

Minutes, Brewster Ponds Coalition, September 1, 2016

Board members present: Tom Vautin, Karen Malkus-Benjamin, John Keith, Gwen Pelletier, Judy Pirani, Sue Searles, Konrad Schultz, Dawn Walnut.

Board president Tom Vautin opened the meeting by thanking Board members for their efforts through the summer, noting that it had been a busy one with a series of successful events.

He then welcomed new Board Members Judy Pirani and Sue Searles.

Minutes for August 4, 2016 board meeting and executive session were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Tom announced that Patricia Monahan had a conflict and was not able to attend this meeting. She had submitted a financial report for Board review. Copy attached. The report was accepted as amended to include under expenses the insurance expense of \$1558 also under the total column. The following expenses were approved unanimously for payment:

- Konrad Schultz \$447.36 for annual report
- Judy Pirani \$30 for Facebook posting expenses
- Silent Spring \$150 donation for guest speaker Dr. Laurel Schaidler, Annual Meeting
- Scott Nagle \$600 for design for Annual Report

Tom reported that he had a telephone conversation with Patricia as a follow-up to emails with questions and concerns about procedures, criteria for restricted funds, and the need for a Finance Committee. Reviewing those issues, Board members agreed on the following.

- Relative to the pending deposit of \$3,200 for the SAVE BLUEBERRY AND SOLS POND organization into their restricted account, these are the proceeds from the yard sale, not individual donations; therefore, they are not tax deductible donations from individuals so there are no letters due individuals.
- As we grow as an organization, it is appropriate to insure we have financial accountability. At this point we appear to have appropriate procedures and safeguards.
- In keeping with the By-Laws, we will appoint a Finance Committee.

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

a. Communications: Written report submitted by Konrad Schultz

Konrad announced that Jim Holland has joined the Communications Committee and has indicated that in the future he will provide design work for both the brochure and the annual report. Relative to the Annual Appeal, the committee has begun working on an approach including consideration of a different letter for people in our database who have already donated. Plans are to use the AmeriCorps Pond Kit project as partial focus for the annual appeal.

The Committee has also begun discussing how to bring in new members including how to reach new property owners. The discussion with the board included the fact that we can include material in the packets sent to new property owners by the Chamber of Commerce and also the possibility of creating a “welcome basket” that includes environmentally safe products to use in homes.

b. Membership. Written report submitted by Dawn Walnut.

In the transition, to taking over as chair of membership, Dawn reports that she is finding MailChimp a useful tool in keeping track of who attends specific events. She continues to refine the database and adds new members to it. She is beginning to make calls to people who indicated an interest in working with the committee.

c. Education. Written report submitted by Karen Malkus-Benjamin

In response to Karen’s request for feedback relative to Annual Meeting and speaker Dr. Laurel Schaider, Board members thought it had been very successful. We have all gotten positive comments. Karen pointed out that as we move forward, we need to keep emerging contaminants in mind relative to collecting data, treatment and remediation, and responding to development of town policies.

Karen will be following up with Kristin Andres re the possibility of a “Cape Wide Pond Summit”. For workshops/meetings this fall/winter/spring season, she is suggesting “pond walks” with an education component.

Karen also outlined first steps for the AmeriCorps member in developing pond kits. Sue Searles volunteered to join Karen as a member of the Education/Program Committee.

d. Current Projects

AmeriCorps Member: Gwen submitted a written report outlining the administrative steps taken to date in anticipation of the AmeriCorps member being assigned by the end of October. She reminded the Board that this is a shared position with Brewster DNR and Brewster Conservation Trust and that BCT is providing desk/office space and computer use for our project as well. In conversations with Hal Minis, the two discussed BPC sharing in the expenses and

reimbursing BCT in the range of \$100 to \$150 per month. Hal will be meeting with BCT Board the first week in September to discuss and make a decision. Our Board agreed by consensus on the \$100 to \$150 range. Gwen and Karen will work together in supervising the BCP project, with Karen focusing on the science side and Gwen with the administrative side.

