flood stage of 19.63 feet.  This is the first major flooding on the river in over 3 years and the initial influx of debris observed so far in the upper miles are discouraging.

As a result of this high flow event, Appalachian will schedule debris assessment to be conducted on Monday the 15th after the water recedes.  After this assessment is completed, the results will be conveyed to the TRC and a plan of action proposed.

During this month and remainder of the winter, I strongly urge members to report debris sightings as often as possible.   Not only will this reinforce the message to AEP for immediate and consistent attention to address this new HF debris but in doing so will help reduce the amount of debris going into the recreational season.

55 tons have been collected since November and the total debris removed out of Leesville Lake for the 2023 year was 2,645 tons (SML-1170 tons).

-TLAC submitted 3 debris reports for the month of December.

-There are no updates on progress to the Myers Creek storage site.

-There are no updates on the Pigg River diversion/collection device.

Dave Rives commented that he has requested that LVL be notified when debris surveys are completed, when high flow events occur, and if we could participate in the surveys with our own boats. Liz Purcell (AEP) was not present, but stated to Dave Rives that there would be a survey on Monday following this meeting to look at Stone County Bridge – in Franklin County – as there was debris up to the bridge railing. VDOT was notified of the concern.

Question asked: When will AEP have the new skimmer? – supposed to be operational in mid to late summer 2024, training now, will be shared with SML based on need, we will try for a minimum number of days on Leesville Lake or at least split evenly.

8.  **Membership Update –** Cynthia Coleman

The LLA website had a link for Leesville Lake merchandise with Signals.com, which no longer carries personalized lake items.

When she began in January 2023, Cynthia met with LLA Vice President, Chip Zimmerman, to learn how to use the Aplos program that holds the database of members, former members, mailing lists, etc. Chip and Cynthia created a Membership list for her to practice upon. As of February 2023, LLA had 209 members.

Through 2023 up until today, 13 January 2024, LLA has gained 14 new members, regained 6 Former members, which is an increase of 20, or 229 members.

At the October board meeting, Cynthia reported that LLA had a membership of 234 households. That was the highest number of the year.

As of this day, 13 January 2024, LLA is down by 24 households, even with those 14 new members and 6 former members.

Why? Because Cynthia dove into the database and found those who did not renew membership, those who have moved away or have changed their lake status, found several duplicate names (which artificially inflates the membership numbers), and several people who bought calendars online were somehow inserted into the membership database.

After cleaning up and clearing up those who are and who are not members, LLA currently has 210 members, an increase of one new household membership from the beginning of 2023.

The good news is that LLA has a membership list that is almost clean of any mistakes or errors.

In December 2022, Chip Zimmerman reported Leesville Lake Association had a membership count of 215 members. In less than two years, LLA has lost 5 members, even with the gain of this past year’s 20.

LLA needs more members. Cynthia plans to be more active with the folks on the lake in several ways  discussed in board meetings, such as

the ability to email lake area HOAs and asking them to email their members information about LLA

using flyers/maps to help recruit new members

However, the LLA members are the best people to recruit new members. Speak to your neighbors or anyone else who expresses interest in this lake. LLA needs more members as we take on the Powers That Be in keeping our beautiful lake clean and safe.

If anyone here has any suggestions of increasing membership, please contact Cynthia via Membership@leesvillelake.org.

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9. **Navigation Update** – Glenn Coleman

 Committee Purpose: To define areas hazardous to navigation and mark them. To ensure that Mile Markers are in good condition and visible.

There are 12 locations on the Lake that have been marked as hazardous.

1. Rock at Runaway Bay Point.
2. Shoal across from the North End Heron Landing.
3. Rocks at North End Heron Landing.
4. Rocks across from Goat Island.
5. Shoal at Old Womans Creek, near the LVL Marina
6. Shoal at Terrapin Creek, near the Tri-County Marina
7. Shoal at Anthony’s Shoal.
8. Shoal at Shoeless Island.
9. Rock at 9 mile rock.
10. Shoal at 11 mile shoal
11. Shoal at 12 mile shoal.
12. Stump near mile marker 15.

 If you see a new hazard on the lake, please contact us at Navigation@LLA.org.

Mile markers are also maintained to ensure good visibility. If you see a mile marker obscured. Please contact us at the navigation email address.

The Navigation Committee also advises residents about the placement of no wake buoys.

