

**Brewster Ponds Coalition
Board of Directors Meeting
February 2, 2023 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Video Conference**

Present: Susan Bridges, Nancy Ortiz, [Mary Mauterstock](#), Marty Burke, Ron Essig, [Cameron Ferguson](#), [Kevin Kearns](#), John Keith, Rob Condon (arrived later)

Absent - Marcia Kielb

Meeting called to order: 6:01 PM

Standing Topics

1. Review and approve the minutes of the January 5th Board Meeting and January 19th Special Meeting - Nancy - approved unanimously
2. Confirm and document email votes between Board meetings - Title 5 Letter to the MA DEP - Nancy - approved unanimously
Susan requested Nancy to inform her when the Chubb insurance letter arrives.
3. Incoming mail (if any) - Rob/Nancy/others - none
4. Treasurer's report - Rob
 - a. Financial statements - see Board folder - January 31st BPC bank balance \$198K, Total balance \$236,591. January expenses \$1,064. Gavin Ellis's scholarship has not been credited to his tuition by the University of RI. Rob is following up to ensure this happens.
 - b. Approval of expenses and reimbursements (if any) - none
 - c. The Board reconfirmed its prior email ballot approval of the 2023 budget.
5. Misc. administrative matters - All
 - a. Website updates - Susan is requesting board members to review and update website documents. There are, for example, changes in committee reports that need to be updated.
 - b. The March 2nd board meeting has been postponed until March 8th due the absence of Susan and John.

New Business

1. BCT is requesting an interview from BPC in celebration of its 40th anniversary. John Keith has been a member for numerous years and could be a good candidate for an interview.
2. QR code research - Board unanimously approved accepting a free QR code allowing members cell phone access to Ripples, the Pond Guide, and other publications.
3. Walkers Pond alum application - A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the \$80K alum treatment slated for the spring town meeting warrant. Walker's Pond was previously a wetland but was flooded in the 1800's for agricultural purposes. The trees around the pond were razed and cows and sheeps grazed in the surrounding area creating more pollution. Sludge has accumulated at the bottom of this shallow pond over the years. The board is concerned about the value of dumping chemicals in such a shallow pond

especially since the effectiveness of alum treatment is questionable. Alum treatment has failed in Cliff Pond, among other sites. Furthermore, alum treatment addresses only phosphorus, not nitrogen. The 2014 Horsley Witten report recommended correcting the erosion on the Walker's Pond landing off Slough Road. Three years ago, BPC contributed toward the cost of the engineering study for remediation at the landing site and reminded the town numerous times that this project should be completed. The town has not responded to BPC's request. The estimated cost of this project is \$50K if completed by the town or \$150K if completed by an outside source. John believes the town may feel the remediation project will have a minor effect on improving water quality considering the gravity of the problem. John would like to hear more from Natural Resources before drawing any conclusions. Nancy Leland from Lim-Tex will likely render her opinion at the March 9th Natural Resources Advisory Commission meeting. It appears many on the BPC board are opposed to the treatment.

Marty commented that, in his opinion, all research over the last 20 years seems to lead to alum treatment. The treatment is ineffective. The pond morphology does not lead to this treatment as one that could work. The treatment gives a false picture of clarity that is short term (5-8 years) at best. Proof of its ineffectiveness is at Cliff, UMP, and Long ponds. The town has done nothing to remediate groundwater nutrient pollution at the Walkers' landings, around the pond, at the bog, etc. The treatment only addresses phosphorus and not nitrogen. Is the treatment ecologically sound for ponds? This question has not been answered. The mowing or harvesting of plants has been an abysmal failure and has impacted the ecosystem and has been partially responsible for clarity reduction. Ponds have life cycles of their own and mostly they cannot be altered. Why has the report not suggested other remediation alternatives? The Board will likely wait until after the BNRAC and Water Resources Task Force weigh in to take a position.

