

President's Letter to BALA Membership

Dear BALA Members:

On March 21 of this year, your BALA Board of Directors met for our first quarter meeting. If you attended the August Membership meeting, you may recall that we agreed to create a Watershed Drainage Committee to investigate drainage problems around the lake. The Watershed Drainage Committee's report was one of the main agenda items at this meeting.

The Watershed Drainage Committee, chaired by Tom Clark, and comprised of members from around the lake, met with a number of engineering firms, and with the Town of Sturbridge engineer, to identify all the various drainage areas that deposit silt into the lake. In a presentation to the Board, Tom pointed out that there are ten total problem sites at various locations on Mt. Dan Rd., Paradise Lane, Lake Rd and Clark Rd. Extension. Some areas need nothing more than monitoring and occasional cleaning, while others will require some construction to divert and catch the run off before it infiltrates the lake.

The Committee determined that the north and south ends of the lake are by far the largest sources of silt infiltration into the lake. Often times this silt carries with it other pollutants, such as phosphates and nitrates from lawn fertilizers, that can contribute to algae blooms in the lake during the warmer months of summer.

After viewing the photos of the run off from these two areas during a rainstorm, included in Tom's presentation, the Board felt it is critical to move ahead with an engineering study of these two areas immediately, as part of our commitment to you to improve the quality of the lake water.

At the Board meeting a vote was taken, and a motion was passed, to spend up to \$12,000.00 from the *reserve* fund on an engineering study, and construction plan, for the two most egregious sources of lake pollution; the north and south ends of the lake.

To be clear, this money will not fund the actual construction necessary to correct the problem. What it will fund is an engineering plan, needed by the town, and needed by BALA to put the projects to bid, to understand the total cost of the project, and to seek grant funding to help pay for the future construction.

You may also remember, at that same August Membership meeting, the Membership voted to spend \$2000.00 on an engineering study from the *reserve* fund. And, at the July 9th meeting in 2005, the Membership approved \$6000.00 to be used to repair the north end road drainage problem. This money was never used. So, the money for the north end engineering plan has already been appropriated.

However, the Board felt strongly that we should address the second area of concern at the same time if possible. To that end, the Board allocated another \$4000.00 from the *reserve* fund to be used for the south end study should it be needed. It may not prove to be \$4000.00 if we do them at the same time, and naturally we will try to bring the study in for the least amount of money possible.

The Board also feels strongly that, in keeping with our policy of transparency, you should be kept informed as we move ahead. Tom will make a complete presentation, with photos and plans, as well as estimated cost of construction, at the July BALA meeting, so that you may better understand the magnitude of the problem, and the mitigation steps necessary to alleviate it. We welcome your comments and questions at any time. Please respond to the BALA email address below, or to me directly at my email below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Chuck Roy/President

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