

WORKING GROUP MEETING FOR
LAKE PLACID WATERSHED ADVISORY BOARD
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2013 2:00 PM

Council Member Debra Worley called the working group meeting for the creation of the Lake Placid Watershed Advisory Board to order on Thursday, September 5, 2013 at 2:05 PM.

ROLL CALL

Pam Fentress

Bob Howard

John Ruggiero

Council Liaison – Council Member Debra Worley

ALSO PRESENT

Jack Richie, Chair Highlands County Board of County Commissioners

Deputy Town Clerk Vickie Bollinger

REVIEW AND DISCUSS ORGANIZATION OF THE LAKE PLACID WATERSHED
ADVISORY BOARD

The Board discussed the Lake June pond weed issue; vacant lot near a wastewater lift station that is available for sale but watershed issues exist in the area; and the improvement in Lake Clay's water quality since issues were fixed.

Council Member Worley stated that she is the Council Liaison for the Board; she would serve as the Chair; and that she would not have a vote in matters before the Board. She presented a draft of an ordinance that would create the Board and outline the issues the Board would address and then provide recommendations to the Town Council.

The Board reviewed the draft ordinance and agreed: they would address surface water and ground water issues; Board members should live within the Greater Lake Placid area; Board members should have some expertise in water issues or a related field; cost estimates should be included with all projects; surveys are needed to identify issues/projects; and the ordinance should be broad so all relevant issues can be pursued by the Board.

Lakes within or near the town limits were identified and current water quality was discussed.

(Clerk's Note: Mr. Richie left the meeting.)

The Board discussed getting or creating watershed maps. Ms. Fentress stated she had access to watershed maps and will follow-up for the next meeting.

The following issues/items were discussed:

- Previous studies/testing on the lakes and water quality should be compiled.
- A list exists regarding projects to improve Highlands County lakes. The list will help identify where the greatest benefits would be.
- Need to identify who owns the land in watershed areas.
- A county-wide ordinance may be needed to control chemical and nutrient run-off into the lakes.

- Funding could come from creation of special districts or a storm water tax.
- Education of the public on watershed issues is very important, and education should be started with elementary school children. The Board could sponsor an Earth Day or be part of the “A Day at the Lakes” which was sponsored by the County.
- Specific areas were discussed: Paradise Hill Mobile Home Park, Lake Clay development, Placid Lakes canals, and annexation.
- More information is needed about the Town’s wastewater facilities and the public should be educated.
- Reuse water is good quality, but its use is expensive to implement.
- Incentives may be provided for property owners to hook into the town’s wastewater systems.
- Annexation agreements should be reviewed for watershed issues.

The Board agreed:

- Once the maps were collected, another meeting would be scheduled.
- Public education is not only important, but will greatly contribute to improved water quality for all the lakes.
- Town officials should be encouraged to take a tour of the Town’s wastewater and reuse facilities for a better understanding of how they work. They would be better able to answer questions from the public. The local newspapers could be invited to join the tour to help promote public education.
- Watershed projects are long term projects. Any project started now may not be funded until 2015 and then begin work in 2016 and it may take years to see improved water quality.

Council Member Worley, hearing no objections, declared the meeting adjourned at 3:35 PM.