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May 22, 2021

Town Council
Kirk Blouin, Town Manager
Town of Palm Beach
360 South County Road
Palm Beach, FL 33480

Dear Town Council Members and Town Manager Blouin,

The Civic Association intends to present this letter to be read into the record at the Tuesday, June 8 Town Council meeting, and hopes that we can all work together to educate and advocate for safe water flow from Lake Okeechobee.

The Palm Beach Civic Association, through its committee work and communications initiatives, including Our Town news articles and Palm Beach TV, wishes to partner with the Town of Palm Beach and the Palm Beach Daily News to educate our residents about this impending public safety issue.

It has come to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Palm Beach Civic Association on May 19, 2021 that we are facing a dangerous water pollution crisis at Lake Okeechobee, resulting in toxicity already detected in canals feeding the Lake Worth Lagoon.

We recently heard a presentation by Lake Worth Water Keeper Reinaldo Diaz, who made the following enlightening but frightening points:

- There is an early bloom of toxic cyanobacteria, referred to as blue green algae, at Lake Okeechobee, already so severe that it has closed the Pahokee Marina due to potential danger to human health.

- That same toxic cyanobacteria has already been detected along the C-51 and M Canals which feed into the Lake Worth Lagoon.

- Cyanobacterial exposure not only threatens the health of wildlife, but human health, causing a range of issues from liver damage to neurological disorders such as ALS and Alzheimer's.

- Studies show that water released from Lake Okeechobee, used to irrigate the vast agricultural acreage of our western county, does get absorbed by crops, making them potentially unsafe for human consumption.

- Summer heat and rain will cause the already existing toxic bacteria to multiply at a rapid rate.

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- Hurricane Season 2021 is predicted to be more active than normal, meaning rising lake levels will necessitate water releases.

- With the toxicity of the cyanobacterial infection in the waters of Lake O, those releases will surely mean more toxic bacteria will find its way into the Lake Worth Lagoon -our backyard

Together, we must act swiftly and responsibly to protect our community and all residents who call Palm Beach County their home.

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Respectfully,



Bob Wright
Chairman and CEO