

Minutes, Brewster Ponds Coalition, July 7, 2016

Board Members Present: Tom Vautin, John Keith, Dawn Walnut, Patricia Monahan, Konrad Schultz, Gwen Pelletier, Karen Malkus-Benjamin. Communications Committee Member: Judy Pirani. Guests: AmeriCorps Member, Ben Howard; Jim Holland, Sue Searles.

Tom opened the meeting by welcoming members Jim Holland and Sue Searles and AmeriCorps member Ben Howard.

Tom changed the order of the agenda, moving the first item under “Current projects” discussion of the POND WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENT GUIDE forward in order to have a conversation with AmeriCorps member Ben Howard, who had developed the guide in co-operation with Board Members John Keith and Gwen Pelletier, and BPC member Jan McGann. Tom and the Board complimented and thanked Ben for developing this important document to aid BPC in working with neighborhood and pond associations to address storm water run-off with development of rain gardens and vegetative buffers. Ben told the board that it had been an interesting project for him and he appreciated the opportunity. At the Board’s request he agreed to write an “executive summary” for inclusion in the document. He will post the document at both the BPC website and the Barnstable County website.

Tom thanked Board members for participating in the Board retreat on Sunday, June 5, stating that the planning coming from the retreat has given us momentum for moving forward with events and efforts to involve more of our members in our programming and events.

Minutes of the June 2 meeting were approved unanimously on a motion by Konrad, seconded by Patricia.

Treasurer’s Report: Patricia submitted a written report, copy available upon request, which was approved unanimously. During a discussion of including a financial report in the annual report, there was agreement that the report will reflect the period, July 1, 2015 --June 30, 2016. The projected budget for the next year will be based on history of this past year plus rounded off projections of expenses for proposed projects. We will each give Patricia estimated amounts for projects and she will submit a proposed budget for approval by email prior to the deadline of July 12 for inclusion in the printed annual report. Patricia requested that a Finance Committee be established; Board members agreed to a three member board to consist of 2 board members and 1 non-board member.

WORKING GROUP UPDATES: Copies of reports referenced are available upon request.

- **Communications:** Written report submitted by Konrad Schultz
Konrad has co-ordinated PR for Brewster Conservation Day with BCT.

Judy Pirani reported that she continues to posts to BPC FaceBook page and has added FB BOOST, which widens the broadcast to anyone within 25 miles of Brewster.

The newsletter was sent June 30; Konrad reports that the “open rate” is about average at 50.3%. Today he sent out an email appeal for donations, targeted at people who are on our mailing list who have not donated this year yet.

In the discussion of the Annual Report for distribution at Annual Meeting on August 13, Judy emphasized the deadline for all copy by July 12. She will have a draft by July 25 and the final by August 5. We agreed on an order of 500 copies. Tom, Dawn, Konrad, and Judy will co-ordinate in development of the list of donors to be included in the Annual Report.

- **Membership:** Dawn reported that Rick Kuzman has transferred access to the membership database to her and she is becoming familiar with it and updating.
- **Education:** Karen reported that all the components of the Healthy Pond game are ready and that she needs “all hands on deck” Saturday, July 9, Brewster Conservation Day at Drummer Boy Park for managing the different sections. Tom, Konrad, Dawn, Patricia, and Gwen said they would be there.

Karen reported that she has confirmed with George Heufelder, Barnstable County Health Agent, for a visit by BPC Board members to the County test site for alternative septic treatment systems on Thursday, July 14. . Karen, Tom and John confirmed that they will be able to attend.

- **Current projects:**

POND WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENT GUIDE. Gwen reported that she, John Keith, Jan McGann, and Ben Howard will meet with the Conservation Commission on Tuesday, July 12, to introduce the GUIDE. A copy had been included in the package sent to the Con Com members prior to their meeting.

John Keith spoke to the following items

- ❖ Public storm water problems in Brewster. John researched and has created a list of 35 locations where there are issues that involve public roads. He gave the list to Noelle Bramer, Conservation Agent, when he and Gwen met with her recently. He suggested that this list provides a beginning point for BPC to work with the Town in an advocacy role.
- ❖ Elbow Pond neighbors are still interested in working together to address the storm run-off issue at the landing on Elbow Pond Circle. The meeting with Conservation Agent Noelle Bramer was discouraging because of her restrictive approach to “no tree removal” and “no mechanical equipment” for a Request for Determination.
- ❖ We need to develop a strategy for working with the Town. During the discussion we concluded that, in addition to the Conservation Agent, we should reach out to

the Town Manager, the Board of Selectmen, the DPW Director, as well as Chris Miller, Director of Natural Resources.

