



THE GLEN ELDRIDGE CLUB

Annual Meeting Minutes

Saturday, July 25, 2026 | 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM ET | The Pavilion, Glen Eldridge, Burdett, NY

Meeting Details

- Called to order at 12:00 PM ET by Tom Seem, Point President. Adjourned at approximately 1:30 PM ET.
- Officers present: Tom Seem (Point President), Rob Mains (Treasurer). Larry Garner presented on dock matters.
- Absent: Laura, excused for a family event (both of her children are getting married).
- New members welcomed: Jens and Sarah, each attending their first Glen Eldridge Club meeting.
- Minutes recorded by Christian Seem using an AI-assisted transcription process. The same process was piloted last year and produced minutes closely matching those taken by hand.

Approval of Prior Year Minutes

- The minutes from last year's meeting, included in the member packets, were presented for review.
- Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. No objections, additions, or changes were raised.
- **Vote: Approved unanimously.**

Treasurer's Report (Rob Mains)

- The Treasurer targets a year-end cash balance of approximately \$10,000, high enough to cover contingencies but low enough to avoid excess funds sitting in a non-interest-bearing checking account. The Club ended the year with over \$20,000, above target, for the following reasons:
 - The new dock bench budgeted for this year will not be delivered until next week, so that expense falls into fiscal 2027.
 - Insurance premiums came in at their lowest level in three years, despite the Club having paid out a claim.
 - Tree expenses were lower than expected, with no major tree problems this year.
 - A late-year water charge that varies widely from year to year, and was very high last year, did not recur.
 - The swale project came in under budget.
- Overall, the Club finished below budget for 2026. No major changes are expected in the 2027 budget, aside from the dock question addressed separately below.
- One new cost item: the lawn contractor has added a small surcharge per cutting, roughly \$3, attributed to rising insurance costs. Not material overall, though they perform many cuttings per season. Trash costs are not meaningfully higher.
- **Proposed assessments:** a regular assessment of \$1,500 per cottage in September and \$1,000 per cottage in January. This is projected to leave a balance of approximately \$15,000 at year end and includes the standard \$2,000 miscellaneous maintenance line for unexpected items.

- Motion made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's report and the proposed assessments.
- **Vote: Approved unanimously.**

Member Financing Proposal for Large Capital Expenses

- In anticipation of the dock expense, Rob distributed a written proposal for spreading large capital costs among members.
- The concept follows the program David DeVaux set up when the creek wall was reinforced: members with available cash front the cost for members who need time, at a nominal interest rate, so the full amount can be paid to the contractor while individual members pay over a couple of years.
- Rob expressed high confidence that the group can assemble roughly \$80,000 among the membership, with some contributing more up front and others paying over time. Financial details would be handled privately through the Treasurer, not exposed to the whole group.

Main Dock Replacement

Condition

- The dock has been patched together for years, and the pilings are failing. During this spring's high water, the north lower section broke completely free, lifted, and moved around. Larry re-secured it with new bolts and, in doing so, got a close look at the pilings: the wood between the boards holding the structure together is badly deteriorated, with little solid material left to hold a screw.
- Larry could not say whether collapse is a month, a year, or two years away, but is convinced it is time to decide on replacement. Patching can likely get the dock through next summer, but many top decking boards are splintering, and it makes no sense to spend money replacing decking on a structure that will be torn out.
- The dock is 53 years old (built 1973). It went roughly 35 to 40 years before boards needed replacing. In recent years Larry and Melissa have replaced numerous boards annually, including the entire section at the diving board two years ago after the support structure went bad.
- Safety history: a couple of years ago a guest of the Brooks cottage was injured when a decking board broke under her while she was running across the dock with children. She suffered a severe leg injury requiring roughly five surgeries, has ongoing problems, and sought only her medical bills. Members noted this as a warning shot that safety must weigh heavily in the timing decision.
- Water conditions are worsening. The lake this spring was as high as or higher than anyone has seen, and it stayed high. Lower dock sections that used to be underwater only occasionally are now at or below the waterline nearly every year. Many docks up and down the lake broke loose this spring.