4. Strategy for supporting fall town warrant articles - alternative septic pilot program (\$300K) and water study (\$80K?). The board agrees it would be beneficial to support the fall warrant septic and water study articles and is planning numerous adult programs and newsletter articles to garner town wide support. Board members agree BPC needs to apply pressure to make sure the town does not once again postpone the articles for another year. Susan reminded the board that BPC has a strong voice with 800 members and that BCT is supportive as well. Kevin mentioned the positive impact of soliciting partnerships with other groups making it more difficult for the town to ignore BPC.
5. Meeting with Yale University. Susan, John, and Tom Vautin met with Fiona Kurylowicz from the Yale University Carbon Containment Lab, a nonprofit associated with the Yale School of the Environment which focuses on scaling novel climate solutions. Fiona works on a variety of projects that aim to mitigate anthropogenic methane emissions, including from disturbed wetlands. Fiona is hoping to learn more about BPC's pond remediation projects, and to propose a potential new funding mechanism for these projects via voluntary carbon offsets markets. John believes there is a low probability that BPC's association with the Yale lab will result in any benefit to BPC. Methane reduction is a slow, multi-year process.

Current Priorities

1. Eco Expo 2/21 11:00-3:00 at the Museum of Natural History. BPC will have a table display of Ripples, Pond Guides and coloring books for the kids. Marcia will appear as Shelly the turtle. Mary will be available from 10:30 until 1 and Nancy will take the 1-3:30 shift. Susan will help as well.

2. Natural Resources Advisory Commission - The BNRAC 2/9 meeting was canceled due to a town scheduling conflict. Nancy Leland from Lim-Tex will speak on Brewster pond water quality monitoring at the rescheduled 3/9 meeting. The BNRAC got a status report on the Pond Property Planning Committee for the former Sea Camps Long Pond property. Public outreach efforts are being planned for spring/summer 2023. These include a video, a traveling display and a guided canoe/kayak trip. Public parking is an issue at the Long Pond location
3. Strategic Planning Meeting followup items.
 - a. Consultant position - search status - Susan is going to post the position on INDEED. There is no charge for this posting.
 - b. Strategic Plan update - review and vote to accept draft of Executive Summary. The board needs to review and vote via Email within the next five days on the Strategic Plan that Kevin, Marcia, and Susan updated. Kevin and John agree that additional detail on the plan is not needed.
4. Committee Reports - Written/verbal reports as needed
 - a. Events - speaker suggestions
 1. Kristin Andres from APCC will present a native plant workshop on April 25th.
 2. Amy Van Hone from the Brewster Board of Health will be asked to give a talk on Title 5 septic systems and cyanobacteria. Susan and/or Marty will contact Amy. June is slated for this event. Nancy suggested providing a basic introduction to septic systems since there are many in the community who have limited knowledge of how a septic system works. Nancy would also like to address how the town tracks cesspools..
 3. Shirley Vautin and Cindy Doutrich from the pond education group will present an adult version of the pond ed program. The date to be confirmed.
 4. BPC will present a program(s) in the fall detailing the pilot septic program, other pond remediation strategies and water testing articles on the fall town warrant. BPC supports these articles.
 - b. Communications Committee - Konrad has put together a draft document outlining the 2023 pond guide. The due date to review the draft is April 1st. All are welcome to submit articles.
 - c. Rob Condon would like to add a financial pie chart to the BPC website. John will submit examples of pie charts from his non-profit organization to assist Rob.

Wrap-up

- Recap decisions, action items, and follow-up assignments:
Board decided to accept the free QR code.
Board should review the website document for updates and revisions.
Strategic plan should be voted on via Email within five days
Nancy will not be here for the March and April board meetings therefore a backup secretary will be needed.

Marty will be in Europe from Feb 14 to April 15 and will continue membership and citizen science transition work while away. He said he will try to attend board meetings.

Board should review the draft Pond Guide

Board needs to decide how best to communicate warrant articles to the voters.

Walker's Pond alum treatment will need to be discussed at the next board meeting.

The scholarship application will be posted online.

Recruitment of board members needs to be addressed.

- April meeting - April 6th, 2023 - Google Meet
- May meeting - May 4th, 2023 - Google Meet
- June meeting - June 1st, 2023 - Google Meet
- July meeting - July 6th, 2023 - Google Meet

Meeting adjourned: 7:57 PM

Submitted by: Nancy Ortiz, Secretary