

## **MINUTES, BREWSTER PONDS COALITION, OCTOBER 1, 2020**

Virtual meeting by Google Meet: Board Members Present: Susan Bridges, Mary Mauterstock, Konrad Schultz, Bruce Swiren, Cameron Ferguson, Susan Searles, Marty Burke, Rob Condon, Nancy Ortiz, Wayne Jenkins Also present: Lynn Conover, Amy Darbyshire

Meeting started: 6 PM

### **Standing Topics**

1. Minutes for the September 3rd Board meeting approved.
2. Minutes for the September 19th Strategy meeting approved.
3. No Email votes between Board meetings.
4. No incoming mail.
5. Treasurer's Report:

Rob suggested the board review the reports prior to the meeting, especially the financial highlights. Board agrees highlights are very helpful. Documents and details are in the shared drive. BPC balance including Blueberry and Elbow pond accounts is currently \$102,291. Expenses have been low due to Covid. \$42,750 was budgeted and only \$15,071 has been used to date. Cameron asked why BPC paid the town \$2K for Elbow Pond vegetation removal. (Covers Ryan Burch's time and use of harvester.) Explained that Elbow is a private pond and therefore not the responsibility of the town and Friends of Elbow Pond donations pay for the project.

Reimbursement policy procedure: Rob suggests \$200 threshold. Any board member purchase under \$200 does not need authorization. Approved contracts do not need authorization. Discussion ensued regarding committee budgets. Do budgeted expenses over \$200 need to be approved? Each committee head creates a budget which the board approves. No authorization is needed for expenditures within the committee budget. Rob will make the decision if expenditure is reasonable.

Rob will rewrite the policy to include items discussed.

6. Miscellaneous Administrative Matters. Gwen completed the state filing form due November 1st. Rob has the form and wrote the \$15 check. Nancy will complete the form next year.

### **Current Priorities**

1. **Committee & Action Plans**

**Pond Association Outreach:** Bruce visited town offices to inquire about a list of pond associations. Apparently the town does not have this information, however, the town does have a list of pond front owners which BPC has already obtained. Konrad mentioned that a few pond associations have non-profit status and suggested changing the name of Pond Associations to Pond Neighborhoods and Associations. Pond front and pond view properties are two distinctions per the town. Marty suggested any letter addressed to pond associations might be more effective if BPC is simply introduced as opposed to sending a long list of associations. Marty has already met with a lot of pond associations individually and believes personal work on an individual scale might be more effective as most people don't take the time to read a long letter. Konrad encourages board members to network pond residents. Bruce is trying to develop a working group between ponds with the belief that a larger concerted effort is more effective than individual efforts. Rob offered his help as an "underling".

**Membership:** Per Marty, membership's vision is to grow base between 5 and 10% per year in both "bodies" and donations. He believes it important to get to know the individual members and build long term relationships. Why did they join? What are their interests? Relations between outside organizations such as the National Seashore and various town boards are also important. Membership objectives are to build sustainable relationships and maintain accurate records via Mailchimp and NEON. There is a two way marketing callout program in the first week of January. Members and subscribers are called and thanked personally for their donations or solicited for their donations. Marty and Mary plan to take tutorial courses in NEON and Mailchimp. Marty mentioned a 55-65% membership retention rate. An action plan is to have more free member events such as kayaking, cycling, walking, "Suping". Continue to have a "Members Corner" in each newsletter and Ripples geared at member interest.

**Development and Fundraising:** There is still no chair for this committee. Konrad and Susan B. met with Mark Robinson of the Compact of Cape Cod re: grants. Every grant goes through Mark Robinson. There are two sources of grant revenue: what you can count on and what you can't count on. BPC board decided not to have a grant writing service. Susan B. is pursuing business partners. Event planning creates a lot of work for Communications which is already overworked. The Evening Glow Paddle was a huge success. Susan B. has arranged to continue the partnership next year with Ryan Burch. Susan B. suggested exploring retail opportunities such as selling holiday cards with pictures of ponds online.

**Operating Plan and Budget:** Postponed until November board meeting. Rob is asking for each committee to submit a budget by month.

## 2. Committee Reports

**Communications:** Konrad thanked Lynn, Amy, and Sara for their invaluable contributions to the Newsletter and Ripples. Bill Pomeroy and Charlie Safran have volunteered to help with photography. There were three main events in the past month: the eco paddle, the native plant workshops, and the newsletter. Ripples will be submitted for publishing next week. All board members agreed that the Fall newsletter was well done.

**Pond Education:** Susan S. is pleased with the good group of volunteers and has had three meetings already. There was a 9/25 leadership meeting with Jan McGann, Susan S., and Nancy. Jan continues in her role as lead educator. Susan S and Nancy will act as board oversight. Susan S organized a group to rewrite the puppet show gearing toward older kids. Nancy will act as liaison to the Brewster Bookstore. Videotaping volunteers reading books was discussed. Jan and Susan S. will work with the public schools regarding producing virtual lessons. Contact has been made with Susan Baur, author, who is interested in providing a virtual presentation for grammar school students on ponds and turtles who live there through use of her published books. Susan S. organized a video recording instruction program for pond education volunteers to be given by Konrad. There was a discussion regarding adding adult education programs. Susan B. mentioned there was already a lot of You Tube programs on the BPC website geared toward adults.

**Events:** Wayne went over the event schedule. Details can be viewed in the 10/1 board meeting folder.

**Volunteer Committee:** Cameron created a volunteer questionnaire with the goal of adding information to the member database.

**Citizen Scientist:** Marty submitted a detailed pond testing report which can be viewed in the 10/1 board meeting folder. Eight ponds were initially tested this past summer with six additional ponds for a total of fourteen ponds. College student Marina Brooks has started volunteering in the CS program sampling pond water in Brewster. Susan B is hoping Marina will be interested in researching floating gardens as a possible remediation project for Walkers Pond. Seymour Pond and Rosemary Tracy Associations have joined BPC. The Food Web testing will continue through October. Nancy Leland reported toxins discovered in juvenile alewife tissue. Fish are eating the cyanobacteria found in small plankton and then swimming to the ocean. Lim-tex released the 2019 Lower Mill Pond results which can be found in the Scientific Research Magazine.

**Pond Outreach:** See pond associations outreach above.

**Membership:** See membership above and report in October board meeting folder.

**Fundraising/Development:** See Development and Fundraising above.

### **3. Outreach, Pond Projects & Partnerships**

Board voted to use the \$250 Crocker plant credit for the Lower Mill Pond Erosion Project.

Mary reported that John Keith, with the help of BPC members and Elbow Pond neighbors finished the 3rd harvesting campaign for Elbow Pond. The harvested vegetation was transported to the dump for composting. Harvesting may continue next spring based upon approval from the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Other ponds can use Elbow Pond's example. It's a win-win situation for all. Elbow Pond is grateful for John Keith's guidance and assistance.

Next Board Meeting - November 5, 2020 - Google Meet

December Board Meeting - December 3, 2020 - Google Meet

Meeting Adjourned 8 PM

Submitted by Nancy W. Ortiz, Clerk