



# Manhasset Bay Protection Committee

## DRAFT Minutes: March 26, 2026, 7:30pm

### Flower Hill Village Hall

#### **Attendance:**

Representatives: Bob Keane (Chairman, Port Washington North), Tom Lang (Plandome Manor), Kevin Braun (Town of North Hempstead), Jeff Stone (Manorhaven), Rich Dunphy (Plandome), Gary Lewandowski (Flower Hill), Kristina Lobosco (Plandome Heights), Maria Branco (Baxter Estates), Annie Mendelson (Great Neck), Ebi Victory (Kings Point)

Guests: Janet Riger, Art Brinkman, Samantha Wilder (Water Quality Coordinator), Sarah Deonarine (Director)

**Meeting was called to order at 7:36pm with a quorum in attendance.**

Note: Action items are in **yellow highlight**. *Motions are in italicized underline.*

#### **Discussion & Motion points:**

1. *Maria Branco made a motion to adopt the minutes of January 15, 2026. Tom Lang seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*
2. *Maria Branco made a motion to finalize the 2026 Committee dues at \$53,400, broken down as \$24,000 from Nassau County, \$6,000 from the Town of North Hempstead, and \$1,800 from each Village. Gary Lewandowski seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*
3. *Maria Branco made a motion to extend the Water Quality Coordinator Samantha Wilder's contract for an additional three (3) years at a rate of \$30 per hour, not to exceed \$4,500. Tom Lang seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*
4. Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP)<sup>1</sup>:
  - a. The February 24<sup>th</sup> public meeting about the draft recommendations ended up being virtual due to a snowstorm, but that seemed to allow more people to attend as there were over 50 people on the videocall. The Committee received positive feedback on the presentation given by NPV. There was some public comment, but a lot of it was not relevant to the WQIP. Though, there were a few comments that will be incorporated.
  - b. Next steps:
    - The Committee decided to keep the Kings Point Park recommendation (N-10) since it's a habitat restoration project and something that is regularly undertaken.

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<sup>1</sup> This project was prepared with funding provided by the New York State Department of State under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

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- The subcommittee will meet to go over the public comments received and how they will be incorporated and then will send them to the full Committee for approval. From there the public comments go to NPV
  - Deonarine will link general recommendations to specific grant opportunities that are currently or will soon be open.
5. *Maria Branco made a motion to finalize the RFP (Request for Proposals) as amended to hire a contractor to complete an annual Water Quality Report for Manhasset Bay (for three years) and submit to the Town Board for approval to advertise. Tom Lang seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried. Discussion: the RFP changes were to report due dates and software requirements.*
  6. *Maria Branco made a motion to retroactively send letters of support for the National Sea Grant College Program and for a phase 2 of the Congressionally-directed funding to continue shellfish seeding of our north shore bays and harbors to Federal Senators and Representatives. Tom Lang seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*
  7. *Rich Dunphy made a motion to retroactively sign-on to a letter that supports legislation sponsored by Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Glick (S.75/A.1101) that relates to prohibiting the release of certain balloons. Gary Lewandowski seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*
  8. *Maria Branco made a motion to move forward with planning an educational event for municipalities about Manhasset Bay water quality issues at a cost not to exceed \$4,500. Tom Lang seconded. The motion passed with one abstention. Discussion: this is a municipal educational event about Manhasset Bay that will only occur every other year.*
  9. Next Committee meeting will be April 23<sup>rd</sup>
  10. The North Shore Protection Committees (Manhasset Bay, Hempstead Harbor, and Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committees) are planning a Joint Protection Committee meeting in May of just the north shore, though we will invite the Peconic Estuary Protection Committee. Possible locations for the meeting include Sands Point and Oyster Bay.
  11. Harbor Fest is Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> and the Committee will host an informational table. Please let Sarah know if you can help. The event is all day long.

