

Minutes, Brewster Ponds Coalition, April 2 , 2015

Board Members Present: Karen Malkus-Benjamin, , Rick Kuzman, Tony Ortiz, Gwen Pelletier, Tom Vautin, Dawn Walnut. Konrad Schultz & John Keith (by Skype), Guest: Hal Minis, Brewster Conservation Trust.

Minutes for the March 5, 2015, meeting were approved unanimously.

GUEST: Hal Minis discussed the following topics with the Board

- He congratulated the Board on the successful event on Saturday, March 28, History of Ponds in Brewster.
- Offered space for an article from the Ponds Coalition in the BCT summer newsletter, with a focus on the Stoney Brook Valley
- Advised us on proposed acquisitions by BCT in the near future. Two of them are abutting ponds; he suggested that BCP might be interested in contributing to the purchase. He indicated that BCT would provide more information later. Because negotiations are in process, he requested that location of the parcels not be made public yet. Board agreed to discuss.
- BCT is working with Blueberry Pond neighborhood associations to resolve a problem of storm water run-off from BCT property abutting Blueberry Pond on the north side of the pond. Horsley Witten will meet with the homeowners association to review proposed solutions. He suggested as the project proceeds and the solution is developed, BPC might want to be involved.
- Brewster Conservation Day, July 11, 2015. Hal invited BPC to participate in this 4th year of an annual event that is co-sponsored by BCT and the Town's Department of Natural Resources. The primary purpose is to provide the public with conservation and environmental information. Last year there were 40 exhibitors and between 800 and 900 attendees. The day includes exhibits, speakers, children's activities with a focus on Brewster homeowners and family fun. He asked that BPC participate in a special exhibit focused on ponds with other organizations. A brief discussion included the following;
 - Other exhibitors: Brewster Water Planning Committee; Orleans Pond Coalition, PALS program
 - Topics: Storm water, native plants, "What's in a watershed", septic drainage
 - BPC Board voted unanimously to accept the information to participate
 - Hal indicated he would need info re plans from BPC by mid-May
- BPC indicated this should be a "special committee project" and that the Board will discuss in detail at the May meeting.
- Konrad & Karen offered to connect with Hal to get more detail of his ideas for "Pond" area and BPC role.

MONTHLY REPORTS

- CLERK—Gwen Pelletier
 - The Bulk Mail permit using a "Ghost account" has been approved by the Post Office. That means we pay no fee to the PO but must use a printing business that has a "Ghost Account" and will pay that business. In our area Sir Speedy Printing has a ghost permit. We are in the process of doing our mailing to pond front property owners.
 - BPC has been approved by the Mass DOR as an exempt organization. We now have and ST-2 form which allows us to complete an ST-5 form with businesses and pay no state tax on purchases. This form must be completed with the business when making a purchase or can be kept on file by a business.

- TREASURER-Tony Ortiz

- We have 8 new members who joined at the meetings on March 28 and 31, with contributions totaling \$175.00
 - Between the two meetings, we have 14 new contacts with request for information.
 - Current membership totals 74.
 - Current balance is \$1952.
 - Expenses of the last month: \$63 to Staples for the new banners. Great to have to use at two events!
 - General discussion re finances and expenses
 - ❖ Tom suggested that we need to have a discussion to clarify how we define membership; Tony added that we also need to consider asking people who contributed last year to contribute/join again this year.
 - ❖ Dawn suggested that we also need to consider special projects such as, if we should decide to solicit special contributions for BPC contribution to land purchases abutting ponds by BCT.
 - ❖ Anticipated expenses: letter to pond front property owners \$400 to \$500; videos of the two workshops \$400. Gwen reported that she is currently working with Sir Speedy to fine tune the excel database and with Sir Speedy and Dawn on the formatting and pictures for the letter. She anticipates that the letter will be ready for mailing by the end of April. Dawn indicated that the videographer is working on the format for the videos of the two events for posting on BPC and Town websites.
 - ❖ Perhaps time to begin soliciting donations for current year; need to show benefit to donation—that's when people donate.
 - ❖ Need to consider an email appeal
 - ❖ Decision that, at the moment, the letter to pond front property owners is adequate.
 - ❖ In May, we should focus on fund raising, highlighting a project that will be appealing to donors, and developing a strategic plan that will help set priorities.
- COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - MEMBERSHIP—Rick Kuzman
 - ❖ We need to be in touch with the 10 new contacts from the events plus 3 new applications from the website
 - ❖ Tony will get the forms to Rick so he can make telephone calls to them
 - ❖ Rick suggested that we need to show people “why I want to become a member”
 - He proposed development of a slide show that would be running while people are arriving at any of our events
 - That we add a strong statement to the application form, both on line and the printed one.
 - ❖ Dawn suggested that we should invite “pond and neighborhood associations” to become members as an association as well as encouraging individuals in those associations to become members.
 - ❖ Dawn also suggested that we might want to list members' names on the website.