Estimate Received - Lakeshore Innovations (Lodi, NY)

- Larry contacted three dock companies. Only Lakeshore Innovations has responded. They are the company that installed Sarah's jet ski lift and were described as reasonable and responsive.
- Preliminary estimate (not a formal quote): \$69,680 for the new dock, called \$70,000 for discussion, plus roughly \$10,000 to remove the old dock, for a total of approximately \$80,000. The estimate excludes light poles, cleats, ladders, and electric, which remain to be specified.
- Construction would use steel pilings, similar to the boat lift dock, with the steel under the decking wrapped in wood for aesthetics so the finished dock reads as a wooden dock. The steel pilings would not extend above deck level the way the current wooden pilings do.
- Underwater support would be a fully welded 8-inch steel box beam. The comparable existing steel dock is rock solid, and the wooden underwater beam is what broke free in this spring's damage.
- The contractor uses galvanized steel from used highway guardrails purchased from New York State, the same material Shamel used on the other dock. Members familiar with it confirmed it is good quality and should last a very long time in fresh water.
- Wooden pilings to match the current look are possible at a similar price, but the contractor does not recommend them: they are less solid, the bolting loosens, and the pilings do not last as long. The group's consensus was to go with steel.

Options Priced

- Shortening the dock by one 12-foot section (the spacing between pilings) would save \$9,300. The group leaned against this: DEC permitting for an in-kind replacement is straightforward, but shortening now and trying to rebuild to full length later would likely be a permitting battle, and remobilizing a contractor later would add cost.
- Composite (poly) decking instead of wood would raise the installed dock price from roughly \$70,000 to \$91,000, about \$20,000 more. It should last indefinitely, eliminates splinters, staining, board turning, and replacement, and uses hidden stainless screws clipped from underneath. Downsides are the price and that composite tends to run hotter under bare feet, particularly in lighter colors. The support structure would still be steel, likely with pressure-treated lumber between steel and decking; Larry will confirm.
- Members noted the maintenance question matters because Larry and Melissa, who currently do most of the dock maintenance, may not be in a position to do it long term.
- Step-downs: the current lower section sits about 16 inches down via two steps. The contractor's steel system uses 12-inch steps. Consensus was to keep a lower section but raise it higher than it sits today, which helps in high water and is an easier step height.
- The diving board is fiberglass, in good shape, and can be reinstalled on the new dock. Its spring tension has been adjusted and it has stayed in place for two years without being chained.

Cost Reference Points

- The finger dock replacement cost approximately \$22,000. The main dock is roughly three times the width (12 feet versus 4 feet), which sanity-checks an estimate in the \$66,000-plus range before removal costs.
- Waiting a year would likely add at least 15% to the cost. Rough member share at \$80,000 is approximately \$8,000 per cottage, possibly somewhat higher depending on final scope.

Timing and Consensus

- Lakeshore Innovations indicated they could perform the work this off-season (between close-up and next spring) if the Club moves quickly. They work from barges and handle DEC permitting; an in-kind replacement is expected to be a routine approval, with permit costs paid by the Club.
- Shamel, regarded as the premier dock builder on the lake, has not responded and is known to be extremely busy. Members agreed the Club should not go sole-source without at least attempting one or two more estimates.
- **Recorded consensus (no formal motion required):** (1) Larry will obtain at least one, ideally two, additional proposals, and will nudge the non-responsive contractors starting Monday. (2) Larry will ask Lakeshore Innovations for their drop-dead date to commit for this off-season, which also gives the Club leverage and a timeline with the other bidders. (3) When proposals are in hand, Tom will distribute them to the membership by email as PDFs, and the Club will vote by email or Zoom. (4) The strong preference is to complete construction this off-season (fall, winter, or spring); if that proves impossible, the work will absolutely be done the following off-season. (5) Baseline scope: replace in kind at the same length and footprint, steel pilings, raise the lower sections with 12-inch step-downs, and shift the north corner out approximately 4 feet (south side unchanged) to correct the north side consistently sitting on the ground. (6) Continue pricing both wood and composite decking before a final materials decision.

Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association (SLPWA) Donation

- SLPWA treated some 70 hemlock trees on Club property this year for the woolly adelgid, an invasive pest causing widespread hemlock death, at no cost to the Club. Lost hemlocks would leave the creek banks and the glen more susceptible to erosion. Had the Club paid for the treatment, the cost would have been just under \$2,000, possibly significantly more.
- SLPWA also maintains a flow-testing device in the second glen, checked every couple of months, monitoring whether the creek could support harmful algal blooms. The creek is listed among the cleanest bodies of water feeding the lake.

- Amy, an SLPWA member, confirmed the organization was responsive, did the work well, and was careful in selecting a treatment appropriate for runoff into the lake. A donation also gives the Club standing to ask follow-up questions, including whether repeat treatments will be needed.
- **Decision:** the Club will donate \$1,000 to SLPWA this year and revisit the amount annually, with smaller recurring donations possible in future years. No objections.