Proposed Septic Regulations: John Keith reported that he is working on BPC comments for the Board of Health hearing on September 21. His goal is to have a draft, based on the recent BPC working session to discuss the proposed regs, ready by September 8. He anticipates 4 to 5 pages and will send it to members by email for email discussion. The goal is to have the comments in a written format to send to BoH prior to the Sept 21 meeting so they will have an opportunity to read. Tom, John, and Konrad plan to attend the BoH meeting and present BPC comments.

Response to Pond groups: John reported that he had a call from Gary Hatch to meet with him relative to a storm drain and storm water run-off down Tracy Lane into Seymour Pond. He plans to meet with him on Sept 2.

NEW TOPICS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Tom reported that John Keith had indicated he would like to step down from the VP position. John then explained that his travel schedule does not lend itself to being able to step in when necessary; he emphasized that he intends to continue to be an active member of the Board, providing technical reviews and being present whenever he can. Tom then reported that he had talked with Konrad Schultz about the position. Konrad pointed out that he is not on Cape from November until April. However, other Board members pointed out that he is still always present by Skype and participates in Board meetings as well as working by email.

On a motion by Gwen, seconded by John, the following officers were elected for the coming year:

Tom Vautin, President
Konrad Schultz, VP
Gwen Pelletier, Secretary
Patricia Monahan, Treasurer

STANDING COMMITTEES

By Consensus, the following committees were approved by the Board.

Executive Committee: Tom Vautin, Konrad Schultz, Gwen Pelletier,
Patricia Monahan, Dawn Walnut

Finance Committee: John Keith, Roger Norman, Patricia Monahan

Membership Committee: Dawn Walnut (new members to be recruited)

Education/Program Committee: Karen Malkus-Benjamin, Sue Searles

Communications Committee: Konrad Schultz, Judy Pirani, Sue Spencer,
Jim Holland

DEBRIEF SUMMER 2016 PROGRAMS

Tom began the discussion by pointing out that it had been a busy summer with mostly new events, that it had been a lot of work, and had been positive. He asked us to consider how we translate it into a sustainable series of programs. Our discussion covered individual events as well as a general discussion.

Conservation Day

Noted that many people were not from Brewster

Possibly scale down amount of effort we put into it

Get more members involved.

Definitely should have a presence

Fine tune HEALTHY POND game; make it smaller

Alternate years FLUSH YOUR KID and HEALTHY POND

Pond Summit

Successful event

Brewster Baptist Church, good location

Have earlier in the season

Got new people involved

Find ways to support efforts of neighborhood groups

Annual Meeting

Excellent idea to have in summer

Speaker on topic of interest

Next Annual meeting, be able to list actions this year

Bike Event

- Successful
- Talks engaged people
- Riders enjoyed
- Good to limit number
- Better planning for stops
- Change the route for next year

Food at events

- Combine educational and social time in events
- Consider potluck
- Fee for events with food if we provide

Year Round Planning

- Should develop a yearly calendar
- Some events can be annual
- Plan monthly walks around ponds with educational focus, what is in a pond
- Plan ACTIONS

- Use some of our funds for actions
- BPC could be the “driver” of actions with neighborhood groups
 - BPC provide technical leadership
 - Build a project team
 - Ponds may be ready: Owl, Seymour, Greenland, Myricks
- Advocacy with Town for stormwater hot spots caused by Town
- Education about septic regs when they are promulgated
- Education about Mill Ponds remediation by Town
- Support plant life studies
- Provide match for pond association effort
- Support Town in purchase of equipment such as macrophyte removal
- Art Fest. Could do a show of adult artist

Charging Fees

- Should consider
- Some people asked what the fee was/is
- Should always put out a jar/basket for donations

General Comments

- Personal contact helps get people to attend
- Different audiences summer and winter, still good attendance winter
- Summer a short window of opportunity, 2 to 3 months
- Winter events educational and social
- Create a priority list

THREE GOALS AS A RESULT OF ABOVE DISCUSSION

- Select a project
- Get membership more involved; motivate them to take action
- Create a calendar on Google account

OTHER

In response to an email from Sanford Zevon, complementing BPC on the Pond Summit, but also pointing out the growth of macrophytes on Elbow Pond and increases in algae blooms the last few years, John Keith said he would have a follow-up conversation with him.

Next Meeting, October 6. Both Tom Vautin and John Keith noted that they would not be present for that meeting.

Submitted by,

Gwen Pelletier, Secretary¹

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