

MINUTES, BREWSTER PONDS COALITION, MARCH 4, 2021

Virtual meeting by Google Meet: Board Members present: Susan Bridges, Mary Mauterstock, Konrad Schultz, Cameron Ferguson, Nancy Ortiz, Wayne Jenkins, Gwen Pelletier, Marcia Kielb, Marty Burke, Amy Darbyshire, Rob Condon (arrived later)

Absent: Bruce Swiren

Meeting started: 6 PM

Standing Topics

- 1. Minutes for the February 4th, 2021 board meeting approved.**
- 2. There were no Email votes.**
- 3. There was no incoming mail to report.**
- 4. Treasurer's Report:**
 - a. Financial statements:**

Susan reported the current balance of \$105,722. BPC's portion of the Walker's engineering study budgeted for \$3K was actually \$1,975. The cost was split with the town.
 - b. Approval of expenses and reimbursements:**

There were no expenses to be approved.
- 5. Miscellaneous Administrative Matters.**
 - a. Proposed policy regarding crisis, operating, and project reserves (see report in folder)::**

Susan thanked the reserve subcommittee (Wayne, Cameron, Rob, and Susan) for creating the reserve report. A question was raised regarding investments. The treasurer would propose investments, the executive committee would review the proposals and the board would vote to approve. These investments would be low risk (i.e. money market). The board unanimously approved the reserve policy. See report in folder.
 - b. Proposed policy regarding matching funds (see report in folder):**

Wayne drafted a grant proposal. He purposely left the proposal broad to allow applicants to be creative with pond remediation solutions. Gwen mentioned the need to consult with conservation for project approval should the project fall within the 100 foot buffer zone. Nancy expressed concern over BPC's policy to retain any unused funds. The Board was reminded that all funds deposited into a reserve account must be used for the mission of the BPC. In addition every written agreement with a pond/neighborhood group states this policy and that all remaining funds will be used for similar projects either with that group or another. Susan reminded the board of tax free status regulations and how returning unused funds could compromise that status. Nancy mentioned that the Lower Mill erosion project has a balance of \$1K. Could those funds be used for a kayak rack, a

bench, or a cart to transport boats to the pond? Per board, these purchases could be considered related to pond remediation. Wayne will fine tune the report. All thanked Wayne for his great job in writing the grant proposal.

New Business

1. Scholarship proposal - Marcia

Marcia proposed setting up a scholarship award for a deserving student. Per Marcia, the current Nauset High School scholarship amounts range from \$500 to \$2,000 and students must apply for the scholarship. Discussion ensued regarding if students should be limited to the town of Brewster and if, in addition to Nauset High School, Cape Cod Technical High School, the Lighthouse Charter school, Cape Cod Community College, etc. should be included. Nancy asked if, for example, a student such as the Cape Cod Tech student who helped with the Seymour Pond project would qualify for the scholarship if she lived outside of Brewster. Marty asked if BPC could develop the criteria under which each applicant would be judged, and Marcia said “yes”. He felt this is a very positive way to encourage young people to learn about pond ecology and to get involved as volunteers in various BPC programs. It is also another way to build our reputation in the community and gain awareness/membership. Does the applicant have to be involved in a BPC project to qualify? The board is in favor of creating a scholarship, however, a small subcommittee of Mary and Marcia was formed to define eligibility and policy..

2. Student researchers - Susan

Susan, Konrad, and Tom Vautin had a Google Meet session with Nancy Leland and Jim Haney regarding investing in student researchers for pond remediation. Students would research creating floating wetlands and other biological remediation solutions. BPC project funds could be used to fund this endeavor.

3. Eco Paddles - Susan

Ryan Burch from the Department of Natural Resources wants to increase the number of paddles this year. SUPfari paddles are typically recreational, pleasure paddles. The BPC paddles they conduct are Eco or educational paddles. One suggested paddle is a herring run paddle which would take place at Lower Mill Pond April 24th (rain date April 25th) during the herring run season. The paddle would retrace the steps of conservationist John Hayes. Naturalist Peter Trull could lead the paddle. BPC business partner SUPfari would handle the signups which would make it much easier for the BPC since we would not need to handle the payments/confirmations, etc. The attendees would be limited to 12 and the cost would be \$75 per person for the herring run event. (Last year’s cost for this event was \$60 per person.) Profits would be split with \$500 to BPC and \$400 for Ryan. The BPC communications team would advertise the event. Konrad suggested having one event per month as too many events could cause “burn out”. Outside events, however, will most likely continue to be popular during the pandemic. Marcia believes four or five paddles will sell out. Marty also felt that 4 or 5 paddles could work. He did raise some concern that the herring run paddle, though a good idea, may not suit many people due to cold weather. He suggested, in addition to the April herring run paddle,

events following in June, July, August, and September for a total of five could work. BPC would select different naturalists to attend each paddle to ensure an ecological feature. Ryan will lead the events and provide the equipment, explain safety requirements, how to use the paddle boards, etc. Susan will discuss details with Ryan.

4. **Newcomers Outreach** - Konrad

Reaching out to new residents is a great way to increase membership. New residents are more likely to connect to their new community than established residents. Konrad suggested a direct mailing targeting newcomers. Konrad and Marty will discuss further and report back to the Board.

