

**BOROUGH OF MOUNT ARLINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 9, 2009**

1. Call to Order

- 2. Adequate notice** of this meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was published in the Roxbury Register and the Daily Record on Wednesday, December 31, 2008; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on December 31, 2008 and has been available to the public; notice of this meeting is on file in the office of the Borough Clerk.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et seq.). The Borough Council opens every public meeting for comments of the public. However, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 : "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to limit the discretion of a public body to permit, prohibit or regulate the active participation at any meeting,...."

Speakers at Borough meetings shall have five minutes to present their comments to the Borough Council so as not to consume time that would otherwise be allotted to other persons who wish to speak. Speakers shall be courteous to the Council and other persons attending the meeting. Offensive remarks or unruly behavior will not be allowed and anyone who violates this policy will be barred from participating in the meeting.

3. Flag Salute

The Mayor asked for a moment of silence to pray for the safe return of our soldiers overseas fighting for our freedom.

4. Roll Call

Councilman Driscoll, Councilman Sorge, Councilman Sadow, Councilwoman Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli, Mayor Ondish. JoAnne Sendler, Borough Administrator and Thomas Segreto, Borough Attorney, were also present. Councilman Doran was absent.

5. Presentations/Mayor's Appointments

1. Leon J. Moreau, III, Picatinny Director of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.
 - Mr. Moreau introduced his Office of Emergency Management Team and each member gave a brief overview of his/her duties, focusing on community involvement and service to Morris County veterans, military families and residents..

6. Old Business

1. Council Committee Reports.
 - Council President Cerasoli, DPW Liaison: Council President Cerasoli stated she has an extensive report from Paul Nelson which she submitted as part of the record.
 - Councilwoman Galate Goodman, Board of Education Liaison: Councilwoman Galate Goodman reported the following: Music Teacher Dr. Aberbach was recognized by DHA/105.5 FM as one of 24 outstanding North Jersey educators in the Teachers Who Rock program; the school held a spelling bee and the winner will go on to the State competition at Fairleigh Dickinson University next month; the PTA is sponsoring a theater week for March 23-27, with a performance of the Rotten Princess at 6pm on March 27th; Teacher Sue Longo won the NJ State Teacher of the Year and will now enter the national competition; and, the Board of Education is holding their budget committee meetings this week and will introduce the budget on March 16th.
 - Councilwoman Galate Goodman, Police Liaison: We are still in contract negotiations.
 - Councilwoman Galate Goodman, Mount Arlington Green Initiative Committee: The Committee will conduct it's first meeting on March 10, which will be an organizational meeting; all future meetings will be held on the fourth Thursday of every month at the Civic Center.

- Councilwoman Galate Goodman, Finance Committee: The Citizens Budget Review Committee met today to discuss the budget; it was a very productive meeting.
- Councilman Sadow, Finance Committee: Met with the Citizens Budget Review Committee today and stated that the Committee was not necessarily formulated to review and help with the budget but rather to look at all aspects of the Borough finances, both income and disbursements.
- Councilman Sadow, Recreation Liaison: The Commission is struggling under their new title but Lisa Abline is handling the transition well.
- Councilwoman Galate Goodman wanted the following on record: Councilwoman Galate Goodman stated that Councilman Sadow was right about the meeting (Budget Review); she wanted to wait until we had information to give out but Councilman Sadow pressed to have the meeting; she wanted to say he was right and thank you.

2. Clerk's Follow-Up Memorandum.

- The Clerk read the memorandum into the record.
- The Mayor stated that the website has a new look and more information is available to the public, which might also be a solution to the numerous OPRA requests.

7. New Business

None.

8. Finance Report for the Months of January and February, 2009.

The Borough Administrator asked the Finance Reports be pulled from this Agenda.

Motion to Table the Finance Reports: Council President Cerasoli.

Second: Councilman Sadow.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion to Table Approved.