- **Advocacy and Outreach:**

- ❖ Tom reported that he, Dawn and Konrad had met with Town Administrator Mike Embury; it was basically an introductory meeting to acquaint him with BPC. Tom thought it was a constructive, friendly meeting.
- ❖ Tom had sent in advance to Board members a copy of a letter from Scott Kerns re Myricks Pond concerns. Copy available upon request. One issue for the pond is that part of the problem is caused by run off from a Town owned road. During a lengthy discussion, we acknowledged that there are other ponds with problems due to run-off from Town owned roads, as enumerated in the research and list that John Keith created. We concluded that a good approach would be to ask for a “field trip” to visit some of the sites, including Myrick’s Pond, with the DPW Director/Engineer, Natural Resources Director, Chris Miller, and Conservation Agent.
- ❖ Tom reported that he and Konrad had met with Kristin Andres, from APCC, Jim McCauley from the Orleans Pond Coalition, and two members of the Indian Pond Association in Mashpee to talk about APCC’s hosting a “Cape wide Pond Summit”. There was agreement that there is a need to develop a unified theme across the Cape relative to watershed planning as it affects fresh-water ponds and that it needs to be action oriented. Kristin is considering a fall meeting.
- ❖ Tom also reported further conversations with Jim McCauley on the following topics
 - Jim has compiled data from the last few years from PALS testing that he believes provides significant information. He will share his work with us. Tom will follow-up with him relative to Brewster data.
 - Orleans Pond Coalition is planning their annual CELEBRATE OUR WATERS weekend for the end of September and invites BPC to participate. We decided to accept the invitation and to consider using the “HEALTHY POND GAME” being used for Brewster Conservation Day. We will see how it goes this coming weekend and decide next Board meeting.
- ❖ Tom reported that he as been invited to speak on July 12 at the BREWSTER COMMUNITY NETWORK meeting. Sue Searles explained to us that it is a group that provides a forum, led by Mary O’Neil, on different topics to allow Brewster residents to gather information and ask questions to keep residents/citizens informed of activities/issues in town.

- **BPC Organization**

- ❖ Tom reported that the Nominating Committee has been meeting with people about opportunities to become more involved with BPC as a Board member or Committee member. Sue Searles and Jim Holland are among those and they are here tonight observing the board meeting as part of that process. We have two vacant Board positions to fill; plus three of our positions are up for re-election. At Tom's request, the following members whose terms expire, agreed to be on the slate for re-election: Karen Malkus-Benjamin; Konrad Schultz; Dawn Walnut. At the next Board meeting, there will be an "Executive Session" when the nominating committee will introduce nominees for the slate for the two vacant positions and for the nominating committee for the next year.
- ❖ Tom also thanked all Board members for our efforts to use the BPC Google account for on-line documents and encouraged us to continue to ask questions and expand our use. Dawn commented that this is also a good tool for preserving "institutional memory".

NEW TOPICS

- **Pond and Neighborhood Summit, July 30**

Confirmed location, Brewster Baptist Church 9:00 am to 10:30

Reaching out to as many groups as we can identify; publicity needed

Purpose: To attempt to set up net-work of pond groups and help them see their commonalities.

John, Dawn, Konrad agreed to help with developing the agenda.

We all agreed to be there and assist as needed

- **ANNUAL MEETING, Saturday, August 13.**

- ❖ Gwen reported that she has re-confirmed with Ardeo's at Captain's Course; the buffet will be ready for 9:30 arrival. Meeting will begin at 10:00 AM. Ardeo's will need a count three full business days prior to the 13th, by late Tuesday or early Wednesday. Ardeo's does have a screen that will be available for the Power Point presentation
- ❖ Karen has confirmed with the speaker, Laurel Schaidler, from Silent Spring. She also suggested that we invite Sue Phelan of Green Cape to attend. Board members agreed and Karen will invite her.
- ❖ Dawn suggested that we might want to consider an appreciation award, which could be name "THE SPLASH AWARD". To be discussed at next Board meeting.

- **Bike to ponds event, August 20**

Patricia and Konrad are co-ordinating this event. It will be at Nickerson State Park. They are working out the details with the Superintendent of the park; the park will provide naturalists to give information. Ponds to be included are Flax, Little Cliff, and Higgins. There will be a combination of biking and walking; plans are being made for late in the day with a picnic at Flax Pond at the end of the ride/walk.

- **Other Business**

Gwen informed the Board that she had learned informally that the joint AmeriCorps application submitted by BPC, with Brewster Conservation Trust and the Department of Natural Resources will be among those selected for an AmeriCorps assignment for the next AmeriCorps year to begin in October. The selections will not be formally announced until some time next week, but she had made a call and been told to expect a positive letter.

RECAP: FOLLOW-UP

- All of us will respond to Konrad's email re Annual Report by tomorrow at the latest.
- John will talk with Steve McKenna, Conservation Commission, prior to Tuesday's meeting with the Con Com
- Tom will inform Jim McCauley that BPC will participate in Celebrate Our Waters
- Tom will send all of us a copy of an email outlining plans for the POND SUMMIT. Tom, John, Dawn, and Konrad will work with Tom to plan the agenda items.
- Annual Meeting. Karen and Konrad will co-ordinate re need for Power Point equipment.
- Bike to Ponds event: Konrad and Patricia will co-ordinate with assistance from John and Karen.
- Brewster Conservation Day, Saturday. Everyone to be there between 8:00 and 8:30 to set up.

Submitted by,

Gwen Pelletier, Clerk