

- **Name**
Karen Sutherland
- **Enter the date of the meeting you wish to present to council**
August 14, 2025
- **Which is your preference for attending the meeting.**
In Person
- **Will there be anyone other than yourself addressing Council?**
No
- **Use the space below to clearly outline your purpose for presenting to council. Provide a brief outline of your subject matter including your suggested outcome.**

I am representing the Oxford County Naval Veterans Association as the Past President to address with council the damage the City of Woodstock caused to the natural spring fed pond on our property (959 James Street, Woodstock). The damage being the water level of the pond is down approximately 22" from it's normal depth as a direct result of construction by the City of Woodstock. In their latest correspondence the City has suggested they will include funds in the capital budget to complete a geotechnical investigation. IF council approves the funds the will "try" to get the investigation completed in 2026.

We are a not-for-profit organization and one of the ways we give back to the community is our pond. Our pond is the source of at least 3 "Fishing Derby" events each year. We host an annual Mother's Day Fishing Derby, the Veterans at Park Place in London attend each year and, most recently, with the Woodstock Police Services have also hosted one for Kops and Kids. We had to cancel all of them in 2025 because of the low water levels. The pond is also used by the Woodstock Fire Department for training.

The outcome we would like to see is the City of Woodstock allocating the funds necessary for the geotechnical investigation to get a solution to fix the issue now. The City was made aware of our concerns (in November 2024) as soon as the addition project started at the Engineering building across the street from us. Our concerns were brushed aside. We have been patient and have attempted to work things out in an amicable fashion but feel we are being placated and our concerns are not being taken seriously.

We were advised we had to wait until spring to see if the levels came up before the City would do anything. It is now August and it is clear from the weekly reports being provided to us by Harold de Haan the levels are not going up. In recent correspondence Harold advised "IF" council approves the funds needed the City will "TRY" to get an investigation completed in 2026. 2026 is too late, this action needs to start now.

- **Will you be providing any additional written information in addition to your summary above? If YES please note it must be provided to the Clerks department no later than 12:00pm on the Tuesday prior to the meeting**
Yes
- **Will you be providing any additional electronic information in addition to documents you will be attaching? If YES please note it must be provided to the Clerks department no later than 12:00pm on the Tuesday prior to the meeting**
Yes
- **Have you appeared before council to discuss the same topic in the past?**
No

The Pond

Oxford County Naval Veterans Association (“OCNVA”)



Why We Are Here

In November of 2024 the City of Woodstock started a construction project at 944 James Street for an addition to their Engineering building.

The Navy Club pond levels were observed going down.

A representative of the club spoke to a City representative about our concerns.

We were told not to worry about it (paraphrasing).

The Pond levels are down between 22" - 24" from it's standard depth.

It has not returned to the standard depth after 10 months of monitoring.

The City's Contractors hit a seam of our spring fed pond.

Why the Pond is important

Oxford County Naval Veterans Association (“OCNVA”) is known locally as The Navy Club. It is a not-for-profit and was created by Veterans for Veterans. The lands were donated by the Dent family.

Each year we host fishing derbys as a way to give back to the community. Every Mother’s Day we host a fishing derby for members kids, grandkids, great-grandkids to come to fish. We stock the pond, we give prizes and feed those that attend. It is something our members look forward to each year.

We host Park Place Veteran’s hospital for a fishing derby and last year they attended 3 times.

Most recently, we host Kops & Kids.

It is one of the ways we give back to our community.

