

**Leonard Mill Pond Collaborative (LMPC)**  
**Summary of Annual Meeting**  
**December 6, 2017**

Fifteen members from various LMPC neighborhoods, including all Captains, attended the annual meeting, which began promptly at 7:00 p.m. Chuck Poole, Superintendent of Wicomico County Department of Parks and Recreation, spoke first in providing a report on monitoring pond management issues. He began by noting that no chemical treatment was applied in the summer of 2017, given earlier sampling of the health of the pond, and that hydrilla levels remain relatively low and isolated. Along with relatively small concentrations of duckweed, the pond remains in good health, particularly in comparison to other freshwater bodies in the region.

As per usual, the Department of Parks and Recreation will continue to monitor the pond, starting once again in the spring of 2018. This year may be a pivotal one in that instead of any potential need for chemical weed treatment, we may be able to use a mechanical weed harvester. The City of Salisbury has undertaken a mission in Wisconsin to examine the properties of mechanical weed harvesters, and is contemplating the purchase of a unit for purposes of maintaining health of area freshwater bodies. Should a harvester be purchased, the Wicomico County Department of Parks and Recreation would then be in a position to use this device in treating for hydrilla and duckweed on Leonard Mill Pond. Weeds so collected would be deposited at an as yet to be named recycling facility on Brick Kiln Road, and from which it might be possible to anticipate commercial recycling for animal and plant nutrient formulations. Chuck said that he would let us know of the disposition on the part of the City as to the prospective purchase of a mechanical harvester, in which case we would hope to be able to use the device without any direct budgetary impact.

A question was raised regarding the prospective construction of a holding dam that could contain floating tree limbs and debris from clogging up the sluice gates adjacent to the Wicomico County Tourist Center facility. Chuck noted that there are no plans at present to construct such a holding dam to ensure the proper functioning of the sluice gates at the Tourist Center spillway. He indicated that there are two flood sluice gates at the pond. One operates on an automatic floatation system while the other operates manually. Neighbors asked about the unusual flooding conditions of this year and that were associated with operation of the sluice gates. Chuck indicated that they would always make every effort to minimize any flood risk, including pre-emptive drawing down of the pond in anticipation of a high probability rainfall event. Chuck's number at Parks and Recreation is 410-548-4870. Residents can call to alert his office of any concern to which he has indicated that they would make every effort to respond to any request in as timely a manner as possible.

During this presentation, it also was noted that some waterfront residents are dumping their yard dead leaves directly into the pond. This is strongly discouraged by the Department as well as by those in attendance. Dead leaf dumping into the pond only hastens eutrophication of the pond's oxygen levels and accelerates the transformation of the pond into a marshland. **All residents should refrain from dumping any yard material into the pond and to use appropriate recycling methods to remove any yard debris to the County recycling yard at Brick Kiln Road.**

Following Chuck's presentation, Volunteer Treasurer Marilyn Booth gave a report on our LMPC finances. No expenses nor contributions were made during this past year. The balance as of December 6, 2017 is the same as at this time last year, and stands at \$9,334.05. As per our discussion and vote in last year's meeting, we will keep this balance on reserve for any financial contingencies should they arise, and for which any expenditure would be brought to LMPC residents for a decision.

In the general discussion, John Rue brought to the attention of residents a Maryland Department of Natural Resources Manual of the Freshwater Bivalves of Maryland published in February 2016. A pdf version of this report will be posted on the LMPC website. In the discussion that ensued, it was noted that many freshwater mussel species exist along the Delmarva Peninsula, and that some appear to be facing not only drastic reductions in their numbers but also extinction. Since these bivalves provide a critical cleansing function of the ecosystem's water resources, it was, and is, important to undertake measures to understand the life cycle dynamics of these organisms as well as to adopt decisions to preserve their stocks. Toward this end, while the LMPC group had adopted a resolution in 2016 not to lower the pond for purposes of undertaking repairs to docks and waterfront edging, a general consensus at this year's meeting affirmed that we would continue to refrain from lowering the pond for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, we also would undertake an outreach to the Biology and Environmental Studies faculty at Salisbury University to see if a study could be undertaken to assess the stocks and varieties of freshwater mussels in Leonard Mill Pond.

During the meeting's general discussion, it also was brought to the attention of residents as to whether they wished to designate new representatives. Residents asked that Marilyn Booth continue as Volunteer Treasurer and that Phillip LeBel continue as Volunteer Coordinator. Both agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.