9. Open to Public

Veronica Silkes, 668 Succasunna Road:

- Ms. Silkes named some government agencies who are willing to take percentage cuts in their salaries, holding off on purchasing of supplies, furloughs, etc. Ms. Silkes states that the federal stimulus package is supposed to give an infusion of money, make people feel safe to spend, and create jobs and proposed for just one year, possibly cutting the stipends for people who are still making salaries, as well as travel allowances and cell phone expenses. Councilwoman Galate Goodman stated Council is looking into these options. The Borough Administrator stated she has offered to give up her travel allowance but certain people do not agree with it.
- Ms. Silkes questioned the Sustainable Jersey Program and suggested some of the money, being a "green" issue, can help with the lights at Fireman's Field. Councilwoman Galate Goodman invited Ms. Silkes to come to the next green committee meeting. The Mayor stated that the money that Walmart is donating to the League of Municipalities through the Mayor's Committee for a Green Future is money that is going to be spent for green initiative projects; to save and conserve energy. Councilman Sadow stated that he is very interested in Ms. Silkes ideas and suggestions and, along with those of the members of the community, are part and parcel of what constitutes our advisory committee. Councilman Sadow asked Ms. Silkes to send her ideas to him as a conduit to the committee and he would be more than happy to then respond to her.
- Ms. Silkes referred to the Court Shared Services Agreement and asked who was appointed to the Court Advisory Committee. Mayor Ondish stated that the Committee consists of the Mayor and an appointed Council Member from each of the towns involved.. The Mayor has not chosen a Council Member as of yet; the Court will not be reviewed until it has been in effect for six months.
- Ms. Silkes stated that in January's check register, there was a \$4,000 legal fee for a recreation retainer. The Mayor stated that the Borough has spent a lot of time trying to determine the best way to handle recreation, due to the money that comes in, the use of purchase orders, etc. Therefore, there were legal expenses specifically for recreation, which were listed as a separate retainer.

10. Approval of Minutes

February 9, 2009

Regular Meeting

Motion to Approve the Minutes: Councilman Sorge

Second: Councilman Driscoll.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman.

Abstain: Council President Cerasoli.

Motion Approved.

Motion to Move the Executive Session to the End of the Meeting:

Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Council President Cerasoli.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

12. Resolutions**2009-50**

Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Approving the Check Register Dated March 9, 2009.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilman Driscoll.

Councilman Sadow referred to Page 10, Seasons/Shadow Woods disbursement; he did not question the amount but how the designation was spelled out. The Borough Administrator will correct this as Seasons and Shadow Woods are two separate entries.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

2009-51

Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Hiring Elisabeth Karpman as Part-Time Recreation Commission Secretary.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sadow.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

Motion Approved.

2009-52

Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Rejecting All Bids for the Renovations to the Howard Boulevard Firehouse.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

The Borough Administrator stated that we can go out to bid two times for the exact same project/specifications; the first bidding was advertised as two separate projects.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

- 2009-53** Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Receipt of Bids. (Howard Boulevard Firehouse Renovations)

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Council President Cerasoli.

Councilman Sadow asked where the Borough was going to house the EMT's and if that affects the nature of the bid. Councilman Sadow stated that with the opening of the building at DPW and possibility of moving the EMT's entirely, is the specification for the current bid valid. The Borough Administrator stated the bids list alternates; we can look at the alternates and decide if we want to move DPW but the repairs still have to be made on the upstairs level of the firehouse.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

- 2009-54** Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Terminating Employees By Reason of Economy.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Council President Cerasoli.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

- 2009-55** Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Authorizing a Transfer of Funds.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

- 2009-56** Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Supporting Participation in the Sustainable Jersey Municipal Certification Program.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sadow..

Second: Councilwoman Galate Goodman.

The Mayor stated that there will be \$10-\$15,000 grants given to municipalities to do sustainable projects; the grant process includes being approved, submitting an application, etc.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

- 2009-57** Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Finance Office to Release Unexpended Escrow Money.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Council President Cerasoli.

Abstain: Galate Goodman.

Motion Approved.

13. Ordinances – Introduction

- 07-09** An Ordinance of the Borough of Mount Arlington, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Amending Chapter 17 Entitled Land Development, Chapter 133 Entitled Property Maintenance and Chapter 134 Entitled Certificate of Habitability of the Code of the Borough of Mount Arlington

The Mayor read Ordinance 07-09 by Title.