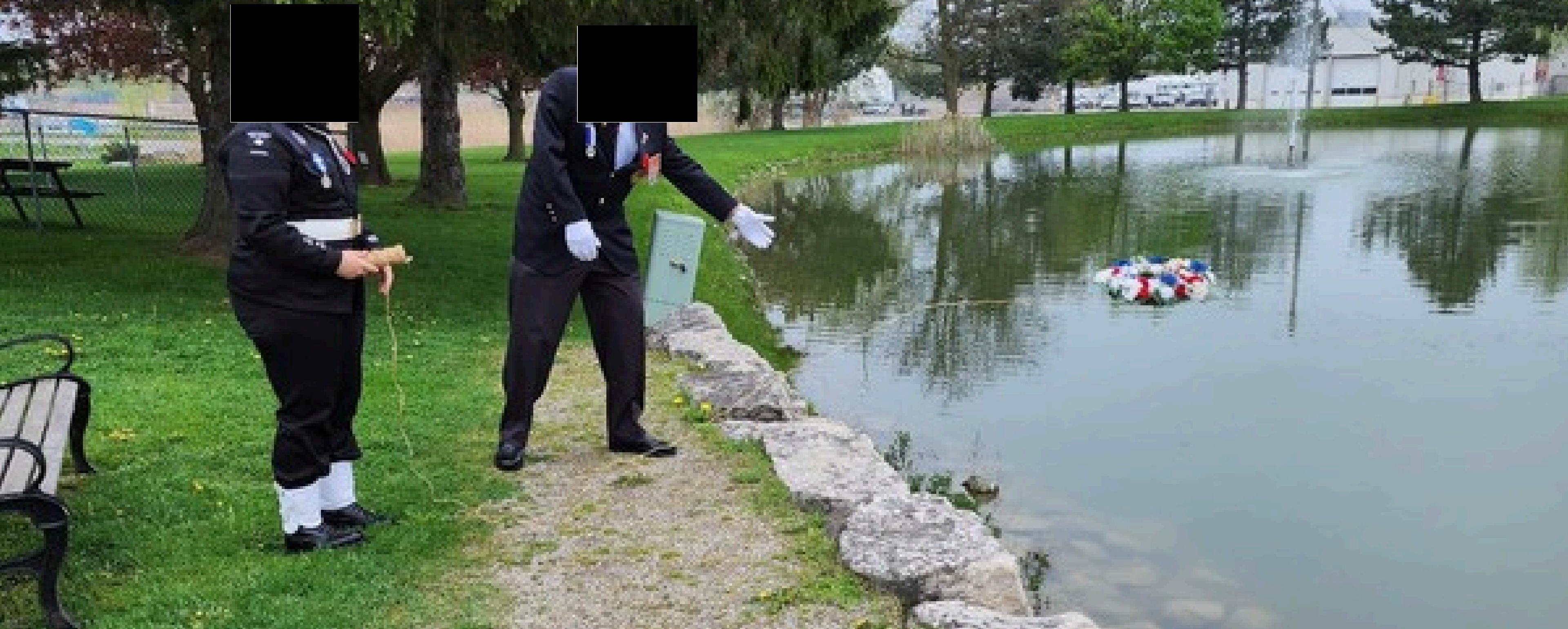
Annual Battle of the Atlantic Service

June 7, 2019



Annual Battle of the Atlantic Service

May 5, 2024



Annual Mother's Day Fishing Derby

A photograph of a fishing derby on a pond. In the foreground, a child in a bright pink jacket is kneeling on the grass, holding a fishing rod. A large black rectangle obscures the child's face. To the left, a blurred figure of a person in a blue shirt and jeans stands. The pond is calm, reflecting the sky and the people on the grass. In the background, several other people are scattered across the grassy area, some standing and some sitting. The scene is set outdoors on a sunny day with trees and a building visible in the distance.

