

BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES, NJ
LAKES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Monthly Meeting Minutes – Quick Notes
Minutes for July 7, 2026 at 7:30 PM - Zoom

1. Call to Order

A monthly meeting of the Lakes Management Advisory Committee was held on July 7, 2026 on Zoom teleconference. It began at 7:30 PM and was presided over by chairperson Derek Jackson.

2. Attendees

Voting Members in attendance: Alpesh Amin, Debra Dewing, Andy Hilton, Derek Jackson, Jason Miner, Wayne Roth, Mike Russo

Non-voting Members in attendance: Tom Menard (Borough Council Liaison), Bob Schindler (Lentic Ecological), Scott Minter (Student Representative)

Members not in attendance: Lucien Foster, Nikki Riley, Mitchell Stern (Borough Manager), Gwyneth Buckley (Student Representative), Kelsey Dages (Student Representative), Maxwell Hollick (Student Representative)

Guests in attendance: None

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on June 2, 2026 was made by Wayne Roth and seconded by Debra Dewing. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Borough Management Report

Report was presented by Derek Jackson on behalf of Mitchell Stern.

Mitchell reports the letter to waterfront property owners that was discussed in the last meeting just went into the mail. Given the recent mailing event, there has been no feedback on the letter. There was a request from committee members for a final copy of the resident letter. (AI)

Mitchell reached out to Chris at Princeton Hydro about the future needs for a bathymetric study. Chris advised Mitchell that completing another bathymetric study at this time would not change anything or have any meaningful effect on his report. He stated that the previous study already shows where the accumulation is located. While he expects additional accumulation over time, because this is a lake with no real current that would shift material, we can wait until we determine next steps before moving forward with another study. However, if there were currents that could shift the material, his recommendation may have been different. Based on my conversation with him, however, a second bathymetric study does not appear to be necessary at this time for purposes of his report.

5. Lentic Ecological Report

Report was presented by Bob Schindler.

Lentic has been on the water and regularly visiting and treating the lakes over the last few weeks.

Birchwood Lake had extensive herbicide for milfoil in the last week.

Crystal Lake had an algaecide treatment in the last week. This was in response to the lakes conditions drastically changing over a short period of time. The lake's water clarity decreased from 12 ft to 6 ft. During the same period there was a significant decline in oxygen levels. The lake seems to be stratifying earlier in the season and releasing nutrients which are very favorable to algae blooms.

Sunset Lake received a treatment for floating aquatic plants.

Olive and Shadow have looked good for the early season.

The Cove Pond appears to have a dam issue resulting in water levels 15" below full pool. This was communicated to Mitchell and DPW.

Mountain Lake has looked good. A milfoil treatment was applied to the north and south ends of the lakes. Similarly, Bass weed will be treated in the cove end and northwest of Island Beach.

Bacteria fecal counts in Mountain Lake near Island Beach suddenly increased by 100x week over week. The results were at a failure level on Monday but returned to normal by Wednesday. This could be caused by the recent rainfall activities and adjacent private beaches that are not cleaning up fecal material.

Wildwood Lake has had no algae blooms but there has been some filamentous algae.

6. Old Business

There continues to be concern about whether the committee will have sufficient information in the report from Princeton Hydro to provide a meaningful insight to the Borough Council and its financial committees about the high-level future cadence requirements for lake restoration activities to ensure the lakes ecosystems are not damaged and/or the lake body is not taken by nature due to water depth loss. The prior Bathymetric study was about \$55K and has not been budgeted or planned for in 2026. There was a discussion about whether there might be opportunity to use the 2013 Bathymetric Study as a comparison against the 2023 study. Both used the mapping network and therefore may provide the necessary data points. Prior statements have indicated this may not be a strong apples to apples comparison. As a follow-up to the report from Mitchell, Tom Menard and Derek Jackson will meet with him and potentially Princeton Hydro to discuss further. (AI)

Birchwood water level continues to be down. Unofficial reports from observers on the committee and Lentic guesstimate the lake is 18" below the dam boards. It was noted that the normal water level is about 6" below the high-water level point which floods over the lowest docks near the swim area.

7. New Business

Fireworks and lake pollution – On the morning of Saturday July 4, Derek Jackson communicated to members of the committee suggesting they visit Midvale Boat Dock to see the amount of pollution in the lake after the fireworks. The large majority of the waste appeared on and around the fireworks barge which was tied to the boat dock. Mitchell Stern noted that the fireworks vendor was supposed to clean up the area after the show. However, as of Tuesday no cleanup had started, which caused additional debris to fall into the lake bed. Similar conditions had been observed and reported in prior years but recent years have not been as bad as this year. The tradition of using the barge starting in 2011 around the 100-year anniversary of the Borough Mountain Lakes to improve viewing for the general public. Prior to that, the fireworks were launched from a sand bunker on Island Beach and the beach was closed to public. There were questions about whether legal or financial recourse that can be taken due to the negligence of the vendor. The committee members felt this is outside the scope and jurisdiction of the committee.

8. Announcements

Next meeting August 4, 2026, is planned for Island Beach under the pavilion. The location has been reserved with the recreation director.

9. Adjournment

Tom Menard moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mike Russo seconded the motion. The motion passed at 840 PM.