

Citizens for the Preservation of Waterman Lake (CPWL)
Minutes of Combined Executive Committee/Dam Committee Meeting (DRAFT)
Tuesday, August 1, 2023, 6:00PM – Harmony Library Meeting Room

Members Present: Jeff D’Antuano, Bob Eaton, Ken Robertson, Mike Stewart, Liz Viall, Phil Viall

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

1. Minutes - The minutes of the July 18, 2023 meeting were approved, but Bob noted he did not get the original email that sent the minutes to the Dam Committee and Executive Committee members. ACTION: check with Tom on lists for execdam@cpwl.org, dam@cpwl.org and exec@cpwl.org.

2. Financial report

Our current balance is \$15, 122. The check to Mike Furia, has cleared, but he still has still has about \$1,000 in deposits to clear.

Phil distributed a list of everyone who has paid to date. So far 90 out of 145 lakefront owners have paid. Commercial accounts are now fully paid, with dues received from Gloucester Country Club, Steere’s Marina, the Lakes, and Camp Russell.

The financial report was approved.

3. Action Items Review/Current Status

- a. Send dunning notices (Phil) –

The notices were sent to anyone not paying dues on July 24. As a result, Phil has received 6 checks he doesn’t feel he would have gotten otherwise. There was a question about boat stickers, and Phil said we mail a sticker if they ask for it using the check box requesting one on the letter. Mike felt you should get a sticker even if you don’t ask. David Steere spoke with Jeff, and didn’t think the stickers were a good idea, because he felt it was soliciting. However, he is willing to send a letter to everyone who rents from him. Jeff wrote a letter, and read it at the meeting. He also noted that David does not live at the Marina, but says it will still be in operation. His nephew Peter lives there now. Bob showed the letter he had written to Gloucester Country Club (GCC), which it appeared had some good ideas in it as well. Phil will merge the two letters, and distribute to committee. Once it is approved it will be sent to David Steere. He will email to all people who have boats at the marina.

ACTION: Phil to merge two letters into one, and distribute to committee for feedback

- b. Speak to GCC President about slips and stickers for the boats that use them (Bob)

Bob spoke to the Country Club President who was just replaced, and learned they were upset by flyers that were posted there. We had not asked for permission to post them. They would have preferred to see a letter/request first. Phil and Bob wrote a letter that, with minor editing, would work for multiple sites. Bob felt it should come from executive board, not the dam committee.

Once there is a finalized letter, Mike will send his list of email addresses to Phil. Mike will also indicate who uses the lake in the Waterman Lake Shores area and who doesn’t. There are about 8 people not waterfront who use the lake. Letters would be personalized to each corporate location. Jeff’s was meant for individuals using slips at the marina.

There was a question of letting those who have paid know about the dunning / boat sticker solicitation letter. There was also a question of whether should we post everything on the website including the Dam/Executive Committee meeting minutes and materials. The consensus was “yes.”

ACTION: revise letter(s) combining wording, and circulate that to committee members (Phil, Jeff, Bob)

ACTION: upload minutes, attachments, and letters to the website (Phil, Tom)

ACTION: Update Facebook page (Mike)

- c. Contact Linda Steere about stickers for boats at Camp Russell (Jeff, Mike)

ACTION: We will send a letter, customized for Camp Russell, to Linda.

- d. Determine disposition of check from Patty Nugent dated 11/18/2018 for \$1000 (Phil)

This happened in 2018, shortly after Phil became Treasurer. The check was deposited, but Phil didn't know Patty Nugent and Rhode Island Foundation were the same; the confusion came from this. Phil wrote a letter explaining the history of this check, which Mike gave her. She and her husband seemed to understand the issue. Mike suggested we take them on a dam tour and then offer lunch. Phil felt we should not use CPWL funds for this, but the idea is good. Mike said he would pay for the lunch (or we could split it x ways). Mike also wants to educate Patty on other upcoming needs.

ACTION: Mike will contact Patty and John for a tour and meal.

- e. Meet with Mike Furia to review work (suggest deferring to later in agenda)

This was deferred to later in the meeting, as there was an agenda item addressing this.

- f. Contact Slacks Pond people; inquire who they use for weed control (Phil)

Phil talked with Kathy Gustafson from Slack's Pond; she said they had used a company called Water and Wetlands in Grafton, MA (508-250-6238). Phil called the company and spoke with Joe. Joe said that in order to get the proper permits from DEM to treat weeds, it was necessary to do an "Aquatic Vegetation Survey" He estimated we might have 240 acres total, and a survey might cost between \$1500 and \$1750. Depending on the type of weeds and the areas which need treatment, a final cost could be calculated. Jeff was concerned about using herbicides to control weeds, because of its impact on fishing. Slack's Pond was very happy with the results.

