

Minutes, Brewster Ponds Coalition, April 2, 2020

Board members present: Susan Bridges, Marty Burke, Rob Condon, Wayne Jenkins, Steve McKenna, Nancy Ortiz, Gwen Pelletier, Judy Pirani, Konrad Schultz, Sue Searles, Tom Vautin.

NOTE: Board meeting was conducted through telephone conference due to the “Stay at Home requirements as a result of Covid-19 Pandemic”.

Copy of referenced documents are available on request.

Standing Topics

- ❖ Minutes for March 5, 2020 were approved unanimously.
- ❖ Voted unanimously to accept Treasurer’s report.
- ❖ Confirmed votes made by email for following
 - Reimbursements
 - Marty Burke, \$68.50 postage; Sue Searles \$136.09 Pond Education
 - Cancellation of participation in Beautify Brewster Day
- ❖ Approved reimbursements:
 - Susan Bridges \$ 31.26. Table top easels and flyers for Volunteer Day
- ❖ Miscellaneous administrative matters
 - Approval of gift for Meredith Reilly for use of her dock for Aerosol sampling at Lower Mill Pond for 2019 season. Nancy authorized to purchase \$50 gift certificate for TRADER JOE’S
 - Agreed to send “thank you/congratulations” note to Bryan Horsley as he leaves APCC---for his organizing of analyzing samples for Cyanobacteria sampling and sharing information and to congratulate him for moving on to graduate school.
 - Konrad will deliver previously approved gift to Diao family for hosting social hour for BPC donors summer 2019.
 - Request from Treasurer Tom Vautin for following reports of hours
 - Board member hours: Average per week on Board Work (NOT including hours worked as volunteer on projects)
 - Hours for projects: Volunteer hours, including by Board members participation in projects.

Current Priorities

❖ Communications

- Covid 19 update: All activities cancelled through April. Email sent to membership
- Spring Newsletter. Released this week. Thank you Judy and crew. Judy pointed out that the newsletter had included article re recruiting additional volunteers for activities and especially for Board membership.
- Treasurer position. Board continued discussion re need to fill the Treasurer position currently filled by Tom Vautin whose term expires at annual meeting this year. Rob, who has served as assistant Treasurer this year, pointed out that he spends 6 months of the year in New Orleans and could not fill all the responsibilities required of a Treasurer. Nancy Ortiz indicated that she would be willing to take the position as Treasurer assistant if we are not able to recruit someone else. Tom indicated that there is a person with whom he has had conversations but has not committed. Nancy asked that Tom provide training for all people who may be considering Treasurer or assistant treasurer.
- Website Press Release. Konrad announced that he had prepared a press release announcing the new Web Site and sent it to printed press and radio stations.
- 2020 POND GUIDE: Susan Bridges announced that plans are on schedule for printing the guide before Memorial Day weekend. She and Konrad are working on getting it ready for publication. Still needed are pictures and requested members to provide new ones if they have them.

❖ Upcoming Events

- Brewster Conservation Day: Susan Bridges, Sue Searles, and Nancy Ortiz are coordinators.
 - Participate in monthly planning meetings
 - BPC has been asked to be the feature at the main tent
 - Need to have a speaker for two 20 minute periods, with 10 minutes for questions
 - Board discussed possibilities and agreed on asking a combination of speakers to focus on informational/education and an activity. Agreed to ask Karen-Malkus Benjamin to talk about research on cyanobacteria and BPC's role and John Keith to talk about the Elbow Pond project. Sue Searles will ask Karen. Steve McKenna will ask John Keith.
 - Children's activity: Sue Searles and Jan McGann are working on one. Two considerations at this point. One using blue plastic pools showing a healthy pond and an unhealthy one. Second consideration--using a Chart of a Board at which children will open flaps providing information about healthy and unhealthy ponds.

- he BIG FLUSH will be part of the BPC exhibit again this year but will be delivered and set up by AMERICORPS.

❖ **Other Working Groups Progress Reports**

- Website redesign: Konrad indicated the team is still working to optimize the search engine. That will include:
 - Using Google analytics to track activity
 - Links to Business supporters.
 - Adding keywords to each page
 - Additional comments/suggestions to Konrad, Judy, Marty
- Fundraising/Business partnerships: Susan Bridges shared that no contacts are being made at the moment because of the COVID-19 “Stay at home” orders.
 - Currently there are 6 partners for the POND GUIDE
 - Rob asked if restaurants were being contacted. Susan suggested that given current circumstances it would be difficult now.
 - Konrad and Susan shared that publication is on schedule for prior to Memorial Day.
 - Marty asked if newsletters were being sent to business already partners
 - Susan and Marty agreed to connect to verify that current partners and prospective partners are.
- Citizen Scientists: Marty and Gwen had submitted a written report
 - UNH has submitted the long awaited Cyanobacteria Aerosol report
 - Projected determined to be successful
 - ◆ Dr, Jim Haney was excited for two points
 - Analysis of the samples proved that there are aerosol toxins releasing from the ponds.
 - The quality of samples taken by Citizen Scientists are of a high quality.
 - ◆ Dr. Haney proposes delaying further aerosol sampling until 2021 to allow fine tuning and developing some of the genetic techniques .
 - Konrad expressed concern that the report did not appear to quantify the results. Marty and Gwen explained that the full report does that; the board has not yet been given the full report, only a summary and recommendations for next year. They explained that the final version of the report is still to be released. Dr. Haney submitted a first version, which was reviewed by Gwen and Marty

