

AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT
Board of Directors Regular Meeting
MINUTES

April 18, 2018 7:00 P.M.

ALA Clubhouse, 16 Wood Acres Road, Amston, CT 06231

www.amstonlake.org

A. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 P.M.

B. Roll Call of Officers and Directors:

M. Paul, F. Hoisl, A. Connor, L. Bowen, A. Stec, B. Pelegano

C. Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners:

Laurel Hennebury, 458 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon

1. The water in the cove where she lives gets really low in the summer – could the Board look at adjusting the weir boards? 2. There are currently a tremendous amount of leaves in the southeast cove. 3. As a former BOD member, she knows how much work the Board does, and believes it's too much for a volunteer board to manage. Could we consider hiring a maintenance company or lake manager?

Maureen Dagon, 144 Deepwood Drive, Amston

1. Says she looked at the ROWs and beaches after this latest heavy rainstorm and saw only minor erosion on the ROWs. The plunge pools are full, but working, and last year at this time, they didn't look as good. 2. There is still a pile of debris from last summer (old floats, noodles, etc) at Main beach that needs to be picked up. 3. She would like the Board to consider adding one more boat rack to the budget – they are already filling up and the rack at Oakland is almost full. 4. The Elsmere ROW has two boats parked on the waterfront, blocking other residents from launching their boats. She believes there is a similar situation at Spafford ROW. Perhaps we should send an email blast reminding residents to not block the waterfront?

Joyce Clark, 6 Deepwood Drive, Lebanon

She would like to know why the volunteer waiver form is on the agenda as new business, when it's been discussed several times already.

Jerry Horan, 7 Rondaly Road, Amston

1. He has been told by a relative who is a lake scientist that our plunge pools are very useful, but barley straw could be added to them to further filter the stormwater. The straw bales could also be used to add filtration to any stream coming in, or catch basins. 2. Is the town of Hebron maintaining the two vortech units and has anyone ever serviced them?. The Board is only aware of the one unit near the corner of Wood Acres Road and the town does service it.

Jeff Arpin, 225 Deepwood Drive, Amston

Regarding the vortech unit, he has spoken to a neighbor who says the town does clean it out and has seen no sand.

Bob Blackmore, 5 Rondaly Road, Amston

1. Regarding Laurel's earlier comment about the water level dropping in summer: Dr. Knoecklein has stated that we will need to monitor the water level more closely now that the Lebanon side has connected to sewers. 2. He suggested that an email blast be sent out reminding people to move their vehicles after they launch their boats at Main beach. People are blocking the way for others to launch.

D. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

A. Stec moved to approve the March 28, 2018 minutes, seconded by A. Connor. All approved.

E. Receive President's Report:

Atty Adam Cohen is doing a title search on the Cove Road property that a resident is donating. He will then develop transfer paperwork, which should be completed before the annual meeting.

F. Receive Treasurer's Report:

The FYE 19 proposed budget was discussed. 1. The Lake Health Committee is recommending to take a pro-active stance and budget for two new plunge pools. The committee is taking steps to understand the root cause of the problems. 2. F. Hoisl and B. Pelegano walked the lake with Envirodredge, a company that does suction dredging (vs. mechanical). They are also gathering information from two other companies that do this type of work. These companies all have their own lake scientists, too, which would be an additional benefit. Would like to put a project request for lake remediation, but at this point it just might be for the investigative part of it. However, whatever the total dollar amount is projected to be should be put in the budget. ACTION: F. Hoisl will put together a slide for projects proposal. 3. Next year's budget will have the same level of funding for Lebanon roads, and we will keep a \$5K surplus in the Roads fund as a cushion in case we have a bad winter. 4. Overall, there will be an increase in the operating budget to \$147,652, a decrease in the projects budget to \$14,000, and no change to the Lebanon Roads budget at \$35,000.

