



Proposal To Further Implement Collaborative Lake Maintenance Services

The Chautauqua Lake Association, Inc. (CLA) appreciates having the opportunity to submit a Proposal for Collaborative Lake Maintenance Services as requested via Chautauqua County's (County) RFP.

Now in its 70th incorporated year of serving the Chautauqua Lake Communities, the CLA is continuing to provide annual lake maintenance services throughout the entirety of Chautauqua Lake and welcomes the opportunity to incorporate new and additional vessels into its fleet. No other local entity has the lake maintenance equipment that we have, equipment that comprises the largest quantity of lake maintenance equipment that is known to exist for inland lakes. Nonetheless, the needs of Chautauqua Lake can, at times, require additional equipment. Plus, the fleet consists of harvesters that are nearing 50 years of age which should be considered for retirement.

It is commonly understood that Chautauqua Lake related properties represent 24-26% of the county's real estate tax base. It thus is essential that the CLA concentrate on the whole lake perimeter which we intend to continue to do. Also, as it is those residential assessments that comprise ever larger percentages of town, village, fire, school and special districts budgets, serving the whole lake becomes even more essential. And, given that Chautauqua County is listed as a high poverty county, the significance of Chautauqua Lake's economic impact takes on even greater importance as it also provides a jobs base, affects sales tax and other auxiliary revenues and is a major factor in attracting and retaining population, a population that is otherwise declining in numbers.

A non-profit organization, the CLA is able to provide less costly services than could a for-profit business or a governmental entity. This provides for a greater quantity of services to be provided than might otherwise be the situation. We believe that we are thus the appropriate entity to host and utilize the county's equipment.

A Clean Lake is Everyone's Business

CHAUTAUQUA LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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The CLA is able to operate due to a collaborative funding arrangement that melds private and public funds together to fund lake maintenance. Over the decades the CLA has filled the gap of unfilled services that the county, towns, villages and state would otherwise be expected to provide similar to their responsibilities to service roadways and parks. Governmental funding is thus a component of the CLA's collaborative funding arrangement.

The CLA proposes to further collaborate with the County to provide continuing annual in-lake maintenance services for Chautauqua Lake and its shoreline. By utilizing Chautauqua County owned equipment, as is currently happening, the CLA proposes to add a county-owned harvester (~\$439,000) along with a county-owned transport vessel (~\$350,000) (equipment as identified in the RFP's ARPA attachment) in 2024 to its fleet, presuming that such equipment is received by the County prior to the 2024 summer season. It is expected that such new County-owned equipment will mirror equipment that is currently owned by the CLA. Should the equipment not arrive for 2024 utilization, then this proposal is modified to reflect the year in which the equipment will be received.

Due to budget restraints currently encountered and predicted to continue, the equipment will be melded into the CLA's existing program. The new harvester will be utilized to replace a decades old harvester which will be either dry-docked or converted to shoreline program support utilization, again dependent upon budget. The new transport will be utilized to add transport capacity to the CLA's existing program thereby increasing unloading capacity for the CLA's harvesting and shoreline maintenance programs. We are optimistic that we will be able to budgetarily sustain this expansion.

The annual duration of the equipment's use will be dependent upon the scope of the CLA's annual program which is always determined by the results of the above collaborative funding results. The CLA has no capacity to deficit spend in order to provide services. The quantity and duration of services is thus dependent upon annual revenue received. During the past seven years, total CLA revenue has allowed us to provide pre-season debris removal and mid-June through late-August comprehensive services within a whole year ~\$900,000 balanced budget. Reporting an in-season only budget is inappropriate given the realities of its necessary off-season function. (See Proposal Appendix for supplemental 2023 program information along with future program possibilities.)

The CLA is committed to operating to the greatest extent possible that revenue will support with the intent of annually fully expending each year's revenue received. The CLA operates from a whole year budget standpoint.

The ARPA Attachment does not reflect the ~\$310,000 Mobi Support Vessel that we previously recommended. Payment for the vessel needs to be in two parts, ~\$100,000 at the time of ordering and the balance upon delivery. Depending upon when the order is filed, the payments could extend into two years. If the County can obtain this vessel, we will incorporate it into our program in the same manner as the above vessels. We believe that obtaining this vessel is extremely important for performing needed services. This vessel will free-up a skimmer for use elsewhere and will improve the efficiency of the CLA-Town of Chautauqua Collaborative MobiTrac Program. Again, we believe this vessel to be an important and necessary addition to our lake maintenance arsenal of equipment and therefore request that the county provide the funding that is necessary to procure it. We submit that other items on the ARPA attachment should be replaced with this vessel.