and amended with suggestions from them. Dr. Haney then asked that the participants who took the samples also give him comments and feedback on the testing equipment with recommendations for improvements/changes. We are waiting for that response. Dr. Haney will then include that in the final report which will then be released and available for publication.

- Rob expressed concern that skipping a year of sampling would interfere with seeing trends. He asked if it would be possible for BPC to take samples and freeze them for later testing. Gwen and Marty replied that research focusing on cyanobacteria in ponds is a project of UNH and BPC's participation is to test whether "Citizen Scientist" can take adequate samples to support the research. BPC's interest is also in supporting research about the health of our ponds. The decision to skip a year is up to UNH.
- Further Board discussion included the following:
 - ◆ Sharing with the Town--DNR and Health Departments
 - ◆ When Final report is available, there should be a major communication
 - ◆ Final report needs to be put in "layman's" language
- Cyanobacteria Water Sampling Project
 - Marty and Gwen reported that, at the moment, plans for the pond water testing cyanobacteria program is on hold.
 - In a conversation with Kevin Johnson, the newly appointed APCC manager of the testing program, APCC's taking of samples is on hold. APCC is tentatively considering having only staff and summer interns taking pond samples this summer, out of health and safety concerns.
 - Marty and Gwen have prepared a notice that will be sent, by the end of this week, to previous Citizen Science pond samplers, informing them that summer plans are on hold, thanking them for previous efforts and for volunteering once again.
 - Additional Board discussion noted:
 - ◆ APCC staff and interns will be limited in how much they can do, compared to BPC testing and other Town and Pond Associations involved in previous years.
 - ◆ If the Covoid-19 situation improves, it could be possible to jump in mid-season.

❖ Outreach, Pond Projects, and Partnerships

- Walkers Pond: Steve reported that he had conversations with Chris Miller, DNR re work at Walker's Pond to address stormwater runoff issues. This is an issue that is a part of the 2014 Horsley Witten studies about water quality in the Mill Ponds---Walker, Upper Mill, Lower Mill. In a wide ranging conversation, the Board considered/discussed the following points:
 - Steve met with Chris and Engineer John O'Reilly
 - O'Reilly has submitted an engineering proposal to address the issue at the Walker's Pond Landing on Slough Road. Cost of \$3,950.
 - Question of whether BPC would be interested in participating and providing funds for the cost of the engineering and/or cost of materials.
 - Some work may be of a nature that can be done by Town's DPW staff
 - Design will address runoff from ramp to include changing the pitch of the ramp, French drains, structures to address overflow, plantings to address erosion on the hill.
 - BPC raised concerns with Chris/DNR re plans for alum treatment in Upper Mill Pond without first or also addressing issues in Walker Pond.
 - There are not many options for addressing issues because of steep bank at the landing.
 - We budgeted \$3,000 for work at Walker's Pond
 - The Board voted unanimously to contribute ½ of the engineering costs for Walkers Pond up to \$2,000. Steve will share info with Chris. He was also asked to tell Chris that there is a possibility the BPC could make this a special project and have a special fund raising effort to help pay the cost of materials.
- Slough Road property. Continuing a discussion from the February meeting, Steve asked the Board to consider the opportunity raised by Brewster Conservation Trust for BCP to contribute to land abutting Slough Pond that BCT has an opportunity to purchase for \$25,000.
 - The Board agreed that to do so would be a good opportunity for us to work with BCT since the property abuts Slough Pond.
 - On a unanimous vote the Board decided to contribute \$2,000 to the purchase of the property, to be taken from our reserve funds or to be obtained by a special fund raising appeal. Efforts for an appeal to be discussed at a future meeting

➤ Natural Resources Advisory Committee.

The Select Board has created the above named committee and invited BPC to have a representative on the Committee. At his agreement to serve on the committee, Steve McKenna was elected unanimously.

Next Board Meeting: May 7, 2020. Brewster Police Dept. Community Room

June Board Meeting: June 4, 2020. Brewster Police Dept. Community Room

Submitted by.,
Gwen Pelletier, Secretary