

AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2023 7:00 P.M.

Zoom and ALA Clubhouse, 16 Wood Acres Rd, Amston, CT

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

B. Roll Call of Officers and Directors

Present: F. Hoisl, B. Pelegano, L. Bowen, J. Caines, J. Greenfield, J. Arpin, A. Fichtel, K. Patterson. Absent: T. Nixon.

C. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the July 19, 2023 meeting (K. Patterson/J. Arpin) passed without objection.

D. Presentation of Correspondence

B. Pelegano: Resident with concerns about repairs that were done on Lebanon roads – it will be addressed later in the meeting. **L. Bowen:** Two different residents upset about their cars being stickered at the ROWs for not having tags, resident concerned about weeds in the southeast cove, another concerned about weeds in the southwest cove, resident requesting additional parking tags. **F. Hoisl:** Email from resident at 20 Deepwood in Lebanon, which is on the agenda as old business; email from the ALD attorney, saying that the ALD, as a tax-exempt entity, could enter into a contract with the contractors for the ALA clubhouse, in order to save on sales tax. **K. Patterson:** Residents asking to allow parking at Cove ROW, which will be discussed later in the meeting. **A. Fichtel:** Resident concerned about a diseased tree on his property that abuts one of the Lebanon roads – F. Hoisl spoke to the ALD attorney, A. Cohen, who said the tree is the responsibility of the homeowner.

E. Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action

20 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: Homeowner Barbara Bennett-Scott, 20 Deepwood Drive, said they hired a biologist and had All Habitat Services evaluate the non-native, invasive Phragmites australis on their property, which includes some wetlands, and in the lake. She and her husband are moving forward with All Habitat's recommendation to cut and clean up their property in December and then spray an herbicide after Jan 1. Six weeks later they will mulch and then spread it back onto their property. This will happen twice a year, for three years. The permits are all in place, with the exception of the town of Lebanon. She would like permission from the board to also clear out the Phragmites that are in the cove because the seed pods will continue to spread back up onto her land.

J. Arpin sent the property owners the 2021 plan from Aquatic Ecosystem Research (AER) stating that the Phragmites were filtering the water that come into the cove from the two storm drains. J.

Arpin stated that AER's suggestion for control was to cut and then cover them with biodegradable material to stop the growth. Because there are two inlets there, any chemical treatment that is done there will end up in the lake. Secondly, once the Phragmites is gone, something else will take its place so we need to be intentional about planting something native in that area. Ms. Bennett-Scott will get more information on the herbicide proposed by All Habitat so that the ALD can make a decision on whether or not they can extend treatment into the water. J. Arpin would like to review all the proposals that she has and forward them to our limnologists to ensure that this is the best course of action.

B. Pelegano pointed out that the Lebanon Inland Wetlands Commission will most likely do a site visit, and the ALD board can piggyback onto that visit to get any additional questions answered.

F. Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners

Karen and Robert Rustico, 253 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: She has lived in the southwest cove at the lake for 19 years and attended the board meeting for the first time because she is frustrated at the inaction of the board and the Lake Health Committee. She stated that the southwest cove is 80% weeds, and heard that the ALD wouldn't do anything until the entire lake was covered in 20% weeds. J. Arpin visited the site and recommended they use a benthic mat. She demanded that the Lake Health Committee consider options such as hydro-raking or D.A.S.H. – Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting. She later offered to serve on the Weeds Committee.

Todd Angelucci, 260 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: He has lived at the lake for three years and watched the weeds overtaking Lollipop Cove, where the road bends – he feels that nothing is being addressed by this board and that we are losing ground. He later offered to serve on the Weeds Committee.

Joyce Clark, 6 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: She lives next to the property at 20 Deepwood and appreciated Ms. Bennet-Scott's earlier comments about the Phragmites. She believes the invasive weed fund should be used when it's determined how to handle the Phragmites that are in the water. The board knew of the Phragmites in 2018 and believes it has spread 20 – 30 feet farther into the water in those five years.

Laurel Hennebury, 458 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: She is frustrated that the board seems to be ignoring resident complaints about the growth of algae and plants in the cove areas. She would like to see a plan from the lake limnologist showing all the alternatives for treating algae and weeds, from the least restrictive to the most, based on information gathered from multiple external sources and what other lakes are doing.

John Mathieu, 28 Manion Ln, Lebanon: The road repairs done last month are all washed out again. The repairs were complete on a Friday, were washed out over the weekend, and the company came back on Monday and Tuesday to repair the repairs. Now they are washed out again.