In addition, The Navigation Committee is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the pontoon boat owned by the Leesville Lake Association. The pontoon boat is used on beautification day and other committees of the board. The Pontoon boat is currently out of the water in winter storage.

The latest news from the Committee is that we have been invited by AEP to join in a meeting concerning the placement of channel marking buoys on the lake. The original meeting was set for January 3, but was postponed and will be rescheduled soon. The LLA Navigation Committee had previously recommended fourteen channel marking buoys in answer to a proposal by AEP for more than forty buoys.

10**. Nomination Update** – Teri Thomas

 Upon review of updated membership rolls we will draw up a plan to begin the recruiting process

Ask members that have an interest in serving on the board or volunteering on the various committee should contact Teri

Calendar subcommittee – 11 calendars left for sale; members are asked to begin taking new photos for submission of next year’s calendar. Would like photos of all four seasons.

11.  **Secretary** – Debra Kiraly had no report at this time – she was too busy taking notes

12.   **Water Quality Update** – Charlie Hamilton

I’d like to thank the LLA WQ Committee members: Debbie Oliver, Kathleen Giangi, Dave Waterman, and Tony Capuco for their tireless efforts to keep Leesville Lake water quality safe. Thanks also to our Limnologist Dr Tom Shahady from the University of Lynchburg for he and his team’s analysis and support of Leesville Lake water quality. I would also like to welcome a new member to our LLA WQ Committee, Leanne Hanson, a published microbiologist, who will enhance our dedicated team!

Water quality at Leesville Lake is currently very good, despite the sediment that has been driven in by recent rainfall. As you know, we keep a close eye on dissolved oxygen – this past year (2023) APCo was below the Virginia Water Quality standard 71 days from 31 July to 31 October 2023. Appalachian’s VDEQ Virginia Water Protection Individual Permit No 08-0572 (Permit) expires on March 31, 2025. LLA has communicated to APCo and FERC that APCo’s resolution of the DO challenge should be central to whether Permit 08-0572 is renewed, or not.

Our analysis of Pigg River samplings, conducted in October and November continue. Look for our annual Leesville Lake WQ report and our Pigg River annual report in late February, early March on LLA website.

The Pigg River will be subject to new limits on how much sediment, or loose dirt, can enter into waterways because of the impact such pollution has on aquatic life. The new limits, called waste load allocations, are being imposed by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, which found that aquatic or semi-aquatic insects like mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies are less prevalent on waterways in those counties than in waters elsewhere.

“The degradation of insects has vast consequences for the water,” said Joe Wood, a scientist with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. The agency found that segments of the Pigg River “do not support a healthy and diverse community of aquatic life.”

“Without this valuable habitat, the diversity of aquatic life in a stream may be severely limited,” DEQ concluded . The waterways were previously identified as impaired in Virginia’s 2020 Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report , which found they weren’t meeting standards for healthy populations of benthic animals, or those that dwell at the bottom of waterways.

In 2021, a DEQ analysis found that the primary stressor to insects in the impaired waterways was sediment. While sediment can be washed into waterways from many sources, including construction sites, the agency’s research points to farming as a main culprit. Fields that don’t have a cover crop with deep roots to hold dirt in place are more susceptible to releasing sediment than acreage that is forested or blanketed with no-till plantings that minimize soil disturbance.

According to DEQ, the largest amounts of sediment flowing into the Pigg River traced the majority of their sediment to hay and pastureland, with loads ranging between 36% and 61%.

If sediment loads flowing into these waterways can be reduced, “healthy aquatic life is expected to be restored in these streams,” DEQ found.

DEQ will now craft a plan to meet the new limits, which will require approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. While the agency will be calling for reductions across multiple sectors, the agricultural decreases it’s seeking will be significant, ranging from 23% for some watersheds to 76% for others.

Some of the strategies DEQ will likely be including in its plan are planting riparian buffers — bands of trees along streams whose roots filter out sediment — fencing cattle out of streams, encouraging farmers to adopt conservation tillage practices and restoring eroded stream banks. Expanding street sweeping programs in urban areas can help too, DEQ states.

Virginia operates cost-share programs to help farmers adopt such practices, generally called best management practices, or BMPs. The General Assembly put $116 million toward the programs last year, and $286 million was allocated this year as a result of a state revenue surplus. Legislation this past session extended the deadline for farmers to voluntarily install BMPs before state officials require them as part of broader goals to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. A workgroup is now gathering data to understand the current rates of BMP adoption in Virginia.

