

## **MINUTES, BREWSTER PONDS COALITION, DECEMBER 3, 2020**

Virtual meeting by Google Meet: Board Members Present: Mary Mauterstock, Konrad Schultz, Cameron Ferguson, Nancy Ortiz, Wayne Jenkins, Gwen Pelletier, Bruce Swiren, Marty Burke, Rob Condon

(Konrad Schultz facilitated meeting as Susan Bridges was in CA)

Meeting started: 6 PM

### **Standing Topics**

1. Minutes for the November 5th 2020 Board meeting approved.
2. There were no Email votes to confirm and document.
3. No incoming mail. Gwen mentioned the letter from the state allowing BPC to solicit non-profit funds is provided by the Secretary of State's Office after receipt of the Annual Report.
4. Treasurer's Report:

Refer to reports in the shared drive Financial folder. Rob mentioned over \$7K expenses was for Ripples publication and distribution. Donations of \$12K were high due to annual appeal. Rob is pleased to report that the treasury functions are working well. The new reimbursement policy can be found in the financial reports. If the anticipated spending is outside of the approved budget this spending must be approved by the Board if over \$200. If under \$200 the unplanned spending is authorized by the Committee Head. Rob suggested the board members review the reimbursement policy before discussing.

5. Miscellaneous Administrative Matters.

The Federal IRS claimed in October that BPC failed to submit the required Form 990. BPC notified the IRS that it did indeed submit said form. The IRS has not yet responded to BPC's notification. The Federal IRS has made this error in previous years according to Tom Vautin.

### **Current Priorities**

#### **1. 2021 Budget Plan**

Konrad asked Rob to send the budget to the board for approval. Rob will need assistance from the board to revise the budget due to the COVID impact. Discussion ensued regarding whether budget approval must be completed prior to year end. The board agreed to approve the budget via Email or wait until January to approve..

## 2. 2021 Operating Plan

Per Konrad, Susan wants the Operating Plan to be approved by each board member on their own.

## 3. Committee Reports - Written/verbal reports as needed.

**Communications:** Konrad is pleased to announce that Sara McCabe has agreed to do website work. Sara and Amy Darbyshire both do excellent communications work. Pam Rogers has also joined the Communications team. Pam has a degree in Communications and is looking for nonprofit work. Gwen complimented Konrad on his success in building the Communications team. The deadline for articles is 12/17. Marty is working with Konrad and the Communications Team on annual appeal Email blasts.

**Pond Education:** Nancy gave an update on Pond Books. (Susan S. was not at the meeting, therefore the Puppet Show and Pond Lessons were not discussed.) The Pond Book group met Susan Baur (turtle lady) at Seymour Pond on 11/28 to record two book readings. Marcia Kielb was dressed in the turtle costume for the introduction and conclusion. Nauset High School senior Bennett Hartley recorded the video and will also edit. Nancy prefers to see the finished product prior to creating the next recording. Sally Bullard has contacted Brewster Bookstore employee Judy Beams about reading the next books at the bookstore. Hopefully the results of the Seymour Pond video will be viewed prior to the bookstore recording.

**Membership:** See folder for detailed report. Marty announced the \$19K of donations is ahead of the same time last year. He is hoping to hit \$50K for 2020-21 donations. There are up to 145 donors at this point. Mary has been "jumping into" both NEON and Mailchimp. Mary will help with donor calls. Rob, Marty, and Konrad are installed at the highest authority in NEON. Mary and Cameron are added as additional users. Subscriber Email fatigue was discussed. There were 30 members who unsubscribed to Emails, most occurring in the summer. (Some of those members have left the area.) Sending less Emails, especially in the summer was suggested. Konrad suggested different levels for subscribing. Eight out of ten subscribers don't give a reason when unsubscribing. All three Seymour Pond Associations have joined and contributed to BPC. A new homeowner welcome kit was discussed. Gwen mentioned the Chamber of Commerce sends kits with copies of Ripples. Konrad mentioned the Communications team will need to know how to use both NEON and Mailchimp. BPC is hoping to move exclusively to NEON as a database so there will be no duplication. Tom Vautin has offered to train the Communications team in both programs.. Marty mentioned that Mailchimp is good for graphic Email campaigns which is the main reason for its continued use. NEON should be configured to fuel the Email list to Mailchimp. All data in Mailchimp is in NEON. Marty has copies of the 2021 Ripples. 2020 copies will be recycled.

**Fundraising and Development:** Susan B. has been working on fundraising while in CA. Konrad continues to research grantors. The Cape Cod Foundation has been focusing on COVID related issues such as food and housing so grants have temporarily been set aside. Citizen Scientist grants have a great potential per Konrad especially since BPC is currently funding studies. When soliciting grants, one must take into consideration the long timeframe from letter of interest to actually obtaining the grant. Planning ahead is key to obtaining grants..

**Citizen Scientist:** See folder for detailed report. Eight ponds were tested this past summer on a regular rotation. Six extra ponds were tested per community request. One hundred forty six tests were completed for the season. Cliff, Walkers and Lower Mill were tested due to October blooms. Nancy Leland conducted eighteen food web tests at Lower Mill and Elbow Ponds. Nancy Leland needs to complete the food web report for the first quarter newsletter. Lower Cape TV will interview Marty the week of December 7th on the aerosol study. BPC is planning to increase water testing from eight to fifteen ponds in rotation in 2021. Aerosol testing will most likely proceed as well in 2021 with UNH. BPC will contribute funds and volunteers for the aerosol study in the Mill Ponds complex. The three programs (water, aerosol, and food web) will work together. Testing will run from mid May to September. The food web study will go forward funded by APCC (not BPC). Dr Haney (UNH) will reinstate the aerosol program. Final projects and costs will be determined during the winter.

**Pond Outreach:** Bruce spoke directly to five associations. He was unable to reach six associations but left voicemails. In addition he is sending Emails hoping he will be able to reach everyone. He is hoping to find out exactly who is available. The next step is reaching out individually to see how BPC can help the associations to meet their goals. COVID has made it difficult to approach the associations. There is not much going on now. Gwen mentioned the importance of creating relationships so when “the world opens up again” BPC is “ready to go.”

**Volunteer Committee:** Cameron suggested a board member “brainstorm” to create a list of volunteer projects. Members will check the volunteer box(es) indicating interest(s). (i.e. maintaining trails, education, etc.). NEON lists interests and individual skill sets. Also important is the time of day needed for the volunteer job and volunteer availability.. A suggestion is to get the projects lined up and then recruit volunteers. Mary suggested a volunteer appreciation event. A volunteer appreciation day in September or October was suggested.

**Events:** Per Wayne, planning for the first event to be held in April will start next month. The April Pond Summit and Volunteer Fair will be combined. One topic will be the food web study with input from Dr. Haney. The other topic will be the Lower Mill Erosion project presented by Rob and Nancy O. This will most likely all be done virtually.

#### 4. Outreach, Pond Projects & Partnerships

Thank you Cameron for volunteering to represent BPC at the Natural Resource commission.

### **Wrap up**

#### **Recap decisions, action items, and follow-up assignments.**

Cameron to create list of volunteer opportunities and give feedback.

Gwen suggested reviewing budget at the January meeting as has been done in previous years.

Rob to send trial budget to board members in advance.

**Next Board Meeting** - January 7, 2021 - Google Meet

**February Board Meeting** - February 4, 2021 - Google Meet

Meeting

Adjourned 7:20 PM

Submitted by Nancy W. Ortiz, Clerk