Motion: Councilman Driscoll stated that Ordinance 07-09 be introduced by Title and passed on First Reading and that a meeting be held on April 27, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building, 419 Howard Boulevard, Mount Arlington, NJ, for a Public Hearing, consideration of Second Reading and Passage of said Ordinance, and that the Clerk be directed to publish, post and make available said Ordinance in accordance with the requirements of law.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

The Borough Attorney stated that this ordinance provides definitions and certain corrections were made. The Clerk indicated that this ordinance must be approved by the Land Use Board prior to adoption; the date of the Public Hearing has been amended to read April 27, 2009.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

14. Ordinances – Second Reading

- 04-09** An Ordinance of the Borough of Mount Arlington, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Amending Section 4-29 of the Code of the Borough of Mount Arlington Abolishing the Recreation Committee, Rescinding Ordinance 21-05, Terminating the Agreement with Mount Arlington Recreation Association, Inc., to Disburse Funding for Recreational Programs Dated October 11, 2005 and Establishing Board of Recreation Commission Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:12-1 Et Seq.

The Mayor opened the Hearing to the Public on Ordinance #04-09 and read the Ordinance by title.

Councilman Driscoll stated, I move for adoption and final passage of Ordinance #04-09.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

The Mayor declared that Ordinance #04-09 is passed on second reading and directed the Clerk to publish the notice of adoption as required by law.

15. Motions

1. Raffle License Application #RA:09-04 from the Rotary Club of Lake Hopatcong for Raffle to be held May 12, 2009 at 201 Howard Boulevard, Mount Arlington.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilman Sadow.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Galate Goodman, Council President Cerasoli.

Motion Approved.

16. Mayor's Report

The Mayor read his report into the record.

17. Borough Administrator's Report

Issues will be discussed in Executive Session.

Councilman Sadow asked about information in the Communications packet.

- Packet of February 26, 2009, #5, NJLM Mayors Fax Advisory regarding the Development of Non-Age Restricted Communities; possible opportunities for developers to change their age restricted proposals. The Mayor stated that we are not going to allow this to happen.
- Packet of March 5, 2009, #14: Councilman Sadow commended Parsippany Troy Hills Council for their resolution asking that COAH be disbanded, Councilman Sadow stated that we do not have to stand up to the State any more but rather start to stand with other communities and together voice that we do not agree with the State. The Mayor stated that last year we agreed to donate \$500, along with the other affected municipalities, to the League suit against COAH. Council agreed to place this resolution on the next Agenda.

11. Executive Session

2009-49 Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, New Jersey, Authorizing An Executive Session of the Mayor and Borough Council and Excluding the Public from That Portion of the Meeting.

Executive Session Topics: Negotiations, Personnel and Shared Services – Construction.

Motion to Take a Five Minute Break and Go Into Executive Session: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilman Sadow.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

Motion to Return to Open Session: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilman Driscoll.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

18. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilwoman Galate Goodman.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

Linda DeSantis, RMC
Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved at Council Meeting of March 23, 2009.

Mayor report for 3/9/09

Since our 2/23/09 meeting:

2/24/09- Met with the Director of Parks and Forestry in Trenton about Lake Hopatcong. I will be on a committee to update the Lake Management Plan.

2/25/09- Lake Mayors met to discuss impact of Lake on our Municipalities

2/25/09- Attended regular Land Use meeting.

2/26/09- Attended Press Conference to officially kick off Sustainable Jersey in Trenton. I also learned that PSEG has made a contribution to Sustainable Jersey of 25k; they now have joined with Wal-Mart who contributed 200k that got this program off the ground. The resolution we pass this evening will begin the process of Mount Arlington working towards the grant money available through this program.

2/28/09- I was invited to attend a meeting at Drumthwacket, through the League of Municipalities, along with about 80 other Mayors to discuss the stimulus money that will come into New Jersey. The money that will come to NJ will be distributed through existing programs. The only money that I can see coming directly to municipalities will be through the CDRS grant money. We are a town of less than 50k so we, as usual, will get the money for CDRS through Morris County. Municipalities with a greater population than 50k get the funding directly from the state. As I understand the funding for CDRS will increase by 25%. We currently have an application in and will be presenting for this on tomorrow evening March 10. I asked Commissioner Doria directly if we would need to reapply in order to get the additional 25% and

he said no the funding would be increased for projects we currently applied for. This CDRS money through the County used to be capped at 100k. A few years ago it was changed to a cap of 80k. With the stimulus money, it should go back to 100k. I have already reached out to the Freeholder board to be sure they are aware of this change.