The above equipment will require support equipment, off-season storage capability, maintenance servicing capability, and staffing/supervision support; all of which the CLA includes in its operation. The CLA will expect that the County, as owner, will fund any major repair/parts replacement needs that might unexpectedly arise that would be beyond the scope of normal maintenance and not caused by misuse.

Again, all of us here at the Chautauqua Lake Association Board appreciate having this opportunity to expand our collaboration with Chautauqua County. We recognize the value of collaboration and currently are additionally collaborating with the Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District, the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, the Town of Chautauqua, the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium and Muskies Inc. Additionally, we keep open doors with other organizations as we strive to best steward Chautauqua Lake.



Douglas E. Conroe
Executive Director/COO
June 23, 2023

cc: CLA Board

Proposal To Further Implement Collaborative Lake Maintenance Services APPENDIX

This Appendix is provided to portray an overview of planned 2023 Chautauqua Lake Association, Inc., in-lake management services along with exhibiting an overview of possible future CLA in-lake services. This Appendix does not constitute in any manner modification of or inclusion in the terms of the Proposal that is attached. This is a separate communication intended simply to address lake discussions that arose during the roll-out of the RFP.

During the Fall of 2022, the CLA released a 2023 Tentative Operating Budget totaling \$1,100,000 for comprehensive lake management services that included in-lake services from May through September. Revenue source needs were identified. In May, 2023, the CLA Board adopted a 2023 Operating Budget of \$952,149 based upon known probable anticipated revenue with the understanding that if such revenue does not materialize that in-lake operations may need to end earlier than the adopted budget provides. The board affirmed its commitment to operating to the greatest extent possible that revenue will support within a balanced budget framework. Reductions in the \$1,100,000 level of service previously planned to be provided had to be incorporated due to the reduced \$952,149 budget.

Simply put, the \$952,149 budget allows for 3 crews to work from June 26 through August 25 with a small curly leaf harvesting operation occurring earlier during late-May and early-June along with a woody debris pick-up occurring during May and a small shoreline crew operating into September. The North Crew will continue as before to service its area in a circular motion covering the entire upper half of the north basin. Likewise the Center Crew will circulate around the lower half of the north basin and the upper half of the south basin. The South Crew will circulate around the lower half of the south basin. The number of times that each community will be serviced will depend upon the time that it will take to complete the circle which will be affected by the density of materials to be harvested/collected. Each crew will be comprised of two harvesters, a transport and a shoreline crew involving barges and skimmers. Shoreline clean-up work will continue beyond August 25 to the extent that the \$952,149 budget allows. Harvesting will continue through September 8 with the same proviso. Consideration will be given to shifting crews to a singular area should one crew's area not require attention while another area requires additional attention. This happened in 2022 when the Center Crew was moved to assist the South Crew for two weeks.

Collaboration with the two Town of Chautauqua MobiTrac crews will continue as during previous years with the CLA providing unloading and disposal support services. It is anticipated that the Town will again have a two basins presence.

A special CLA effort will be made to collect floaters that accumulate along the Chautauqua Harbor Hotel's seawall every Friday during the summer while the crews are in operation.

The operational nature of 2024 and beyond will be dependent upon revenue that is received going forward. If increased revenue is not received, those years' operations will be similar to 2023 or less in nature as has been the situation for the past seven years. The CLA planned a larger operation for 2023, as we did in previous years, which lack of full funding has not made possible. The CLA stands ready to do more and can do more once funding for such is in place. Additionally, with the acquisition of a new harvester, transport and shoreline collector the CLA will be capable of expanding its daily operation.

Effort is being made to estimate annual costs going forward. The variability of future costs prevents specific numbers from being presented. Unknown labor cost increases, be it minimum wage required increases or annual adjustments; fuel and utility variability; length of service season, crew content variability, quantity of equipment and inflation complicate predictions. We know that the starting point is \$1,100,000. We know that more services are desired than the \$1,100,000 funds. Depending upon the variables, future annual full-service budgets therefore could range between \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000. Given the inability to deficit fund, the annual revenue will determine the level of services that will be provided.

The CLA is regularly being asked to expand its services, be it in-season or pre/post-season. The CLA is not opposed to such expansions. The CLA Board has regularly discussed such and has expressed a desire to expand services. The feasibility of such is limited by a number of factors and is always limited by available revenue. Nonetheless, the CLA stands ready to implement expansions when such becomes feasible. In every instance, program expansion requires increased program funding. This has been understood in every setting that the CLA has participated in/observed.

Additionally, given the age of the CLA's equipment, major replacement needs are upon us within the in-lake and motor vehicle fleets. This, too, creates an additional funding need and will affect the levels of service that can be provided going forward.

The CLA remains optimistic about the future.