For us, a survey would result in map of areas that needed treating, for what. Joe said that July through September is the best time to conduct a survey. Jeff spoke to Judy at Saves the Lakes about weeds; they have tried to make the permitting process easier. There was a question of whether we defer this until next summer. Jeff will check with Judy at Save the Lakes about someone she knew at DEM to identify weeds. Scott was also going to check with a service that surveyed for free before selling a treatment process. Bob thought it would be good to survey now, to come up with plan for the future. We will revisit this in 2 weeks. At the Waterman Lake Shores area of the lake, prickly weeds currently go out 50' from shore. They grow back within two weeks after raking, and go out farther than the water level after drawdown.

ACTION: Jeff will contact Judy and Save the Lakes about the DEM weed expert.

ACTION: Scott will research what service it was that surveyed from free.

AGENDA ITEM: Revisit weed problem

- g. Amend Dam Operation Permit Application and file (Phil)

This has been amended and filed. Fall drawdown will still begin on November 1. Drawdown level still 60"-72". Fill up begins on March 25th (unless ice still on lake). Lake full by 5/15.

Adverse weather conditions address; allows for lowering on lake to do maintenance. Phil emailed the plan to David Chopy at the RI DEM on July 28th.

- h. Create email alias (exec@cpwl.org, dam@cpwl.org, execdam@cpwl.org) (Tom, Phil)

This has been completed but will be reviewed to fix the error Bob reported.

ACTION: Tom, Phil – Review email forwarding setup.

- i. Meet with DEM re next steps on Pare Seepage report; discuss possible funding (Phil, Tom)
Tom and Phil met with Stacey Pinto today for 45 minutes. She is an Environmental Engineer in the RI DEM Office of the Compliance and Dam Safety Program. There is no money available right now from the state, but they want to help. She recommended speaking with the Gloucester EMA. Phil expressed CPWL's financial concern, between costs of an engineering study and the much higher cost of a dam repair. The DEM does not want to order us to drop the lake level, nor does the state want to own the dam. This means there is less urgency to address leak immediately, but it needs to stay on our radar, and we need to monitor the leakage amount and sentiment amount. CPWL will eventually need to develop and file a Consent Decree with a time table, regarding the dam. This would be a good faith promise, which can be extended if needed. There may be federal money but using that is considered a long shot; there is also a significant match that is needed. Stacey said we weren't going to be on the radar till January 2024 anyway, when the stumps needed to be pulled. Phil told her the stumps had already been pulled, and she was happy with the progress. Jeff wondered if we could do our own plan, but Phil was concerned no one knew how to develop a plan properly. The plans would have to be approved by a Professional Engineer (PE) anyway. Phil didn't specifically ask Stacey about drawing our own plans. Other items discussed included whether the "leak" might actually be a spring. If we had evidence of that, DEM would reevaluate the unsafe condition. Also discussed where getting prices from other engineering firms. She also mentioned a dye test, which Pare has not done. There was concern from committee members that Phil was shooting high on the potential cost of repairs, which we've never had to spend, but everyone agreed that it can cost a lot. DEM can't recommend anyone specifically, but they will send a list of possible firms. A PE would need to stamp a plan – DEM wants to see that.

ACTION: When DEM send list, Phil will follow up. Ken will try to find the person who spoke with him before about the dam as well.

- j. Obtain quote for officers & directors insurance (Mike)

Mike is getting a quote from the company WLS uses, but has not gotten a response yet.

ACTION: Mike will scan and email it when it comes in.

- k. Explore options for funding through EMA or FEMA (Bob)

Nothing to report at this point.

- l. Other

Jeff Booker apparently has a lot of information on how the dam came together historically and is willing to share it with us. We will have it shortly.

ACTION: Mike will gather the material; Bob can scan any larger format plans.

