

AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2020 7:00 P.M.

Remote meeting via Zoom

www.amstonlake.org

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

B. Roll Call of Officers and Directors

Present: F. Hoisl, A. Connor, L. Bowen, T. Nixon, B. Ryan, A. Fichtel, T. LaMontagne, J. Greenfield. Absent: B. Pelegano.

C. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the January 20, 2021 meeting (A. Connor/J. Greenfield) passed unanimously.

D. Presentation of Correspondence

F. Hoisl wrote to the owners at 190 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon to inform them that the BOD will not be holding a hearing on their use of a benthic mat and the matter is now closed. The letter reiterated that residents must request permission from the BOD to install anything in District waters.

E. Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action

Tree Management program: J. Greenfield reported that he had received a proposal from one arborist and is expecting a second at the end of the week. He's hoping to be able to discuss the proposals in executive session at the March BOD meeting. He has asked the arborists for recommendations for any immediate action, as well as a longer-term plan, for the two beaches, the ROWs, and the Berglund property across from Main beach.

F. Task List and Action Items

1. F. Hoisl went over the task list, which is now on the website under "District Meetings and Schedule." He asked the committee chairs to submit their initial budgets by the end of February, and briefly talked about grass contracts, input for the newsletter, barley straw installation, the need for volunteers for water sampling, the dock lottery, and upcoming email blasts.

G. Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners

John Matra, 265 Deepwood Dr, Hebron. He asked if the board had given any more thought to this year's lake pass distribution. T. LaMontagne said that it would be discussed later in the meeting under Security and Boats.

Jeff Arpin, 225 Deepwood Drive, Hebron. As a member of the Lake Health Committee, he sent out detailed requests for proposals from Aquatic Ecosystem Research (AER) and Phoenix Labs. He did a lake writeup report and sent it to F. Hoisl for review before publishing. The committee received the final plant survey and yearly report from AER.

H. Receive President's Report

1. F. Hoisl believes that we won't be able to hold an in-person annual District meeting. It might be up to the BOD to pass the annual budget, as we did last year, but he will contact the ALD attorney for guidance. He'd like to keep the budget flat again, with no tax increase because so many people have suffered hardships this year. 2. There will be three director positions open this year, all 3-year terms. They are currently held by B. Pelegano, J. Greenfield and B. Ryan and none have decided yet if they will run again. He asked everyone to give some thought to the possible openings.

I. Receive Treasurer's and Tax Collector's Reports

1. A. Connor went over Tax Collector Eileen Curtin's report, and discovered that although overall collections were at 89%, collections for Lebanon were at 96%, while Hebron is only 74%. A. Connor will be working with E. Curtin to figure out why there is such a discrepancy; she posited that it may have something to do with the many recent property transfers – with new owners not realizing they owed taxes to the District in addition to the town taxes. Delinquent notices to be sent in March may spur some payments. 2. A. Connor stated that QDS, the company that processes our tax bills and hosts our software, will be charging \$1200 per year effective July 1 for the bill-pay service on our website. It was free the first year. A. Connor will report back to the BOD about how many residents use this service, and analyze whether it is affecting our collections, especially in light of her earlier topic of the number of delinquent accounts. J. Greenfield stated that, while it's a convenient option, it seems like a high price in relation to the size of our budget.

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

1. Finance: A. Connor pointed out that last year's budget anticipated using surplus, so if we do end up spending it, it will not be available for next year's budget. Consequently, if the District spends the same amount of money next year and doesn't have a surplus to use, taxes will have to go up. F. Hoisl stated again that keeping taxes flat is his goal, so he urged the BOD keep an eye on spending through the end of this year and to take a hard look at each line item for next year's budget.
2. Lake Health: 1. F. Hoisl reported that their last meeting was on February 2, and reviewed the highlights of their meeting minutes, which have been posted to the website. AER has sent their final updates to the water quality report and the aquatic plant survey for 2020, and both will be posted to the website.
3. Beaches and ROWs: 1. T. Nixon reported that their last meeting was on February 10 and reviewed the highlights of their meeting minutes, which have been posted to the website. She said that the silt fence at Lollipop is working well and might be able to be used again next year; or at a minimum, pieces of it could be used at Ryan Terrace ROW. The committee is hoping to complete the work on the boat racks prior to the season. Spring cleanup will be scheduled for the weekend before Memorial Day. 2. A. Fichtel stated that an abutter to the Francis ROW has had a recent survey done of their property, which would help in determining the sidelines of that ROW. 3. A discussion ensued about the idea of banning smoking on the beaches and ROWs and what would be involved with changing the ordinance, as well as the difficulty of enforcement. 4. F. Hoisl

pointed out the line item in the budget for miscellaneous lake expenses that might be able to be used for beaches and ROWs; A. Connor clarified that the \$2100 was put in as a contingency for unanticipated items in any area of the budget and the BOD could vote on its use.

4. Security, Boats: 1. A. Fichtel has contacted 9 security companies with barely any response. He's investigating carded lift gates as a solution for parking problems at the beaches. F. Hoisl is unsure that we should even be calling it "security." The BOD discussed hiring residents as "pass checkers" or even "attendance takers", funneling residents through a gate for entry. It was pointed out that a private security company doesn't care about the lake like the residents do and this would keep the money in the District by paying residents. Logistics would need to be discussed. A. Connor said in the past the ALD used resident pass checkers and by taking attendance we could gather data about when we actually need attendance takers. Last time we did this they were 1099 independent contractors. F. Hoisl will follow up and seek advice from our ALD attorney. A. Fichtel questioned the reasoning for locking the parking lot gates in the summer. 2. T. LaMontagne recommended that we use the old black passes/tags for one more year, and that anyone who is new or has lost their tags will receive one of the orange passes expiring in June 2021. T. LaMontagne also offered to take over the welcome letter responsibility from A. Fichtel.
5. Lebanon Roads: 1. B. Pelegano was not at the meeting but had emailed earlier to say there was nothing new to report.
6. Communications: 1. L. Bowen stated that a resident (who is a graphic designer by profession) has offered to help with the newsletter this year. L. Bowen will email the other directors a list of past topics to help with ideas for this year. We need to decide if we are going to print the newsletters in addition to putting it on the website, and if so, how would it be distributed. She will contact ALA president John Matra to see if there might be a way to distribute them at ALA events.

K. New Business - Discussion and Possible Action

There was no new business to discuss.

L. Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting

F. Hoisl asked to add a discussion about fireworks on ALD property to the March agenda.

M. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (T. LaMontagne/A. Fichtel) passed unanimously at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Liz Bowen, Clerk
Amston Lake District

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