

Brewster Ponds Coalition
Board of Directors Meeting
January 4th, 2024, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Attending: Mary Mauterstock , Susan Bridges , Tim Chase , Ron Essig , Jane Savio , Nancy Ortiz, Marcia Kielb , John Keith , Rob Condon , Marty Burke , Kevin Kearns

Meeting called to order: 6:02 PM

Standing Topics

1. Review and approve the minutes of the December 7th Board Meeting - Nancy - accepted unanimously.
2. Confirm and document email votes between Board meetings - none
3. Incoming mail (if any) - Rob/other. Susan mentioned a letter received from a BPC member expressing disappointment over BPC's perceived lack of support for affordable housing. This member wanted to rescind her BPC membership. Susan and Marty reached out to this individual explaining that BPC is in favor of affordable housing. There is also concern about septic issues in the construction of any additional housing especially on the Long Pond property with its proximity to town wells. BPC members have also questioned the town adding old houses to a new neighborhood treatment facility. Marty has had written and verbal conversations with other members who had the same question regarding our position on affordable housing.
Marty feels that we (BPC) should continue to rebut the potential plan to put housing on the Long Pond property parcel and give our factual reasoning.
The town needs a Comprehensive Water Management Plan prior to constructing more housing especially on locations close to water supplies..
Marty was asked by the Chair of the Town Water Quality Review committee to give an overview of the CMP and some pictures for the 2023 Town Report. Marty submitted pictures to the committee chair on 12/20/23.
Marty reached out to Ryan Burch, DNR, as a follow up to the need for Brewster pond GPS coordinates for the deep water points. Marty agreed to assist Ryan in this task in Spring 2024 per Ryan's request since Ryan's team has not been able to complete this task to date.
4. Treasurer's report - Rob
 - a. Financial statements - see Board folder - The end of year bank balance is \$210K. The balance including Blueberry and Elbow Ponds is \$250K. The cash balance has increased by \$25K from November due to donations. November expenses were \$800. YTD income is \$94,400 (budget is \$82K). YTD expenses are \$63K (budget is \$83K)
 - b. Approval of expenses and reimbursements (if any) - none
5. Misc. administrative matters - All
 - a. Master Image File - Jane has created a master image file for organizing **future** photos. Photos are currently filed in a haphazard manner, often with missing labels. Events has the biggest folder. Pond photos should identify the specific

pond. Individuals should be identified by name. Photos should be filed in the appropriate category.

Nancy mentioned Ryan Burch is requesting members report any unused boats and docks. The Board suggested this would be a good project for Citizen Scientists.

- b. Lower Cape TV fundraising request. Susan asked the Board if BPC should send a donation to Lower Cape TV now or at a future date. Lower Cape TV spends a lot of time recording BPC events such as the Pond Summit, Annual Meeting, speakers, etc. Editing is also time consuming. BPC compensates the Baptist and Cape Cod Bible Alliance churches for event usage of space therefore, donating to Lower Cape TV seems fair. The Board decided to make a donation after the Pond Summit.

New Business

1. Pond Management Report and Pond Studies - Ron and Tim attended the Natural Resource Advisory Commission meeting with Kim Crocker Pearson and other members. The pond management plans of four towns will be evaluated for strengths and weaknesses. These findings will be reported at the next meeting in early February. BPC questions have arisen such as who will compile the data? Who will write the plan? A survey of residents regarding their pond usage and what they value was proposed by Kim Pearson. John is concerned that the Natural Resource Advisory Commission's plan is too linear leading to an extended timeframe as opposed to organizing tasks to be completed concurrently. A demo project for ponds, for example, could be started simultaneously with doing surveys and drafting policies. The scheduling as currently planned could take three to four years to complete. The plan appears to be bureaucratic as opposed to organizing the task to complete in a more efficient time frame. Tim is concerned about the lack of an overarching plan for wastewater management. Septic systems were barely mentioned despite the fact that 80-85% of the pond pollution is caused by septic systems. Brewster is not proactive in septic issues compared to other Cape towns. Susan reminded the Board of the goal of passing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan at this Spring's town meeting.

Marty heard from Ryan Burch of the DNR, that the Ed Eichner report due to the town at year end is still being worked on at this time. Ryan recently supplied Mr. Eichner with the data that Eichner requested.