4. Mowing situation

- a./b. Review of events, Review of contract and current status of dam

Phil distributed copies of the mowing contract, a compilation of texts/emails with Mike Furia and others, and a data collection document. Phil reviewed texts. Mike sent a text to Phil on July 20, at 3:46 pm, saying the cutting was finished, and could he get a check. Phil had been by spillway about 6 hours prior to calibrate his water level stick. The grass was very high. Phil went back after receiving the text, and although growth near the concrete wall was weed whacked, everything else was unchanged. Over the course of the next two days, Jeff approved work, and

Phil cut Mike a check. He went back Monday to collect data on growth height. Pictures on document show growth up to 60" high. The Pineledge section was 30" high, and grass/growth at the Marina was 4' high. The spillway Spillway was 2' high. Jeff had met with Mike but did not walk the dam; he wanted to calm him down and make sure we still had someone for this year. Mike said he can't do the riprap without vinegar. Jeff recommended that someone else speak with Mike as he feels he is not getting through. There was agreement we need to start looking for next year, but we need to complete this year. We also don't have insurance certificates from him yet. Jeff agreed he has not fulfilled conditions. Bob had already reached out to Mark Favreau, who is willing to mow all sections of the dam (except Pineledge) in August for \$6,000; he will mow all sections of the dam in October for \$7,000. He reached out to Mark because he took Mike's text resignation as a resignation. Mike S wondered why we weren't getting a detailed invoice of work done each time. He also agreed the Marina may have been let go because we've never done that; the marina has maintained it in the past.

The question arose whether vinegar was bad to use along the dam. Phil was concerned the roots are affected, which means the soil in the dam is not held together as well. Ken said it's only the surface that is affected – the grass grows right back. Mike S. though it might be a Save the Lakes question.

c. Steps going forward

Everyone agreed we need to do something sooner rather than later. Bob can get back to Mark.

Ken felt whoever maintains dam should be allowed to spray. Mark had sprayed in the past, but only one area where there was invasive growth. Bob was also concerned about skid steer ruts, which make it difficult to mow later.

The cost for Mark was slightly more than for Mike. Phil felt that If we hire Mark, it would only be for this year and we would readvertise for next year. It's a \$6,000 difference between the two vendors. The toe was cut last year by Mike, but he had trouble with wet ground. He rented an Extension mowing arm last year but has not done so this year. The Extension was a loaner last year, but he never bought it. It was our understanding he had originally asked for a five year contract to make it possible to buy the Extender arm.

Phil will check with Save the Lakes on the vinegar issue. Jeff recommends meeting with Mike and giving him a chance. Mike S. felt we needed to go over the contract, show him the pictures, and save \$6,000 to spend elsewhere. Jeff feels we should ask him if he can mow to 5", and fulfill contract including providing proof of insurance. Phil is concerned about timing, but Ken is not as concerned. Bob is not sure Peter knows to maintain dam edge at the marina. It will probably cost more to also mow the marina.

MOTION (Bob, Mike) – Members of the committee will meet with Mike Furia before Thursday 8pm. If he is able to complete the second mowing prior to August 22nd, and meet all terms and conditions of contract (including but not limited to section 2, 3, and 4), we shall continue with Mike Furia. Otherwise the executive committee shall contract with Mark Favreau (Bob will see if price can be reduced).

MOTION PASSED

- d. Who is going to meet with Mike F and inform him of our decision?

ACTION: Bob, Mike S, Ken, and Phil will meet with Mike F at the Spillway section of the dam. Phil will set up a text chat to find a good time.

ACTION: Bob will talk to Peter about the marina.

5. Short- and Long-Term Goals – discussion

This item was tabled.

6. Bring Tax District idea before general membership again? – Discussion

This item was tabled.

7. Other Old Business

Mike spoke about a fundraiser. A friend did comedy night and raised \$28,000. He is reaching out to Wright's Farm and some comedians for dates, and will post information on CPWL for help putting the event together. Mike's goal is \$20,000. He sees the biggest issue at the event being education, about the lake and the dam. He felt we could maybe go to Patty Nugent to ask for a match for what we raise. This event will involve weekly meetings, and while he is willing to lead, he will need a lot of help. Everyone endorsed the plan.

Action items: Mike will continue research on events, dates, etc.

8. New Business

- a. Join Save the Lakes RI – discuss (Membership for CPWL is \$50/year) – passed by consensus

ACTION: Phil will send check to Save the Lakes

- b. Any other action items to add? Who?

ACTION: Phill and Tom. Emergency action plan need to be completed

ACTION: Liz, Phil: Setting up mailchimp access with Liz.

ACTION: Liz, Phil, Tom: Posting minutes on website

9. Next meeting date

August 15, 2023, 6:00 pm Harmony Public Library Meeting Room

The meeting adjourned at 7:51.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Viall