Most of the stimulus money will be going to DOT and the DEP through existing programs that will channel the money to projects that are “shovel ready”. I am not sure how that will work out but that is what we are being told.

When I first arrived I spoke to the Governor about the LHC and that for a half a million dollars we can create 5 jobs and clean up a lake. He smiled and was drawn off to another conversation.

During the presentation, when DEP Commissioner Maruiello was presenting, when he spoke about the Clean Water fund, the Governor pointed at me and gave me the nod that this was where we might find funding. After the meeting I took Commissioner Mauriello aside and had a discussion about it. He said he would see if it was possible. When most had left, I was getting a second cup of coffee and the Governor approached me and said he would do what he could to move some funding to the LHC through that fund. I think this was good news and it might get us funding for this year. Beyond that, it is still up in the air. Commissioner Mauriello did call me Tuesday and asked me to get a letter to him about this request. I have attached a copy of that letter to my report to be in the minutes. He said he would work on it. Later in the week I got a call from John Hazen, who is the DEP legislative affairs contact, and we discussed other options. I suggested that since I confirmed with Senator Smith that Senate Bill 2262 created by Senator Bucco was dead in the water, that we look at the realty transfer fee fund. Out of every real estate transaction that takes place in NJ, a percentage of that transaction is placed in this fund. Commissioner McCarthy, who does a lot of real estate law, had talked about this fund. I suggested to John Hazen that of the 25-26 million dollars that goes into this fund, can 700k be diverted to the

Lake Hopatcong Commission. He said that it sounds like a good idea and that he will look into it and discuss with Commissioner Mauriello. That would be a permanent funding source for the LHC. I will let you know what comes of this.

Just so everyone understands the importance of the LHC and the work the LHC does to maintain the lake, we are a lake community that receives much revenue from those who come to recreate on and around Lake Hopatcong. It is vital that the lake remains usable and desirable in order to continue to attract that business. This is not just about those businesses that are on the lake but all those around the lake and on the way to the lake. The gas stations, the deli's, the supermarkets, the hotels and every other business that supports those who choose to recreate on Lake Hopatcong are impacted by the lake. That is why it is important and I want you to be as up to date as possible on what is going on with the LHC. If funding is not forthcoming from the state then the LHC will have to be funded from other means and that will be some sort of Lake Maintenance Charges collected from those who impact the lake. I am doing everything I can to avoid those charges from having to be put in effect.

3/1/09- I represented Sheriff Rochford at an event in Parsippany.

3/3/09- I attended a United Way of Morris County Public Officials forum at Picatinny. This year's forum was focused on getting everyone to recognize the importance of supporting the families of those soldiers that have been deployed in action. There are many ways that we can help. I have asked Tina to create a place on our website where information can be posted. Please take the time to visit our website or call me to learn how to help.

3/5/09- I attended a NJ Conference of Mayors board of directors meeting in Trenton. We selected a new Executive Director for the COM. Al Licata was the person selected out of a slate of over 30. I know Al, a former Mayor of Bernardsville, and I believe he is

going to do a fantastic job. He actually already has been filling in during the absence since the former Exe Director was let go. There was also much discussion of how we are all in financial stress with our municipal budgets. Many are looking for shared services opportunities as well as looking for waiver caps and extraordinary aide. With revenues being down and costs only continuing to rise, we are all in the same boat. Many have had large lay offs and reorganizations of their employee workforce. Most are not happy with the idea of the pension deferral but are being forced to look at moving forward with it if the legislation passes.

3/6/09- Attended a political event for Freeholder and assembly candidate Doug Cabana in Wharton.

3/7/09- Attended an Eagle Scout Ceremony for Jeffrey LaMana of Landing. I presented our proclamation and had the opportunity to say a few words. I also presented Jeffrey with a "Generals Medal of Excellence" that General Izzo had given me to present to any Eagle Scouts that I preside at their ceremonies. It was a very moving ceremony and Jeffrey is a truly worthy recipient. It was unique and special because Jeffrey's father also is an Eagle Scout award recipient. This is one of the very few father/son Eagle award holders. It was truly moving for Jeffrey to be pinned by his father. I want to once again, publically congratulate Jeffrey on this fantastic achievement. Young men like Jeffrey truly give me hope for our future!

