

## Minutes Brewster Ponds Coalition, February 4, 2016

Board Members present: Tom Vautin, Karen Malkus-Benjamin, Rick Kuzman, Dawn Walnut, Gwen Pelletier, Konrad Schultz (by Skype). Also present Judy Pirani, Communications Committee; Patricia Monahan, guest.

Tom welcomed and Dawn introduced Patricia Monahan, who is attending the meeting because of her interest in BPC and our activities and also because both Dawn and Gwen have suggested her as board member, in particular to fill the treasurer position being vacated by Tony Ortiz. Patricia then shared her background. In summary, she lives in West Brewster, is a long time resident of Brewster, has served on the Town Recreation Committee, is a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity and works at Vacation Resorts International in Hyannis as an accounting supervisor.

The minutes of the January 7, 2016, meeting were approved unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Tom presented the Treasurer's report as submitted by Tony Ortiz. On a unanimous vote, the report was accepted as presented. Copy available upon request.

**WORKING GROUP UPDATES:** Copies of all reports available on request.

- **Communications:** Konrad Schultz and Judy Pirani. In addition to the written report, Konrad and Judy reported that "call for art" for the March 12 event has been posted on the website and on Facebook. Konrad said the Brewster Conservation Trust will provide an article for the JApril spring newsletter about the purchase of property abutting Mill Pond. Re the announcement of the Mar 12 "Healthy Ponds Art Fest", Patricia suggested that in addition to the BBC Facebook page, we could also use the FB "events" page.
- **Membership:** Rick Kuzman. In addition to his written report, Rick indicated 16 new memberships and that he continues to respond with letters, hats, and decals.
- **Education:** Dawn Walnut and Karen Malkus-Benjamin. With no written report, Dawn and Karen reported their focus is on the March 12, "Healthy Ponds Art Fest". From 11 am to 2 PM; Arts and crafts, poetry, story reading. Art work especially for the event being done by students at the Partnership School. At Dawn's request for help from Board members, Karen, Rick, Tom, Gwen, and Patricia said they could be available either Friday afternoon or Saturday morning. Konrad requested an outline of exhibits by February 17th for newsletter and

website. We will be taken photos and a form will be available for people in photos to give permission for use of photos on website. Judy and Konrad agreed to create a Flyer for the event. It will be sent to the two elementary schools in Brewster as well as posted at the library and other locations that permit postings for events. Karen reported that there have been no further discussions at this point with APCC, but plans will be developed for an event in the fall, probably October, in coordination with other towns and pond coalitions.

- **Current Projects:**

- ❖ Elbow Pond; John Keith submitted a written report on the status of the Elbow Pond Project. The Americorps program is considering designating a different member to work with the project since it appears not to be an appropriate assignment for the skills of the current member. He has been assigned to other tasks in Brewster. Meanwhile, John, Gwen, and member Jan McGann will continue to move the project forward.
- ❖ Blueberry Pond: Konrad shared that Brewster Conservation Trust has received a letter that the grant application for a rain garden at Blueberry Pond was not approved. The Blueberry Pond Association and BCT are considering other options for proceeding with the project. BCP had committed to providing \$1000 for a video tape of the project for education purposes.
- ❖ Also relative to Blueberry Pond and other Pond Associations, Konrad and John developed a “template” for Pond Groups to sign authorizing the creation of a restricted fund for collection of and designation of funds for a particular project. The form will be part of the request for a pond specific fund along with the other information required with the “Policy for Receiving Funds from Other Organizations”.

- **Advocacy Updates:**

- ❖ Tom Vautin submitted a written report re a Planning Board hearing on March 9 re draft Stormwater Bylaw amendments. The Board concurred that we should be represented at the hearing and will discuss our comments at the March Board meeting. The revised document is in the BPC Google App for us to review. Konrad noted that in the video of the December Planning Board meeting when Tom gave comments on behalf of BPC, the Planning Board had a positive reaction to the BPC comments.