### **Updates, Reminders, & Municipal Updates:**

- MS4 Annual Reports & Interim Progress Certifications are due to DEC on April 1<sup>st</sup>
- Town of North Hempstead (Kevin Braun): The Town has FEMA funding from Superstorm Sandy for Leeds Pond sediment removal. However, the permitting process is still on-going and additional sampling may be needed.
- Long Island Sound Partnership (LISP) Advisory Committee (CAC<sup>2</sup>):

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<sup>2</sup>MBPC is a member

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- The CAC is traveling to Washington in July to educate elected officials about the work being done in Long Island Sound. Travel is reimbursed by Jeniam Foundation and the Committee agreed that they would support the Director attending.
- Deonarine attended a leadership “retreat”/meeting in February that was productive
- The CAC wants to draw in more diverse participants and more participants overall, so they’ve created a value document about what a group gets out of CAC membership and vice versa. This may also necessitate a change to the bylaws, because LISP wants to get more participation from the upper watershed (LIS watershed goes to Canada).
- No one is stepping up to fill the role of NY Chair, it has been vacant since December.
- USAEPA says they will replace the LISP Director internally (vacant since last March), but still no movement on that. CAC/STAC<sup>3</sup> sent a joint letter to EPA requesting a rapid refilling of the role
- The LIS Futures Fund scope has expanded to include on-going projects (this was a concern from our review of the WQIP)
- North Shore Fertilizer Education: The three north shore protection committee directors met in February and discussed how we get at the educational requirements of the MS4 program. One topic we wanted to focus on is fertilizer. Then we found out about the Long Island Regional Planning Council (LIRPC) and NYSDEC survey of homeowners. We met with NYSDEC and LIRPC earlier this month and learned that the survey was the first step in a Community Based Social Marketing Campaign (CBSM). They have funding from the EPA Long Island Sound Partnership to design the campaign and will release an RFP later this year. They’re waiting to see what response they get back to figure out what their next steps will be. The protection committees expressed that we want to be involved and they agreed to have us assist. DEC expressed the importance of having on-the-ground community groups, such as us, delivering the message. Also:
  - UCONN developed a web tool to help identify target audiences
  - Grassroots Environmental hosted a webinar about PFAS and microplastics in fertilizers
  - Schreiber HS group has started a fertilizer educational campaign
- Joint Protection Committee Meeting – May. Still seeking a venue. Plan to invite elected officials and ask how the PCs can best help/support the member municipalities.
- The directors are also considering applying for a grant from the Long Island Sound Futures Fund for educational and training requirements of the MS4.
- Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP) – a new state law allows for grants to cover up to 75% of the cost of an I/A installation.
- Federal Shellfish Seeding Grant -- It’s the last year of the funding and Manhasset Bay is due another 738,000+ spat-on-shell oysters. Eric Swenson submitted a Phase 2 appropriations request for seeding to Gillibrand, Schumer, and Suozzi:

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<sup>3</sup> LIS Partnership Science and Technical Advisory Committee

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- Suozzi wanted to include Huntington Harbor and Little Neck Bay, but NYSDEC won't allow planting in LNB.
- The request is \$1M, because Cornell Cooperative Extension, who supplies the seed, didn't feel they could fulfill a larger request
- 20% match requirement, but we can get at it with in-kind contributions
- Reimbursement grant, so Eric is looking at possibilities of pooling money from the protection committees to cover the cost until USEPA reimburses it.
- Village of Baxter Estates (Maria Branco): The permitting for the waterfront is progressing. There have been changes to design (foot bridge has been reduced).
- Village of Plandome Manor (Tom Lang): NYSDEC came to investigate dead birds, including a dead hawk who had been feeding on the birds. ~~There is a fear they died of Bird Flu, so~~ NYSDEC collected the birds [for testing](#), but the outcome is not known.

**Upcoming meetings and events:**

- Next Meeting: April 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Upcoming meetings: June 4<sup>th</sup> (or 11<sup>th</sup>)
- Upcoming events:
  - Joint Protection Committee meeting, May TBD
  - Earth Day Event, Port Washington Public Library, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2 to 4pm

*Ebi Victory made motion to adjourn at 8:54pm*