

The Emperor has no clothes.

The 12-acre man-made lake in Admiral's Cove is brackish and the level is high. The lake, created in the 60's contains fresh water which originates from spring run-off from the hills and homes in Admiral's Cove and salt water that enters the lake through the out-flow pipe. The 300 foot out-flow pipe originates at the sound (you can see the entrance during low tide), travels under Keystone Rd and culminates at the lake where a tide-gate maintains the lake level. The original tide-gate was constructed of a series of boards; it enabled the community to adjust the gate height to moderate the water level of the lake.

In 1989, the original tide-gate failed and a large amount of sediment was deposited near the gate. A new gate was installed eight years later (2007) by ACBC. The goal of installing the new gate was to maintain a lake level and reduce salt water flowing into the lake. The new tide-gate is a large concrete box without an adjustable weir (little fence) that acts as a dam and causes the water to back up and be retained in the lake. The weir is no longer adjustable, the Club installed a fixed flapper that no longer operates properly and the lake is at an unacceptably high level.

Property erosion has occurred, high levels of algae bloom in the summer due to improper lake flushing, new types of salt-water reeds and grasses have begun to grow and flood insurance for those living on Keystone is at risk. In 2007, neighbors abutting the lakeside made the Beach Club aware of the erosion issues occurring to their properties. Some members now have substantial amounts of property underwater – property markers are now submerged by the lake. Several members are faced with severe undercutting of their property banks due to lake levels that are extreme in the winter months.

A one- year study (Sept 2009-August 2010) was completed by a community member – Mike King, a licensed Hydro-geologist. Mr. King outlined all of the property issues as a result of the high lake levels and the failed condition of the tide-gate. As a result of this presentation, the Club formed a Lake Committee headed by Carol Delahanty to study the problem and in 2011 the Beach Club (at great expense) hired consulting firm – Davido Consulting Group. Davido was asked to conduct a study of the lake elevation changes and the resulting issues as an outcome of the tide-gate repair in 2007. In March of 2007, Davido presented the Club with the results of their lake study with recommendations for repair.

Davido results indicated that the repair of the tide-gate in 2007 left the lake elevation at the out-flow one foot higher than before the repair. This has resulted in shoreline erosions due to high levels that occur during the winter months. Because less water moves through the pipe in the summer months the lake temperature is higher and it has become stagnant –inviting algae blooms and unwanted growth of invasive plants.

Davido recommended immediate replacement of the flapper that is no longer functioning properly. Davido proposed a repair of the tide-gate which would return the lake to the level prior to the 2007 change of the gate. Their design suggested an adjustable weir gate that would allow elevation changes to mitigate high water levels in the winter and low water levels in the summer. A plan of repair was provided to the Beach Club.

Three years have passed and the Beach Club has not taken any action to repair the existing flapper or move to restore the lake to levels prior to 2007.

In the summer of 2014, Mike King obtained and completed a permit application from Island County to repair the flapper on the gate. The community had already obtained a permit the prior year to fix a rusty hole on the beach side of the out-flow pipe; the permit would allow for repairs to the flapper with no additional permit costs required. This permit expires this year. Mr. King provided the completed application to Board President Ed Delahanty. Mr. Delahanty proceeded to do nothing with the application for months – he claimed to be studying and evaluating the application. At the end of his term he announced to the community that it would be a project for the subsequent board. Mr. Delahanty specializes in kicking the can down road. Now it is winter and the lake levels are once again rising.

At the November 2014 board meeting Mr. Delahanty described that a special committee will be formed to study the lake level issues. Oh boy, here we go again – inaction, studying and lots of untruths will be forthcoming. The special committee will include Bob Wilbur a lakeside owner who opposes lowering the lake to its prior level due to various obscure biological reasons and Mike King a licensed Hydro-geologist who has presented the issues caused by high water corroborated by Davido Consulting. In addition, there will be two board members on this committee.

At this same meeting Sid Iverson made various statements against lowering the lake level. Sid Iverson along with John Klassel made the changes to the tide gate in 2007. They, along with Bob Wilbur are opposed to any changes to the lake level – their reasons are varied and unclear. To most of us it appears that a healthy dose of ‘not invented here’ syndrome is in effect. At the meeting Sid said,

I would like to go back to the lake situation and a couple of things I know that has to be done. Number one is that we need to fix that outfall pipe and make sure that it isn't plugging up the lake. The second thing is that all studies indicate that the ratio of salt-water to fresh-water are like for example similar around the world. That ratio is critical to the intrusion of salt water into the aquifer. At this point the salt water is below our fresh water pick-up and if you reduce the amount of fresh water you will increase the amount of salt water and it blows up the aquifer. That's not my opinion, that's the opinion of the experts who are working in Florida and California and are applied to here. So, don't mess with the ratio of fresh water to salt water in the lake. If you do, that changes the aquifer. You have a sole fresh water source intrusion which is a federal offense.

To be factual here, there has been NO study that indicates that lowering the lake to its prior level would cause salt-water intrusion to the aquifer. The aquifer predates the creation of the man-made lake. The aquifer that is tapped for drinking water by the Admiral's Cove Water District is at a level significantly below the lake. Sid's statement is simply nonsensical and threatening the community that repair would be a Federal Crime is simply an idle threat and a bully tactic.

What's going on here with the naysayers of the lake level? It appears to be an issue of control – I'm right therefore we will do it my way. This small handful of members are mired in a personal agenda to get their way versus do what is right.

Why should you care about the current situation with the lake?

- The Club can be held liable for destruction of personal property due to negligence. The Club has been made aware of damage to personal property and has taken no action to stop more damage from occurring. A lawsuit is a likely result of this inactivity.
- Many residents of Keystone (myself included) have flood insurance that is regulated by federal standards. One such standard that is dictated by FEMA is the level of the lake. The lake is currently higher than stipulated by FEMA standards. At the September meeting President Delahanty was informed of this and he said he understood the issues. This blatant disregard for the issue makes the Club liable for flood damage that could occur to any Keystone property. These statements were forwarded to FEMA to ensure a paper trail exists in case of flood damage.

I don't believe a special committee is needed or warranted and will just delay the needed repair. The Board has all of the information it needs to motion to repair the tide gate. If the Feds become involved the cost will only increase.