- EVENTS AND EDUCATION---Dawn Walnut and Karen Malkus-Benjamin

- ❖ Karen indicated that we all were satisfied with the results of the workshops, with the interest and attendance. She asked that we consider what went well and what we learned that might help with future events.
 - What went well
 - Started on time
 - Good number of handouts
 - Seed Packet for attendees.
 - Venue
 - What we learned, could improve
 - Q & A petered out; should set time period and end
 - Repeat questions for entire audience
 - Be sure questions and answers are at mikes
 - More formal introductions of speakers
 - Ask for donations and memberships
- ❖ Events coming up
 - Beautify Brewster Day; Clean up streets
 - BPC location off Setucket Road, between AP Newcomb and Slough Road, in the area of Elbow Pond
 - Tom offered to purchase hats with BPC logo and to give them to all participants
 - Recruiting with email to membership, neighborhood associations, posting on website. John will send to Elbow Pond Association, Konrad noted that Blueberry Pond Association is covering Mill Pond Road.
 - Tom and Konrad will develop message for website
 - May 16: Pond Friendly Landscaping
 - June 6: Pondweed ID
 - August: Alternative Remediation strategies
 - September: Participation in Celebrate Our Waters weekend in Orleans
- COMMUNICATIONS---Konrad Schultz
 - ❖ Press coverage of March 28 and 31 events; welcome suggestions for future coverage. Can't anticipate what will actually be used and/or when by Media
 - ❖ Committee continues to monitor/add to website, Facebook, and Twitter
 - ❖ Spring e newsletter published
 - ❖ Press release deadline is April 24 for May 16 "Pond Friendly" workshop
 - ❖ Continuing to co-ordinate for videotaping of BPC programs through Town
- PROCEDURES MANUAL---Tom Vautin
 - ❖ Efficient way to have available is to create an on-line resource
 - ❖ Has done some research and recommends using "Google Aps", which is free to nonprofit organizations.
 - ❖ Secure area
 - ❖ Tom will pursue enrollment, which must be done using our website domain name
 - ❖ On a motion by John Keith, seconded by Tony Ortiz, the Board voted unanimously to approve enrollment of BPC in Google Aps and developing use of it for the Procedures Manual and other ways it can be useful to BPC. Tom and Konrad will work together to accomplish this.
- PROJECTS\

- ❖ Letter to pond front property owners, addressing envelopes: an evening or weekend will be better for us to meet. Karen, Tony, Dawn, Tom, and Rick indicated they will help when we have them from printer. Gwen will coordinate that effort when the letters are ready.
- ❖ Proposal for AmeriCorps members to work on projects for BPC. John submitted descriptions of possibilities to Ryan Burch. He had circulated the proposal to Board members in advance. Ryan liked the proposals and thinks they are highly likely to be approved. He had suggested that BPC supervise the AmeriCorps member or members if approved. However, John indicated that BPC does not have the capacity for supervision, but would certainly coordinate with Ryan if approved.
- ❖ Meetings with Pond Associations during the summer to talk about issues they can address. John Keith is spearheading this effort. Goal for early June. Focus on nutrient issues. Pilot with Blueberry Pond Association. Should be sure our message is not different from issues that BCT is addressing relative to their land which abuts Blueberry Pond.
- ❖ Ground water project re monitoring phosphorous. Karen has been in conversations with Carmen Scherzo, Chair of the Brewster Board of Health, and George Heufelder, Director, Barnstable County Department of Health and Environment. Both are interested in the possibility of a research project with test wells to determine phosphorous levels near ponds. The project would need 5 properties abutting ponds whose owners would agree to test wells. George Heufelder has indicated that county staff could work on such a research project. The Board indicated an interest in such a project and agreed by consensus that Karen should continue in discussions with Brewster BoH and George Heufelder. There are many details that would have to be defined in order to proceed.
- ❖ Restore your Shore. Continued discussion of this program in Minnesota and how the idea can be used here. Focus should be on homeowners' activities, a watershed approach, remediation, storm water run-off. New Board of Health regs being developed relative to "Storm water run-off" could require remediation. We need to see how these regs develop. BPC role will be one of education for homeowners, to show how.
- ❖ Relative to the Board of Health, it was noted that in a recent meeting, a BoH member mentioned BPC but didn't seem to understand that we are a growing organization with a strong focus on improving impaired ponds and developing educational information on how to improve the health of our ponds. We need to correct what appeared to be a negative impression of our efforts.

➤ OTHER ITEMS

- ❖ Mill Ponds Report from Horsley Witten. BPC should review and provide comments relative to the report. Karen and John will discuss.
- ❖ Distribution of our brochures: Place at Town Hall, Chamber of Commerce, and other relevant locations in Town.

NEXT MEETING: May 7, 2015 6 PM, Library

Submitted by,

Gwen Pelletier, Clerk