

Dam Valve

After the last unsuccessful attempt at making adjustments and reducing out-of-compliance leakage by divers under 50 feet of ice-cold water, the **upstream** valve was removed and raised to the surface for rework and adjustment. This is why we needed the **downstream** valve (which is working fine and keeping the Lake full); to allow maintenance on the main, upstream, valve.

The valve can now be checked by the valve designers (not themselves divers...) so they can determine what is wrong, causing the leakage. The latest plan, which seems to me should work, is to have the valve manufacturer mate the valve (flat and stiff) to their own-design 'flange' (stiff and flat), and then have that flange be in turn mated to the existing (apparently irregular) 'thimble' with a suitably flexible adapter. All but the last step can be done out of the water in the maintenance building where the valve is now.

A lot of people are working hard to get this amicably resolved. Thanks will be bestowed upon all once all the work is done... Councilman Cornez's blog [<http://www.paulindianlake.blogspot.com>] typically has all the late-breaking details on the dam work.

Somerset County Building Inspector "Decertified"

You may have been following the case of a Berlin family whose new home sits incomplete and unused due to inspection issues. The inspector was just recently 'decertified' for life for "incompetence and gross negligence". We have been following this case closely as the inspector is a residential inspector and has been actively involved on various jobs at the Lake. We have been quiet since he was presumed innocent until the proceedings were over. They are now concluded, but an appeal is likely. The Daily American recently published some details, available at:

<http://indianlakepa.us/dotnetnuke/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=yVPRzRBWmns%3d&tabid=64&mid=388>

We have determined that 18 residential construction projects (building permits) have had at least one inspection by this individual. Please remember; an inspector, good or bad, cannot "inspect-in" good or poor quality or workmanship. As a result, if your contractor is reputable and did/does things right, you should be fine. If you have concerns, Dean Snyder has the list. Contact Dean at ZONING@indianlakepa.us. You should discuss your concerns with your contractor first.

Police Security Watch - Reminder

Some residents ask the Police to periodically check on their property while they are gone for long periods (such as 'snow-birds' during the winter). I was asked to continue to remind everyone that there is a form you can fill out for this and we have put it on the web site for your convenience under **Borough->INFO->Permits and Applications:**

<http://indianlakepa.us/dotnetnuke/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=FFIгнаU7SIM%3d&tabid=57&mid=382>

Budgets, Taxes, Politics and the English Language

It is Budgeting time again. Council held a Budget Workshop on October 27th to review 2009/2010 actual data and to plan budgets for next year. The work is not yet completed, but a few things are fairly well established; our operating budget will increase only modestly and our tax rate (millage) will need to go up to cover the dam debt. Last year we spent some reserves to avoid a tax increase; we can do the

same this year (deplete reserves further), or raise the rate by around 3 mils and maintain reserves. Council is leaning towards increasing the millage, maintaining reserves. Our finance experts expect our long-term debt to cost more than our current very-low-interest temporary line of credit and our reserves may be needed to ease the future burden. We should save them .

Last time I mentioned that:

*Council has 'reportedly' been 'quoted' as saying that "taxes are going to go up to 30 mils". This is not correct, or even realistic. Taxes may need to be increased a few mils or so next year. To cover the dam expense going forward, the Planning Commission has projected (August 2008 Study; on the web site...) that taxes **could** go to as high as 25 mils over the next decade **if** we cannot encourage some new development and **if** we cannot curb our legal expenses. I certainly hope we can do both, and would view not being able to do either as a failure.*

I get accused of being an alarmist when I mention this. My only point in bringing it up is that if we wish it to turn out differently, we need to do something different, and soon. Encouraging development (more income) and curbing litigation/legal costs (less expense) are things that we can do to help. Keeping taxes the same and paying the increased costs another year out of our cash reserves works, too. Other creative ideas welcomed. Don't shoot the messenger.

Again at the Budget Workshop I was accused of being the culprit, 'blabbing' to the newspaper [Daily American] that "taxes were going to go up 25 or 30 mils". I recognize that we seem to be in a climate of political mudslinging at the state and national levels, and that in such a climate, the English Language becomes imprecise and ambiguous. I guess I thought we were immune as this isn't an election year for us... Please read the Daily American article, available by clicking below, if you think I said that...

<http://indianlakepa.us/dotnetnuke/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2b/67COjIFrE%3d&tabid=64&mid=388>

If you really want to know what I think about taxes, read the 2008 and 2009 Planning Studies, also available on the Borough web site:

<http://indianlakepa.us/dotnetnuke/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Unz9JGAabtY%3d&tabid=83&mid=417>

<http://indianlakepa.us/dotnetnuke/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=5f%2bKU1zkFuw%3d&tabid=83&mid=417>

Happy Halloween!!

I thank you for your time.

Bob H.

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