Current Priorities

1. Finalize 2024 Budget - Discussion ensued regarding the budget, especially the largest item; \$35K for the phosphorus study. Rob questioned the high amount. After discussion, John recommended budgeting \$25K for the phosphorus study and \$5K for the pond management study for a total of \$30K. The 2024 budget was approved by the Board.
2. Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan - Susan and Tim are investigating wastewater plans in three surrounding towns: Harwich, Dennis, and Orleans. These towns were chosen partially because a coordinated wastewater plan using abutting infrastructures may be in the mutual interest of Brewster and one or more of these towns. Also using plans already in place could save time and money. Susan and John will meet with Peter Lombardi. BPC believes working with the town to pass the

Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan cited for the Spring warrant is more effective than attempting to pass this article without town support.

3. Septic system/pond testing initiative for summer 2023 - status report. Per John, four houses were candidates for the phosphorus study. Two of the houses located on Upper Mill (Jacobs) and Schoolhouse Ponds (Dermody) were deemed not suitable, primarily due to access and drainage issues. The Smalls Pond candidate (LaFave) is ideal, however, the owner is hesitating to allow BPC to conduct the drilling. Concerns expressed were the time involved for the project which could interfere with summer activities, the machines needed, etc.

Marty and John discussed John putting together a response that Marty can deliver back to the candidate. John will work on this. A suggestion of having the owner speak to Linda Darbyshire to allay fears was presented. (Linda's property was used previously for the project.) The Lower Mill candidate is pleased to allow the project conducted on her property. Mark Nelson is involved in this project. The drilling should take place in March and April.

Per John, Brewster should not need a nitrogen removal Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Bass River watershed basin project due to Brewster's less than .3% (point 3%) of nitrogen loading into the watershed. There are two lots located in the watershed area, one of which is owned by the town. The Herring River watershed NOI is due by July followed by three years to get a permit. The town must adhere to the requirements of the permit.

The Board of Health is studying the effectiveness of Brewster IA septic systems for nitrogen removal. The standard of 19 milligrams per liter has not been met. In other words, the systems are not as robust as expected. The state is considering lowering the standard to 10 milligrams. How will these systems meet this more stringent standard if the current standards are not met? If not brought into compliance, the owner will be responsible. Here is another example of the need for Brewster to have a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.

4. Board recruitment. BPC still needs a volunteer to head the Pond Protection Pledge Program. Marty and Nancy's second three year term and Marcia's first three year term all end in August.
5. Marty brought up the Cape Cod Commission and APCC "Pond Monitoring Study" which parallels the Ed Eichner PALS summary report from a data perspective. The first year of this study was completed at the end of 2023. Marty has been in contact throughout the summer with T. Pasakarnis of CCC to receive the study data when completed. Tim forwarded to Marty the quant results thru August and will send the YE data later in January when it is expected to be completed. Marty mentioned that there are 3 Brewster ponds in this study. This was confirmed to the board by Marty after he reviewed the early reporting. The ponds are Cliff, Long and Slough.
6. Marty mentioned that the CCC/APCC study conducted with NOAA has been granted money for a continuation in 2024. Marty has outstanding questions for NOAA to respond to.

Committee Reports - Written/verbal reports as needed. Kevin brought up the status of Jane as a consultant as opposed to a paid employee. At the time of Jane's hiring a year ago, the Board agreed the status would be revisited in a year. Concern was that the IRS might question Jane's status. Many Board members cited personal examples of paid consultant positions in their careers. The Board concluded that Jane's status as a consultant posed no issues for BPC or government reporting. All agree Jane has done a fantastic job and BPC is lucky to have her aboard.

Tim is working on a project to identify BPC members who are on the Brewster town voting rolls. This list will be used to encourage these members to attend the Spring Town Meeting and vote in favor of the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan. Tim asked Marty to provide a listing of members from NEON that he could cross reference against the town voting roll. Marty provided that list to Tim on January 4.

Wrap-up

- Recap decisions, action items, and follow-up assignments
 - Susan and John will meet with Peter Lombardi regarding town support for the Wastewater plan cited for the Spring town warrant.
 - Tim will work on the BPC Brewster voter list.
 - The Smalls Pond house owner will need to be contacted regarding allowing the phosphorus project to take place on his property
- Next Board Meeting - February 1, 2024 - Google Meet
- March Board Meeting - March 7, 2024- Google Meet
- April Board Meeting - April 4, 2024

Meeting Adjourned: 7:52 PM

Submitted by:

Nancy Ortiz, Secretary