

## MINUTES, BREWSTER PONDS COALITION, AUGUST 3, 2017

Board Members Present: John Keith, Karen Malkus-Benjamin, Gwen Pelletier, Judy Pirani, Sue Searles, Konrad Schultz, Tom Vautin, Dawn Walnut. Member Dave Valcourt joined us for the meeting.

**Minutes for July 6, 2017**, were approved unanimously.

**Confirmation of email votes:** The following votes were confirmed unanimously:

- ❖ Approval for Judy Pirani to participate in “Instagram Workshop” and be reimbursed for fee of \$75.00
- ❖ Approval for Karen Malkus-Benjamin to purchase additional equipment for the Citizen Scientist cyanobacteria monitoring program: A pair of ZAPPRs at estimated cost of \$170.00 and a Turbidity Tube at estimated cost of \$100.
- ❖ Suggested donation of \$10 for non BPC member attendance at Annual Meeting

**Incoming Mail:** Invitation to Brewster Conservation Trust Annual Meeting. Tom informed Board Members that BCP is being recognized by BCT as Annual Conservationist Organization of the Year and encouraged us all to attend meeting on August 10. Everyone indicated they could and Gwen offered to register those of us who had not already done so.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Financial statements were approved as presented.

- ❖ Approval of expenses: At previous meetings, Karen and Sue had indicated that two of the schools participating in the Pond Kits Project had provided their own transportation. The outline of the project to the schools had indicated BPC would pay transportation costs for field trips. Sue and Karen had attempted to get the schools to provide bills for their transportation costs; however, they had not done so. Sue and Karen indicated that the Partnership School would be providing a bill for reimbursement. They recommended that the Board approve giving Family School Foundation and the Laurel School, each a donation of \$50.00 in lieu of the transportation costs. The Board unanimously approved the payment as requested.

### **CURRENT PRIORITIES AND ISSUES**

- ❖ Annual Meeting Final Preparations
  - We agreed on responsibilities for preparation and to be there at 8:00 AM to set up
  - Reviewed nomination of Board members for an additional 3 year term: John Keith, Judy Pirani, Tom Vautin. For Nominating Committee: Fred Budreski, Jay Olin, Konrad Schultz, Dawn Walnut

- Reviewed handout being prepared by Judy Pirani
  - Voted to present Volunteer of the Year SPLASH AWARD to Nancy Gustafson-Smith in recognition of her participation in the Pond Education Program and at Brewster Conservation Day.
  - Noted 46 responses to date; Judy will do a final email reminder on Sunday with deadline for response by Tuesday so Dawn can give final count to ARDEO's
- ❖ BPC Organization and draft coordinator position description
- Tom opened the discussion by indicating he had created draft position description based on previous discussions and information we sent to him. He indicated that to create a position is a significant decision which requires more discussion than we can spend in a regular meeting. Board members agreed with his suggestion that we plan a special meeting to focus on this issue. Tom will poll us for dates for a meeting between now and October
  - Brief discussion included following thoughts and information
    - Need to look at what we want person to do: program, administrative, financial?
    - Need to look at reasonable rate of pay
    - Determine what volunteers could do and what coordinator would do
    - Coordinator supervise volunteers
    - Examine our long range directions and strategies
    - Significant initiatives already
      - Pond Education Kits
      - Citizen Scientist
      - Observations of Upper Mill Pond Complex projects and Macrophyte removal at Walker's
    - Other environmental organizations on Lower Cape share positions, such as Harwich Conservation Trust and Chatham Natural Resources, Eastham Conservation Foundation and Orleans Conservation Trust.
    - Some organizations and/or Town staff have part time positions
    - Salaries range from \$40,000 to \$50,000 for full time equivalents
    - There are accounting firms that provide bookkeeping and/or accounting services for nonprofits
    - Consider surveying membership to determine their vision of BPC
    - Focus groups
    - Seeking grants