Other Donations

- Sheriff's Department: the Club continues its token annual donation of roughly \$100, which keeps the Club on their list.
- Fire Department: donations have lapsed because mail keeps being returned and the all-volunteer station is unstaffed when visited. Members noted the point is vulnerable and asked that the donation be hand-delivered if possible.
- Refuse: no garbage service issues. An initial billing hiccup with the hauler was resolved and the amount owed has been determined.

Swale Project and Drainage

- The swale project, contracted through Dean Brooks with Swartout, is complete and came in under budget. The contractor returned in spring to reseed after initial grass growth was thin, and grass is now filling in.
- Effectiveness is hard to judge yet. Puddling in front of Jane's cottage, the lowest point on the point, is a longstanding condition driven by the lake's water table rather than surface runoff; when the lake is high enough, water simply rises there and the swale cannot prevent it.
- The buried drainage line is perforated pipe under the former swale transitioning to solid pipe toward the lake, with a capped outlet at the lake end. The cap prevents lake water from running backward into the system in high water; opening the cap with a screwdriver allows accumulated water to drain when the lake is at a reasonable level.
- Concern raised: the exposed outlet end of the black pipe was curled upward this spring, and if the final section is not graded correctly the line will not drain. It has since been weighted down into the stones. The installer likely set the buried run level with a transit, but Tom will check the pipe for standing water and the group will keep the outlet end exposed and accessible.
- Background: the grates behind the lower cottages sit on catch basins installed around 1973, after the 1972 flood, when the then-dirt road sent heavy runoff toward the backs of the cottages. That problem has not recurred since the road was paved.

Pavilion

- The floor was sealed at the end of last season (August), with Larry doing much of the work and Rob volunteering and assisting. The Club thanked them. The leftover oil-based sealer went on poorly and stayed tacky into spring, so only one coat was applied and the remaining material was discarded. The floor looks much better and the weather-exposed boards on the south side needed the protection. A second cleaning and coat may be done later this year.
- Paint is needed under the eaves eventually, and a couple of doors need minor attention, but nothing is failing. Given the dock expense, pavilion painting is deferred and no quotes were gathered.

Lawn and Grounds

- Gizmo continues to perform well and has been responsive to requests.
- Their mower threw a piece of metal strapping that speared clean through Larry's downspout. After Tom notified them, Gizmo reimbursed Larry for the replacement downspout on the spot, no questions asked. Members were impressed with how it was handled, and relieved it hit a downspout rather than a window or a person.

Trees and Plantings

- Trees were successfully taken down outside the Owen cottage over the winter.

- Significant dead wood remains in the trees on the North Hill in front of the DeVaux, Laura, and Carr cottages. If those limbs fall they could take out power lines. This should be the top priority when the tree evaluation is done this year. Jane, who has just arrived for the season, will assess. No other tree issues have been reported.

Water

- No issues. Sarah has taken over coordination with Jeremiah for the seasonal turn-on and shut-off, and the Club thanked her.

Septic

- No Club-wide septic issues. Cottages are on individual or shared two-to-three-cottage systems, and issues are handled by the affected owners. Last year's lawn excavation for a repair is hopefully not to be repeated.

Security and Property Rights

- No security or oversight issues reported this year. The barrier island prevents kayakers from making their way up the creek.
- Historical context for new members: years ago, during a major dispute over smelt fishing, Ed Hoffman did extensive legal work establishing that the glen and the creek are Club property, not the state's. Tom holds the documentation, currently spread across several files, and is consolidating it. Members should report any kayak or canoe incursions.
- Recommended approach to trespassers: inform them calmly that they are on private property, that they have passed posted signs, and that continued argument can be taken up with the Sheriff. Video documentation of the warning was suggested so a deputy can see the trespasser was informed. Confrontation is at each member's discretion.

Wildlife

- The usual cast is present: groundhogs, deer on the point in the early mornings, a possum in the parking lot, plus the annual fox and occasional skunks under the Brooks/Bacon cottage, at one point simultaneously with groundhogs.
- Sarah's cottage had screening installed to keep groundhogs out from under it. Cards for her contractor were made available. Key points from the contractor: exclusion is more effective and more cost-efficient than trapping, since relocating trapped groundhogs is illegal (trapped animals must be killed). Groundhogs test a new barrier the first season, then generally give up and move elsewhere. Digging is tolerable; chewing on the cottage wood is the real problem. The contractor also handles bats, and possibly flying squirrels.