Current Priorities

1. **Events**

a. **Pond Summit 4/10**

The virtual summit will consist of Susan's introduction, Nancy Leland's talk, Marty's Lower Cape TV interview, the Lower Mill Pond erosion project (Nancy, Rob, and Bruce), and a PowerPoint presentation regarding the grant program. Wayne, Nancy, Rob, Susan, and Bruce are scheduled to complete their video Saturday 3/6 in order to meet the 3/10 deadline to submit to Konrad for editing pictures and the video. Participants will have the opportunity to submit questions for the question and answer session at the end. Invitations will be sent to pond association members in addition to all BPC members. A first BPC Email blast will be sent on March 15th to Pond and Neighborhood Association leaders followed by two subsequent blasts to our full email list and posting on the front page of the BPC website. The BPC NEWS Page, plus BPC Facebook and Twitter pages will also be used to announce the event. The summit will be limited to 100 participants. Advertising on the radio and newspapers will not be needed, however, Wayne will work with Bruce re: making calls to pond and neighborhood association leaders to encourage association member participation. The press (i.e. Cape Codder, MV press, etc.) should be informed in advance of the event so news articles could be published after the summit.

b. **Herring Run Eco Paddle**

See number 3 above. BPC will work with Brewster Conservation Trust on the event.

c. **Hydrangea Festival 7/9 and 7/10** - Susan

A volunteer is needed to organize BPC's involvement in the event.

d. **Virtual Conservation Week** - Susan

Susan attended a meeting last week. 700-800 people usually attend, too many for this summer (Covid rules), so needs to be virtual again this summer. Ideas include a passport for kids to get stamped as they visit various venues, a storybook walk, book readings, walks at Eagle Point, an online photo contest, a

virtual paddle with Peter Trull. BPC was scheduled last year to be the main presenter under the big tent in the middle of Drummer Boy Park. This was cancelled due to Covid. Can still be a focus point this summer.

e. Miscellaneous topics.

Brewster in Bloom - The Brewster Chamber of Commerce is planning a virtual Brewster in Bloom. The board decided to participate with a tent in front of Ace Hardware or the Brewster Book Store. BPC materials will be available at the tent. All pond guides were distributed last year, therefore, none will be available for Brewster in Bloom. A suggestion was made to recruit Bob and Sally Bullard for this event.

Marty suggested the development of a "BPC Pond Trail" highlighting the ponds with town landings and a few others including Nickerson State Park. This idea might be too late for the Bloom festival but could be kept on our website as a placement for members and visitors to use. Families enjoy visiting sites when on vacation and this would be used as a recreation and education piece. It could also be used for future fun events.

Spinnaker Fundraising Dinner -- The owner suggests a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday in July for this event. A small number of BPC's higher donors will be invited to attend. There are 13 donors who donated \$1K and 25-30 who donated \$500 or over this past year. An interesting speaker would be scheduled to speak.

Spring Newsletter - deadline for story and image submissions is March 15.

2. Committee Reports - Written/verbal reports as needed.

See reports in folder. The pond education video is finished.

3. Outreach, Pond Projects & Partnerships

- a. Susan was interviewed by Martha's Vineyard radio.
- b. Marty met Alice Kelly during the appeal outreach and learned that she is a freelance writer. They discussed BPC and the possibility of writing an article on paddling ponds. She landed a job to write a piece for the Cape & Islands magazine for this summer 2021. Alice interviewed Marty for the article on March 1. He requested that BPC be mentioned, the website documented, and our paddling events highlighted.
- c. Marty pitched the idea to Channel 5 Chronicle in September 2020 to come to the Cape to film a segment on freshwater pond water quality issues and the work of the BPC. He will follow up later in March/early April.
- d. Marty pitched David Able from the Boston Globe to write a story on freshwater pond water quality issues as a follow up to his earlier major Boston Globe story.. They had a discussion with the pitch and David is open to another discussion in spring. Marty will follow up.
- e. Marty will be interviewed by Eve Zuckoff of WCAI on March 5th.
- f. Doug Fraser of the Cape Cod Times wrote a front page article on BPC in August of 2020. Fraser asked to be kept in the loop for similar stories in 2021.

Executive session

Gwen is leaving the board due to term limits. Marty, Wayne, and Nancy's terms end in August 2020. Susan expressed hope that they might continue on the board. Recruiting board members is continuous work that involves all board members.

Marty has had initial conversations with four new board position candidates. A second phone conversation will take place with each and then an in-person meeting if there is mutual interest.

Wrap up

Recap decisions, action items, and follow-up assignments.

Board unanimously approved reserve and grant policies with amendments.

Board voted to participate in Brewster in Bloom.

There will be numerous Eco Paddles this year.

Marcia and Mary will fine tune the scholarship policy.

A fundraising dinner at Spinnakers is planned for July.

BPC will participate in virtual Conservation Day.

The April 10th Pond Summit preparations should be completed within a few weeks.

Next Board Meeting - April 1st, 2021 - Google Meet

May Board Meeting - May 6, 2021 - Google Meet

June Board Meeting - June 3, 2021 - Google Meet

Meeting adjourned 8:00 PM

Submitted by Nancy W. Ortiz, Clerk