G. Receive Tax Collector's Report:

1. The Tax Collector's report will be posted on the website. 2. March was a slow month for collections, but once the combination late notice and Notice of Intent to Lien were sent out at the beginning of April, a flurry of activity (phone calls and deposits) resulted. 3. Several residents requested that we send delinquent notices more often, as reminders, but E. Curtin commented that we shouldn't have to pay to send additional reminder notices. 4. April 30th is the deadline for payment, and after that the District will be filing liens. 5. The town grand lists have been finalized and E. Curtin will start making adjustments so she can calculate the mill rate for the new fiscal year. 6. E. Curtin spoke to Atty Cohen regarding the approximately \$20K in combined real estate taxes the District pays to Hebron and Lebanon. Municipalities are normally exempt from taxes, and they are exploring the possibility of having the taxes waived, which would result in a significant savings to the District.

H. Receive Clerk's Report:

1. Email blasts since last meeting: one sent out announcing the boat dock lottery on 4/3, another sent on 4/12 informing people of the need for new Board members at the

annual meeting, another sent 4/17 notifying residents that there will be people sampling lake water during rainstorms. Another will probably go out next week announcing the dates of the lake and boat pass distribution. 2. F. Hoisl, A. Connor and L. Bowen went to the Douglas library to go over logistics for the upcoming annual meeting. A second meeting will be scheduled at the library to do a dry run with the library's equipment before the meeting on May 19.

I. Presentation of Correspondence:

1. L. Bowen received an email from a resident wondering when they could pick up their lake passes. Another resident responded to the "Spring Reminders" email and wanted to remind residents not to put their leaves in the lake. That message will be conveyed in a fall email blast. Another resident wanted to know why dogs aren't allowed on the beaches and ROWs after April 1, and noted that a few signs state the date as May 1. The ordinances, which take precedence, state the date as April 1. 2. A. Connor received an extension of the mowing contract through September 30, 2018 from Baldi Landscaping. 3. M. Paul received an email from a resident of Amston (but not of the ALD) who wondered if they could use the lake. 4. M. Paul was contacted by a mortgage company doing an audit, with questions about whether or not ALD has HOA (homeowner's association) dues.

J. Consider and Act Upon Standing and Special Committees' Reports:

1. Lake health: 1. During the heavy rain of April 16, volunteers collected 17 water samples around the lake. Water sampling will be one of our bigger lake health expenses. 2. F. Hoisl heard from resident Al Fichtel about the Amston Lake fish surveys done by the DEEP in 2008, 2013, and 2016. One item of note was that the Amston Lake Bluegill population was a little more than double the average of the state as a whole. This will be more information to pass along to Dr. Knoecklein to help get a clearer picture of lake health. 3. F. Hoisl was approached by a resident who believes that the catch basin at Lollipop was not installed properly.
2. Lebanon roads: 1. A. Stec spoke to Jay Tuttle from Lebanon Public Works, who said that catch basins are cleaned every year (per DEEP requirements), and will get started around the end of April. 2. He further stated that the town cleans the culverts every 2-3 years, and that we can call and request that they clean a full culvert out at any time. 3. Regarding the resident comment about the catch basin at Lollipop – there are two private roads that are potentially contributing to the drain filling up faster (Woodland and Island Beach), and we need to look at them to see if there is anything we can do to prevent additional sediments from finding their way into that catch basin. 4. Some of the documented culverts and catch basins can't be found, possibly due to plant overgrowth. A. Stec will call Public Works again in early May to schedule a walk through of all public culverts and catch basins. M. Paul suggested that if Lebanon agrees to improve the catch basins, perhaps the ALD can help defray the costs as we did in Hebron. 5. A. Stec reported that she will be getting an updated quote for the work on the three roads (Ledge, Ryan Terrace Ext, and Manion) that weren't done in the fall. The original quote was \$5100. She will also get a quote for Kelly's Corner, W. Woodland, and Island Beach. The work wouldn't commence until after the last frost, and any overage would have to go to the next fiscal year's budget. 6. Baldi

Landscaping will soon start on the culvert debris removal, which will be the culmination of the current contract. She would like to extend the contract to include this fall. 7. After this year, we will go out to bid for mowing and culverts contracts, and it was suggested that we should do multi-year contracts. 8. Jeff Arpin recommended that we ask the town of Lebanon to clear out the catch basins and culverts in the lake areas first (before the other roads in town) because of their proximity to the water and the detrimental effects of stormwater runoff. 9. We've had 64 inches of snow so far this season.