Preparations are also underway at the [Smith Mountain Lake Association](https://smlassociation.org/) for the upcoming year, marked by a fervent focus on addressing potential harmful algal blooms that afflicted Smith Mountain Lake during the 2023 season. A primary effort to combat the problem involves establishing a Harmful Algal Bloom Lab, equipped with necessary tools to identify and test cyanobacteria commonly found in these blooms. This initiative aims to reduce the time taken for delayed sampling.

SML Association is also in talks with members of the General Assembly, aiming to secure funding from the Governor’s budget for a state study of the lake. If successful, they hope Virginia Tech will lead this study to understand and resolve the issue of these blooms.

We do not anticipate that Harmful Alga Blooms will impact Leesville Lake this upcoming season.

13. **Water Safety and Education** – Jeff Markiewicz

1. Vessel Safety Inspections - Gerry Caprario probably not be able to continue will continue this service in 2024. Jeff Markiewicz will be getting qualification to perform in 2024. If Vessel inspection is desired Jeff will work with SML Sail and power squadron and/or US Coast Guard Auxiliary to support.

2024 Boater Safety Classes - Continue to refer to VA DWR

Up coming Classes (from DWR website, link is on LLA Website on Water Safety Committee

* + - 1. Sat 27 Jan 8:30-4:30 Coast Guard Auxiliary Station, 285 Oak Grove Lane, Moneta VA. Free Course
			2. Sat 24 Feb 2024 8:00-5:00 Virginia DWR, Central Virginia Community College, 136 Carver Lane, Appomattox contact Patrick Morgan at patrickfranklin269@gmail.com Free Course
			3. Sat 24 Feb 2024 Virginia DWR, Smith Mountain Lake State Park, Discovery Center, 1235 State Park Rd, Huddleston trevor.ruble@dwr.virginia.gov Course full, Free Course
			4. Sat 16 Mar, 13 Apr, 11 May, 15 Jun, 13 Jul and 17 Aug 8:00-4:30 SML Water Treatment Facility, 1500 Radford Church Rd, Moneta VA. $40 Course. US Power Squadron Course materials include 270 pages with supplemental chapter on piloting and intro to Navigation question call Randy Stow 540 588-0270
			5. Online Courses
				1. Virginia Boating Safety <http://www.boat-ed.com/virginia/>
				2. America’s Boating Course <http://www.americasboatingcourse.com/>

 Lake “Rescue Service” Review

The committee is in the process of organizing a rescue service. Most of the effort will be to assist boaters in trouble due to a breakdown or other similar issues. Currently two of the Board of Directors members are providing this service on an individual basis. Most of the time the issues they respond to are not life threatening but occasionally they are life threatening. The committee is looking for additional volunteers who are comfortable going out to tow another boat or otherwise provide boater assistance. They are also looking for volunteers who have a view of the lake. Jeff will be looking at Google voice or other similar services to have a central call-in phone number that can notify the group of a call.

Electrical Safety on Docks/Piers

All four lake counties with Leesville and Smith Mountain lake shorelines have the same requirements for structural and electrical building requirements the requirements sheet is attached and the following is the Franklin County Link: <https://www.franklincountyva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/333/Dock-Require-Guidelines-PDF>

 14.  **TLAC Updates** - Roy Kelley

 December Meeting Summary:  New Board voted in – Lori Smith to remain Chairperson, TLAC has been given an update on issues between LVL and APCO, it is now posted on our website. TLAC expected that these issues will come up every month.

At the APCO meeting in January, LVL representatives spent time noting that we felt APCO was not in compliance, the relationship was adversarial, and we felt that we had to go above local APCO representatives to get results. It appeared that APCO would continue to say “no” all day long to our suggestions, but we only want to make improvements to the lake and how APCO does their job.

Shoreline Management Plan Suggested Revisions – TLAC provided a compounded study of things to address, after Town Hall meetings, challenges, process improvements, surveys, etc. APCO will review and comment. Expect this to take 6 + months.

15.   **Old Business** – none reported as all Board members and Committee chairs presented

 current reports.

16.     **New Business -**   General Membership Meetings – Train Station is not accepting further reservations.  We may need to explore a new location for General Meetings.  Next meeting is scheduled for April 13th, 2024.  Location TBD.

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved and seconded to adjourn for the wonderful chili, sides, fixings and desserts that the LVL Board, Committee chairs and members provided for each other.

Social time followed while enjoying the above.

Debra Kiraly – Secretary