3/8/09- I am sure you read about the accident on Route 80. I want to take a moment to thank our fire and rescue volunteers. I understand this was a very serious accident that has route 80 closed for 3 hours. 4 people were taken by 4 different medivac helicopters. It was very serious. From my understanding most all of our emergency equipment was put to use in order to help these unfortunate people whose lives were changed by being involved in

this horrendous accident. This is what we have this equipment for and I am very proud of our men and women who go through so much training to make sure that when something like this happens they are there to come to the aid of people they don't even know. They are truly a blessing and we can all be thankful they are there and do what they do. I understand Roxbury 1 and 2 also responded and should be commended. Picatinny should also be recognized for responding with their Haz Mat team to address a diesel fuel spill from an ambulance that had its fuel tank ripped open while crossing the median to get to the scene. It was a very remarkable day and experience for all involved.

3/9/09- Prior to this meeting we had an organizational meeting for the Citizens Budget Review Committee. This was a very preliminary meeting and due to the nature of the budget process, it will be a while before our budget will be passed. It will be introduced but the timeframe upon which we are dependant on the state is unknown.



Lake Hopatcong Commission

P.O. Box 8515
Landing, NJ 07850-8515
TEL: 973-601-1070 ♦ FAX: 973-601-1071

March 3, 2009

Commissioner Mark N. Mauriello
State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
401 E. State Street, 7th Floor, East Wing
P.O. Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

Dear Commissioner Mauriello:

As we discussed at the February 28, 2009 meeting with the Mayors and the League of Municipalities at Drumthwacket, the Lake Hopatcong Commission is providing a written request for \$600K from the Economic Stimulus Package funding earmarked for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund administered through the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The primary purpose of the funding request is to continue the Commission's efforts to restore Lake Hopatcong and operate its successful weed harvesting program which will address the water quality issues in the State's largest lake and provide needed employment opportunities in Morris and Sussex Counties.

The water quality of Lake Hopatcong, the State's largest and most heavily used recreational lake, has long been threatened and impacted by development of its watershed. Septic systems, road runoff, lawn fertilizers and various other non point sources of pollution are responsible for the degradation of the lake's water quality. The pollutants having the greatest direct impact on the lake are phosphorus and sediments. Some of the more noticeable impacts caused by these pollutants are the occurrence of summer algae blooms, the filling-in of coves with silt and the development of dense beds of invasive aquatic weeds.

Recognizing the need to address the causes of the Lake's water quality problems has been of utmost priority for all involved with the long-term management and restoration of Lake Hopatcong. The Lake Hopatcong Commission has worked closely with county and municipal governments to maintain, and where possible, upgrade catch basins and installation of stormwater management BMPs. The Commission has also supported the installation of sanitary sewers and septic management plans, a measure that will eventually correct one of the most significant sources of nutrient inputs to the lake, septic systems. In addition, through community outreach and public education efforts, the Lake Hopatcong Commission has been instructing all the public of the measures and practices that everyone who lives around the lake or uses the lake can do themselves to avoid negatively affecting the lake's water quality. Overall, these efforts have helped stem the eutrophication of the lake and lessen the potential impacts caused by development of the watershed.

One of the most apparent management activities of the Lake Hopatcong Commission is the weed harvesting program. Some may view this as a simple "mowing" of the lake. However, much more is accomplished than simply opening boating lanes and improving swimming conditions. The harvested weeds represent a significant amount of biomass, and associated nutrients, that if not removed would otherwise add to the siltation of the lake and contribute to its future eutrophication.

Because of the concerted, coordinated efforts of the Lake Hopatcong Commission, over 18.7 million pounds of weeds were removed from the lake since 2002. This could not have been accomplished without the efforts of the Lake Hopatcong Commission Field Operations staff and the well maintained harvesting equipment which includes six weed harvesters, two transport barges, two conveyors and two dump trucks.

The weed harvesting program was initiated in the mid-1980s by the Lake Hopatcong Commission predecessor organization, the Lake Hopatcong Regional Planning Board. The primary advantage mechanical weed harvesting has over other lake management techniques, such as the application of herbicides, is that phosphorus is removed from the lake along with the weed biomass. In fact, based on a plant biomass study conducted at Lake Hopatcong in 2006 and the weed harvesting records of 2006 and 2007, approximately 6-8% of the total phosphorus load targeted for reduction under the established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is removed through the mechanical weed harvesting program.