May 6, 2006



May 6, 2006

July 23, 2016



May 14, 2017



May 14, 2023





May 14, 2023



May 14, 2023



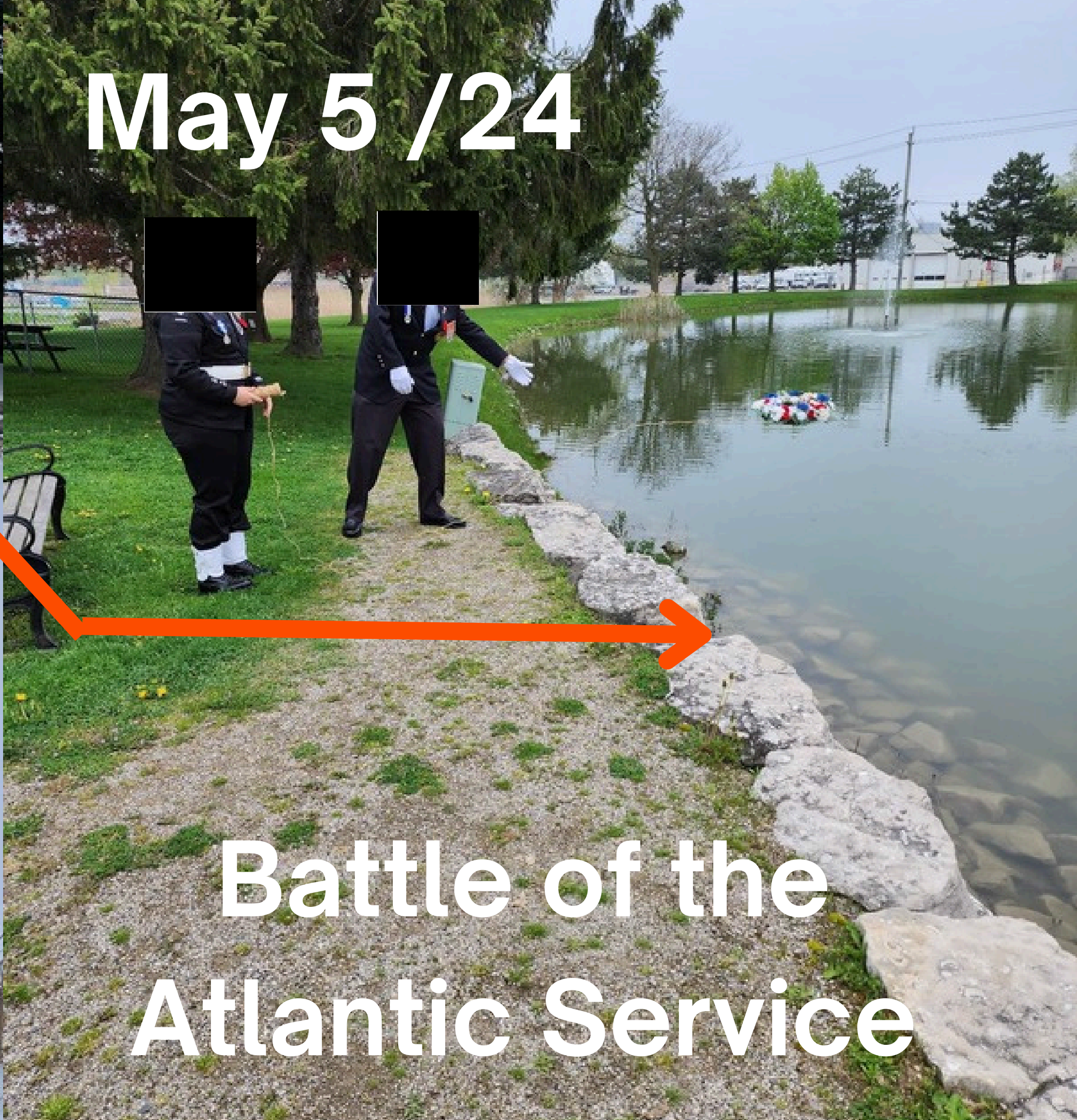
May 12, 2024

A wide-angle photograph of a park pond. In the foreground, tall green reeds with brown seed heads are visible. The pond's surface is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding trees. On the far side of the pond, a line of mature trees with dark green foliage stands. A group of people, including adults and children, are gathered along the grassy bank under the trees, some sitting on blankets. To the right, a small, active fountain sprays water into the air. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and suggests a public park setting.