- ❖ The Board briefly discussed the proposed Board of Health regulations re Septic systems acknowledging that there is nothing new at this point. There are public concerns about the effect on current property owners. Included in the discussion was the possibility of financial assistance from private property owners through the establishment of “septic betterment fund”.
- **BPC Organization Updates:**
  - ❖ Board positions. Tom presented a position description for Treasurer developed by him and Gwen in our efforts to recruit a Treasurer to fill the position being vacated by Tony. Board members accepted the description as presented. During a brief discussion, we all agreed we to focus on filling the vacant 9th Board position, with perhaps a focus on grant writing background. The discussion expanded to a brief conversation about contacts in the political realm and how best to let those contacts know who we are and how to connect with them when we need support for a particular project or issue.
  - ❖ Google Apps for BPC. As we continue to become familiar and use Google Apps, the number of documents will increase so we should begin to set up folders for relevant items. Tom has set up a Board meeting folder with subfolders for each Board Meeting. We should begin to put reports in those for all of us to access.
  - ❖ Public Contact. Board members agreed with Tom’s suggestion that it would be helpful to have a BPC telephone number with voice mail and regular monitoring. Tom will explore the options and proceed.
  - ❖ Other: Karen reminded Board members that Elizabeth Taylor, Planning Board, had sent out general information, including to us, that there is some discussion by the Community Preservation Committee and the Finance Committee about looking at the allocation of CPC funds, particularly around the amount allocated for open space.
- **New Initiatives and Projects**
  - ❖ Proposed Winter Member Meeting. Tom presented a draft outline for a meeting, developed with Dawn and Konrad, with a proposed date of February 27 in the morning. Board members agreed with the proposal as outlined, the date of February 27, and location at First Parish. The event will have a social component with breakfast, an overview of what we have done, and a request for input from the members in how we move forward and that they become involved.

In preparation and in order to move forward, members agreed as follows.

- Tom and Dawn will continue the planning
- Dawn will Facilitate the discussion and be responsible for whatever materials will be needed for general discussion and small group sessions.
- Gwen will be in charge of food and refreshments
- Konrad and Judy will develop PR: an invitation, email it and send out a press release.
- Tom will prepare introductory materials

We also agreed that we should have a similar event in the summer in order to reach members who are not here year round. Such an event could be coordinated with the Annual Meeting to be held in August this year.

- ❖ PALS Program. Tom reported that he has had conversations with Chris Miller and Ryan Burch, Department of Natural Resources, about the possible involvement of BPC with PALS, the pond testing program. During a lengthy discussion of the program, we reached the following conclusions:

- The program should remain a Town operated program.
- BPC is interested in being supportive of the program
- Sampling techniques and timing should be reviewed. Technical training should be provided to ensure consistency in the way data is collected.
- Long term, a review of the value of the data would be helpful in determining if there should be changes in how and how often data is collected.
- Responding to Chris and Ryan's comments that equipment needs to be updated, there may be a role for BPC to assist with that.
- BPC will coordinate with DNR to help promote the PALS program with a recognition event the end of March. Such an event will recognize current and previous volunteers, recruit new volunteers, and provide basic training/education in pond sampling protocol.

- ❖ Annual Calendar of BPC events. Tom presented a draft outline of BPC events for the coming year and asked that we begin to fill it in. Discussion of specific events included the following:
  - Consider participating in the BREWSTER IN BLOOM parade in May.
  - Schedule the WEED WORKSHOP for the end of May
  - Coordinate with APCC for an “all Cape” Ponds coalition's event in October.
  - For end of year membership drive, possibly combine the annual appeal with the annual report.
  
- Other
  - ❖ Rick reported that the Myricks Pond association had sent a letter to the Department of Natural Resources about the from the Pond to Point of Rocks town landing area.
  - ❖ Patricia Monahan said that she is definitely interested in the BPC and would consider serving as Treasurer. She and Tom set up an appointment to talk in more detail about the position.
  
- WRAP-UP
  - ❖ Scheduled Member Breakfast for 2/27 at First Parish with assignments as outlined above.
  - ❖ March 12 “What is a Healthy Pond” Arts Fest at Museum of Natural History. Following agreed could be there to help Dawn and Karen, with set up and during the day: Tom, Gwen, Rick, Judy, Patricia.
  - ❖ Tom will follow-up with discussions with DNR re PALS event
  - ❖ Financial Plan/Budget for 2016 will be on agenda for next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: March 3, 2016.

Submitted by,

Gwen Pelletier, Clerk