During the 2008 growing season the Lake Hopatcong Commission Field Operation Staff, comprised of four full-time and five seasonal employees, removed a total of 1,137 tons of aquatic vegetation from Lake Hopatcong. This roughly equates to 2.2 million pounds of wet plant biomass removed from the lake.

Using the results of the 2006 plant biomass / phosphorus study, it was estimated that the 2008 mechanical weed harvesting program removed 406 lbs (184 kg) of total phosphorus from the lake. This accounted for approximately 5.6% of the amount of phosphorus targeted for removal under the lake's established TMDL. If this removed phosphorus was utilized by filamentous and planktonic algae, it would have the potential to generate approximately 446,000 pounds of wet algae biomass.

Based on the 2008 Lake Hopatcong Water Quality Monitoring Report, the long-term, 2006-2008 mean annual amount of plant biomass removed from Lake Hopatcong is 1,343 tons, which equates to approximately 479 lbs (217 kg) of total phosphorus removed from the lake. Thus, the mechanical harvesting program of Lake Hopatcong contributes toward improving the water quality of the lake, as well as removing nuisance densities of submerged vegetation.

A 2007 study on the aquatic plant surveys and evaluation of aquatic plant harvesting on Arizona reservoirs by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, identified the following other problems associated with excessive plant growth which a weed harvesting program helps to address:

- aquatic plants provide stagnant habitat ideal for mosquito breeding
- certain algae can impart foul tastes and odors to the water and can produce substances toxic to fish and wildlife
- plants impede water flow in ditches, canals, and culverts and cause water to back up
- deposition of dead organic matter can cause the gradual filling in of water bodies
- nutrients, particularly organic carbon and phosphorus, released from plants into the water can result in algal blooms
- lower property values and decrease aesthetic appeal

Lake Hopatcong, its associated tributaries, Lake Shawnee and its sub-watersheds, form the headwaters of the Musconetcong River. Lake Hopatcong also serves as an emergency water supply in times of drought emergency. Lake restoration activities will benefit Lake Musconetcong and other downstream water ways and will protect the State's emergency water supply source. As previously noted, weed harvesting reduces the organic matter which can cause the gradual filling in of a water body. By not removing excessive aquatic plants from this emergency water supply, it could potentially decrease the lake's water storage capacity.

During the harvesting season, which commences in mid-to-late May depending on the weed growth, harvesting crews are deployed in the northern section of the lake in Woodport and in the southern section at the Hopatcong State Park or Lee's County Marina. Many shallow sections of Lake Hopatcong are susceptible to an abundant density of rooted aquatic plants.

To ensure the harvesting equipment is fully operational during the harvesting season, the Commission Field Operations staff performs critical maintenance tasks daily, weekly and monthly during the season. In the ff season, the staff performs a complete maintenance overhaul on the equipment to prevent wear and tear on the equipment and to protect the Commission's \$1M capital investment.

The weed harvesting operation also ensures that everyone can continue to enjoy fishing, swimming, boating and other recreational activities on the lake. These recreational activities are a big draw which brings countless visitors to the lake region each year and excessive weed growth could impact the usability of the lake and ultimately impact tourist revenue. A reduction in tourist revenue would have a detrimental effect on small local businesses which rely heavily on increased business activities during the spring and summer.

In summary, many of the more shallow sections of Lake Hopatcong are susceptible to the proliferation of nuisance densities of rooted aquatic plants. Given the size of Lake Hopatcong, the composition of its aquatic plant community, and its heavy and diverse recreational use, mechanical weed harvesting is the most cost effective and ecologically sound method of controlling nuisance weed densities.

From a water quality perspective, the removal weed mass is very important. Thus, through the weed harvesting efforts of the Lake Hopatcong Commission, phosphorus, that otherwise would be recycled through the lake and fuel future weed and algae growth, is removed. This has a direct positive benefit to the long-term water quality of the lake and the control of the lake's eutrophication. As such, the weed harvesting program contributes in more than the obvious way in the revitalization of the lake and the improvement of its water quality. Aquatic weed harvesting is an extremely manageable and the least invasive lake management approach to the overall lake ecosystem

If you need further information or would like to discuss this request, please contact me directly at 201-787-6538. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Arthur R. Ondish
Chair

C: Governor J. Corzine
L. Baier, NJ DEP Watershed Management