❖ Citizen Science Monitoring Update

- Karen shared a spreadsheet showing the schedule and ponds being monitored for cyanobacteria. BPC volunteers are taking samples at Greenland, Long, Lower Mill, Pine, and Sheep Ponds. APCC staff are monitoring Upper Mill and Walker. Volunteers are Marty Burke, Nancy Ortiz, Doug Smith, Pat and Bill Wood.
- APCC is monitoring Upper Mill and Walker Pond.
- Board discussed “how are we sharing information” and concluded that this is a research project in which we are participating.
- Responsibility for sharing information about possible cyanobacteria blooms lies with the Health Agent and the Natural Resources Department.
- Karen will share information she has with Health Agent and DNR

❖ Walker’s Pond project update and updated BPC management plan: Tom shared thoughts and observations based on visits to Walker’s Pond, conversations with DNR and member of the Conservation Commission, Steve McKenna. A wide ranging discussion among Board members included the following:

- The area for macrophyte harvesting at Walker’s Pond is quite limited and harvesting as planned this year would not lend itself to allow for judgement of whether the process is successful
- Harvesting Walker’s Pond by the Town is still to be conducted and will provide an opportunity to see how the equipment can be successful in removal
- BPC’s role at this point should be low profile, photography and observations of the process
- Macrophyte harvesting in other ponds, surrounded by private property, will probably provide a better opportunity to evaluate.
- Wherever it is done, macrophyte harvesting is a longer term project, requiring repeated removal over several years
- BPC could play a role in working with the Conservation Commission to help support neighborhood and pond associations where macrophytes are more significant problems
- BPC could play a role in developing protocols; protections need to be built in to lessen the ecological impact on endangered flora and fauna in shallow water
- BPC support a way for Town harvester to be used on ponds where there is no public landing.
- A likely candidate is Elbow Pond where there is interest .
- Other relevant ponds include Blueberry, Cobbs, Greenland, Griffiths, Sols

- ❖ Ecotour Pond Paddle Event: Konrad shared plans.
  - Test paddle with group of volunteers on August 2 went well
  - Determined route and decided not to go into Walker's Pond because of time consuming to navigate sluice between Upper Mill and Walker's
  - Figured out points along paddle route for information/education opportunities
  - Dates selected. September 9 with rain date for 9/10 or following weekend
  - Good support from member volunteers to assist
  - Limit number to 12 plus Board members
  - Konrad will get insurance contact from Tom and contact company to confirm that our coverage, which we added this year is adequate
  
- ❖ Town of Brewster Septic System Activity
  - In a previous discussion, we had supported a draft letter from the Board of Health to State Legislators and Senators re use of septic betterment loans for upgrading systems to higher levels of treatment than currently required by Title V. Tom informed us that the BoH had decided at their meeting last night to meet with the State Reps and Senator covering Brewster to talk about the issue instead of writing the letter.
  - George Heufelder has applied for an EPA 319 grant that would provide funds that could be used in Brewster for test sites for advanced treatment systems
  - Discussion ensued about how BPC might apply for grant funds that could also support test sites
  - Discussion also suggested that we support BoH and Planner to approach issue less from a regulatory approach and more an incentive
  - BPC support efforts by convening a "working group" re the issue of septic improvement and upgrades with an emphasis on education and providing incentives
  - Karen informed that she has heard that State is moving towards an update on Title V requirements.

## REPORTS AND UPDATES

- ❖ Written report was submitted by Communications Action Team. Copy available upon request

Konrad announced that the “Save Blueberry and Sol’s Pond Association” is holding their annual fundraiser sale the same day as our annual meeting and asked if BPC could announce. Agreed to do so and to allow posting on Facebook.

Karen shared that she, Sue, and Gwen had attended AmeriCorps Graduation Ceremony, met Corey’s parents, and presented him with gift and card from Board.

Next Board Meeting: September 7, 2017

Submitted by,

Gwen Pelletier, Secretary