3. Security, Boats: 1. B. Pelegano says the budget for security this summer will total \$32,688.16, including \$1980 for opening and closing the gates daily at Main and Lollipop beaches. 2. There are still a few boats that were left on the beaches over the winter. 3. B. Pelegano rescued a rogue pontoon boat that escaped its mooring over the weekend, and once he recovered from near-hypothermia, he contacted the owners.
4. Communications: The newsletter is almost ready to send to the designer.
5. Dam/ Duck pond: 1. Nothing new to report on the dam – the weir boards are in place and the lake is full. 2. We need to replace the fence to keep people off the duck pond dam and A. Connor has gotten a quote from a handyman. For a 4' high, 8' long cedar fence, the price would be approximately \$4-600, including materials and installation. B. Pelegano will look into the job and possibly complete it himself. A. Connor believes the District could benefit by having a competent handyman to do some other small jobs around the lake.
6. Beaches and ROWs: 1. The distribution dates for beach, boat and parking passes have been finalized, and the ALA has been notified that we will be using the clubhouse on those dates. The passes and stickers have been ordered and A. Stec will be meeting with the volunteers to go over the distribution process.
7. Finance, docks & rentals: 1. The monthly financials were briefly discussed and have been posted to the website. 2. A. Connor met with Drew Gibson and Cliff Boyce from the ALA to get their financials in support of the ALD contribution to the ALA. We will continue to monitor that the ALD's \$8K contribution to the ALA is used to support the clubhouse. 3. The new ramp for the dock at Main beach was delivered on Tuesday, but it's been too cold to install it. 4. Dock rental fees were raised 10% this year, after several years of no increases. We will send another email blast soon to remind people of the lottery deadline, April 24. 5. The Finance Committee will not meet again until after the annual meeting.
8. Calendar & tasks:
The task lists for April and May were reviewed and discussed. 1. M. Paul will contact Carl Wool to find out where the buoys that mark the “no boat” zone at Main beach are. 2. Maureen Dagon will contact Mike Dagon about poison ivy spraying this year. The spray is used every spring and is lake “friendly”. 3. A. Connor will move forward after tax season to hire an accounting firm to do another year-end review. 4. The proposed budget will be posted on the website in early May.

K. Old Business - Discussion and Possible Action:

1. M. Paul will inform the Cove Road land donors that they must pay their ALD taxes by the end of April.
2. A. Connor, in speaking for the Finance Committee, stated that before it is proposed to put money in the budget for a lake caretaker, we need to have a full complement of Board members, to see what tasks can be done by the Board. Then they could put a job description together, based on the tasks remaining. It's also possible that the District could hire a lake management company. ACTION: M. Paul will ask Atty Cohen for names of lake management companies that he is familiar with, to start gathering information.
3. The draft of the annual meeting presentation will be sent out to the BOD members again for comments. Presentation should be 99% complete by April 25th.
4. The status of the Welcome packet for new residents: needs a few minor things to bring it up to date. B. Pelegano will email L. Bowen to get final edits on the letter. ACTION: M. Paul will check with Ray DeCormier and L. Bowen will check with our newsletter designer to find out who has the originals of the Amston Lake handbook for editing and re-printing. It was suggested that a new Board member could take over the task of coordinating and delivering these packets.

L. New Business - Discussion and Possible Action:

1. A. Connor distributed a draft volunteer liability waiver to the Directors. M. Paul will send this draft to Atty Cohen for his comments.
2. We have been using the services of a Board member as our webmaster, without compensation. B. Pelegano made a motion to pay the webmaster \$80 per month (which is what we paid the former webmaster), for a total of \$780 per year, and A. Connor seconded. Discussion ensued, and in lieu of a fee for services, it was pointed out that according to the by-laws, a Director "shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with their Board duties". B. Pelegano amended the motion to allocate up to \$80 per month to reimburse A. Stec for her internet expenses. F. Hoisl seconded, A. Stec abstained, and the motion passed. A. Stec will submit the bill for her internet services for reimbursement.

M. Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting:

1. Nothing to add at this time.

N. Adjournment:

A. Stec moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:04 PM. Seconded by B. Pelegano, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by
Liz Bowen, Clerk
Amston Lake District

Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.