May 12, 2024



Jan. 15 /25



May 5 /24

**Battle of the
Atlantic Service**



Jan 15 /25



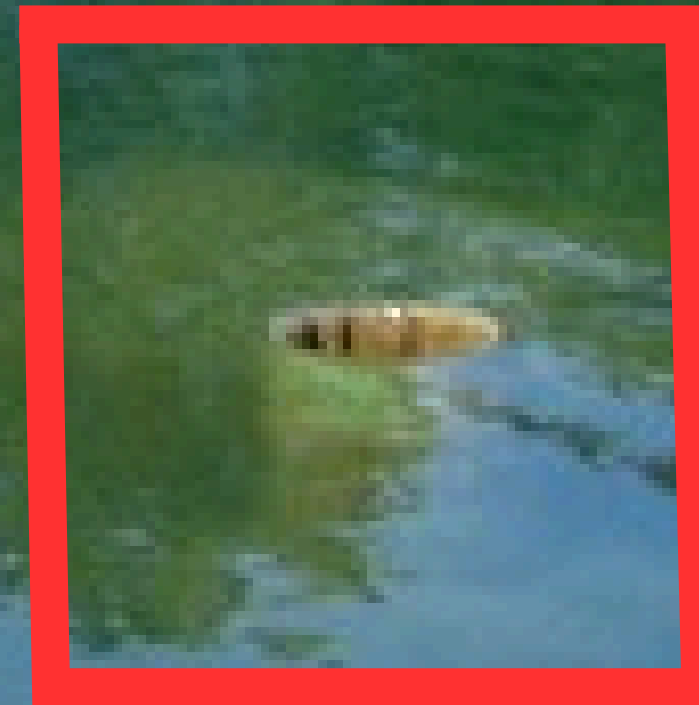
Mar 21 /25



Mar 27/25



May 6, 2006



**NORMAL STATUS
OF OVERFLOW DRAIN**

How the Pond came to be

The City of Woodstock drilled a well and found a good supply of excellent water, but the City at that time was not prepared to buy or lease the property.

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority surveyed the property and assured us that an excellent spring-fed pond could be dug. The Authority engineered the pond, free of charge, and Cliff Johnson dug it.

Water filled the pond in a very short time with a depth of fifteen feet at centre.

The Normandale Fish Hatcher stocked the pond for us with fingerling trout. these fish did very well and reproduced enough to keep the pond stocked for several years.

Distance of the stream in relation to the Pond
(taken from sidewalk at James Street)





WIDTH



APPROX.
16' WIDE

In Conversation with the City

We asked the City why they didn't stop construction when they knew they had hit some sort of water stream / seam?

There was no explanation as to why they did not stop. The City advised it would not have made a difference if they stopped because there wasn't really anything they could have done (at that time) to rectify the issue. Basically, once the water stream had been hit the damage was done. Water goes the path of least resistance.

The City believed the backfill they used would have acted as a "stopper" for the water stream and the dirt and silt would settle back in place ,effectively stopping the hole. This did not work

In Conversation with the City

Why didn't the City notify The Navy Club once they realized there was a problem? (and after pumping water consistently for up to 2 weeks, over the 50,000L per day as mandated by the Ministry of the Environment, and as outlined in the Geotechnical report from EXP in Section 4.2.3.)

There was no reason provided as to why The Navy Club was not notified.

The City also stated they don't know how many litres they were pumping out per day.

The City also advised later in the meeting they were using 2 pumps at one point to effectively rid the water in order to proceed with the backfill and continue their construction.

In Conversation with the City

Why didn't the City take The Navy Club's concerns seriously when they were raised in November?

There was no reason provided, other than they had hoped the issue would resolve itself once everything was backfilled.

What is the resolution? There will be no immediate resolution to this problem.

The City advised they had already been in contact with EXP to see if EXP could provide a solution.

OF NOTE: The proposed solution by EXP has never been shared with The Navy Club

Wait & See

The City will continue to formally monitor and document the water levels of the pond.

The Navy Club will wait, and watch to see if the spring thaw impacts the water levels.

There has been no substantial change to the level based on the City's reporting.

We had to cancel all the fishing derbies this year.

Had to turn down a grant

The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters (OFAH) awarded the Navy Club a \$7,500 grant over a 3 year period to stock our pond.

Becasue of the status of the pond we had to turn down this grant, which not only affected us this year but the following 2 years.

The time and effort that goes in to applying for a grant is quite laborious and those efforts are for naught.

Wait & See

If the water levels of the pond do not start to show an increase in level, the City agreed they would conduct an experimental fix of blocking the overflow drain pumping water directly into the storm sewer at 944 James Street.

They would decrease the flow of water by 50% to see if the pressure might assist in the backfill settling in as a stopper, and/or if it would cause the water to flow back into the pond. This will be done by summer 2025, at the latest.

This was not done. In a second meeting with the City their stance was, basically, the genie is out of the bottle and it is not in their control to fix.

Stonewalled

The Navy Club does not have formal documentation stating what the standard depth of the pond is. Therefore, technically, nothing needs to be done to remedy it.

There is what is mandated to be done and there is doing the right thing.

The damage is to our property. We did not cause it.

The negative impact is to our members & community. The City's Engineering Department has a new addition.

What if a home builder did the same thing and it was Southside Park that was impacted?

The Resolution

The Navy Club would like the City to take our concerns seriously and ACTIVELY work toward a solution. We have members who are very knowledgeable about our pond and, if their knowledge was consulted regarding the matter we could work with the City to come up with a resolution to satisfy both the City and the Navy Club.

The Navy Club is asking the City to do the right thing and work to remedy the issue now, in 2025, so we don't lose another season's use of the pond.