Legal and Bylaws

- The response from the Mancuso firm (via an associate) on the bylaws was, in substance: do not change the system, though a few minor tweaks may be appropriate. The small committee (including Tom and Cora) will take up those potential minor changes this year.
- Separate from the bylaws, the one-page rules/guidelines document will be redistributed by email. Members are asked to share it with everyone in their cottage, not just meeting attendees, and posting it (refrigerator-style) was encouraged. Parking regulations were already circulated this year. It was confirmed, with some amusement, that the prohibition on Sunday card playing is no longer among the rules.

New Dock Bench

- The new bench arrives Monday at approximately 9:30 AM. It is composite, the same material as the circular bench. The delivery crew will handle all lifting.
- The Club needs to select which existing dock bench will be hauled away, likely the most deteriorated one on the far north end, though not the recently painted one.

- Further bench orders are on hold until the dock decision is resolved, since a composite dock may open the option of matching benches from the dock contractor.

Nominating

- No changes. No officer or committee member has asked to step down.

Annual Picnic

- This year's picnic follows the meeting, hosted by the Brown, Barbara, and Barnhill/Troy cottages. Laura cleaned out the pavilion beforehand and was thanked in her absence. Next year's hosts are the Owen and Brooks cottages.
- The regular caterer of several years was unavailable due to an unexpected vacation, so this year's food was ordered through Wegmans catering and picked up, which was somewhat more expensive. The caterer should theoretically be available next year. Consensus remains to keep the picnic format as is.

Committee Assignments and Point Directory

- The committee list was distributed. No changes were identified to committees or the point directory. Any corrections should be given to Tom in writing or marked on a copy of the directory. Tom's cell number and email as listed were confirmed correct.

Hoffman Property Matters

- Status: last fall Steve Hoffman was seen doing additional survey marking and mentioned to Michael a possible interest in doing another deal with the Club. He has not contacted the Club since, and the matter is dormant. One of the Hoffmans' attorneys has passed away since the last round of discussions. The Club retains all records of prior dealings.
- The Club was careful in its dock and frontage work never to cross onto Hoffman land, and still owns an estimated 10 to 20 feet of lake frontage beyond the dock area.
- Road access: the Club holds an easement in perpetuity over the Hoffman-owned final stretch of the roadway, dating to the 1800s as part of the original deed. The easement is for access only, not utilities. When the Club water project was done, the Hoffmans declined to allow a tap into the hydrant on their property, so the Club instead tapped a manhole up the road to the north for the Hector water supply, at considerable time, effort, and expense. A private water line does cross their land under separate arrangement.
- Jens shared that when his family bought their cottage, the Hoffmans granted a license for the few feet of land the garage encroaches on. The license is not time-limited and extends to Jens and Nancy, their children, and descendants, but does not transfer with a sale outside the family. It would need to be renegotiated by an outside buyer. Members noted this license also constitutes the Hoffmans' formal declaration that they retain that property.

Records and Documentation

- In response to a question from new members about document retention: Tom holds the Club's records, including the original book of minutes (preserved thanks to Chris Jollick, and rediscovered when Jack and Debbie's cottage was cleaned out last summer). Amy's historical materials from the Hank and Mort era have been very helpful on the road, seawall, and post-flood dock questions.
- Tom is working through the accumulated paper and intends to digitize all the minutes. Fireproof storage was raised as important, since these records are the Club's only proof on property and legal matters. Survey maps by Hunt Engineers from the 1990s or 2000s are held in several cottages. Members with documentation should give it directly to Tom.

Adjournment

- With no further old, new, or funny business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 1:30 PM ET, followed by the annual picnic.

Summary of Action Items

- Larry: nudge the two non-responsive dock contractors starting Monday; press for a Shamel estimate; ask Lakeshore Innovations for their commitment deadline for off-season work; confirm the substructure detail under composite decking.
- Tom: distribute dock proposals to the membership by email when received and organize the email or Zoom vote; check the swale outlet pipe for standing water; redistribute the rules/guidelines document by email; continue consolidating and digitizing Club records; attempt hand delivery of the fire department donation.
- Rob: process the \$1,000 SLPWA donation; continue the sheriff's department donation; stand ready with the member financing framework once the dock cost is fixed; collect the \$1,500 September and \$1,000 January assessments.
- Jane: evaluate trees this season, with the dead wood on the North Hill in front of the DeVaux, Laura, and Carr cottages as top priority.
- All members: budget for an estimated dock special assessment of roughly \$8,000 per cottage; share the rules/guidelines with all cottage occupants; report any changes to committees or the directory to Tom in writing; report any creek incursions.
- Club (Monday): receive the new bench at 9:30 AM and designate which old bench is to be removed.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian Seem

Recording Secretary for the Meeting

The Glen Eldridge Club | Seneca Lake | Est. 1896