G. Receive President's Report

F. Hoisl ceded his time due to the full agenda.

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

1. J. Caines reported that the year-end financials have not been finalized as our tax collector has not yet received the rate book from QDS. 2. The District had approximately \$23K of revenue and \$29K of expenses in August, and total year-to-date (July and August) collections of approximately \$53K in Hebron and \$70K in Lebanon, putting us at or ahead of last year. We've had \$70K of operating expenses year-to-date, leaving the District with \$56K of net income.

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

1. Long-term Financial Planning: President F. Hoisl named K. Patterson as chair of this new committee – with the purpose of identifying longer-term financial needs of the District, evaluating the amounts of funds the ALD is holding in reserve, and establishing a financial plan to aid in the budgeting process. The committee would ideally consist of some ALD board members, residents, and a representative of the Amston Lake Association.
2. Lake Health: 1. Based on resident concerns F. Hoisl announced that he will chair a new Weeds Committee, made up of board members and ALD residents, to produce a report of their findings within a year. He feels the board needs to do a better job of communicating what we are doing to the residents and his biggest fear is that a resident will take matters into their own hands, without board approval, because of what they perceive is the board's inaction. J. Arpin said that resident weed-pulling without guidance or approval from the board could be disastrous for the lake, in light of the milfoil discovered at the lake last summer. To J. Arpin's point, A. Fichtel reported that he recently found another clump of milfoil up against a Hebron resident's dock, so he advocated for the board to monitor weed-pulling. 2. J. Arpin put the WPCA in contact with B. Pelegano for maintenance on the Lebanon roads. 3. Two residents asked for guidance in cattail removal – one is completed and the other is still in progress. 4. A benthic barrier that was in the lake and had been given a time extension was removed today. In an effort to find a less costly way to install and remove the barriers, J. Arpin suggested we ask one of our contractors. 5. Deepwater testing September 12 showed 4.7 meters of Secchi depth, about the same as last year; the constant rain has clouded the water. Final test will be the week of October 9. GZA will remove the device they've had in the lake taking hourly readings. 6. Stormwater testing is over for the year. J. Arpin thanked F. Hoisl for collecting water samples at the beaches every week. 7. J. Arpin nominated Jean Waleszczyk to join the Lake Health Committee, and was approved without objection.
3. Dams: Engineer K. Acimovic reported two areas of concern to F. Hoisl about the Duck Pond

Dam: the pond itself is in a state of eutrophication and secondly, the aging dam support is susceptible to collapse at the spillway. He will visit the dam again in order to make some recommendations.

4. Beaches and ROWs: 1. Plunge pool cleaning around the lake is almost complete. 2. There have been problems with renters not being aware of the ALD ordinances – we need to do a better job of educating landlords, who in turn need to do a better job of educating their renters. 3. A letter from the stewards of the Cove ROW with a request to allow parking at the Cove ROW was discussed. It was agreed that the spaces there should be used for drop-off only, which wouldn't be possible if the spaces have long-term parkers. Residents may park on Cove Road.

4. Beach Pass Checkers, Boats: 1. F. Hoisl reported that they came close to their budget this summer and due to the amount of rain, 1300 hours were covered out of 1600 hours available. They will meet over the winter to discuss plans for next year, including extending coverage later in the day, as outsiders and people with dogs seem to know when the checkers leave for the day.

5. Lebanon Roads: B. Pelegano reported on the work that Extreme Maintenance was hired to do last month. Among other things, on Ryan Terrace Extreme installed a catch basin and created a diagonal discharge down the street, adding riprap and stone, also dug a curtain drain; on Kelly's Corner they installed a catch basin, ran the pipe across the street, and lowered an existing catch basin. After this work, there was a great deal of washout from the torrential rains so they returned several times and attempted repairs. There was an additional \$3,000 in the contract to work on other roads, but when Extreme realized the roads were mostly dirt, they did a minimal amount and only charged \$692 for Manion, Kelly's and Ryan Terrace to regrade and fill potholes as best they could. B. Pelegano has since hired BASE contractor to fill the potholes on the other private roads with the exception of Andrews, Bush, and Scanlon (which had millings last year). All three contractors say that our roads need to be properly pitched, and that the ¾" processed stone that we currently use will continue to wash out on the heavily sloped areas. A 1.75" stone was recommended. B. Pelegano asked to go into executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss a proposal from the contractor that did the millings on other roads last year.

6. Communications: 1. L. Bowen reported that the online boat auction only had one kayak, and the \$210 sales price was deposited in the General Fund. 2. She will start sending email blasts soon about removing boats from ALD properties for the season. 3. An enormous amount of information has been uploaded to the Google Drive, but it needs an organization overhaul.

Motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Lebanon Roads contract proposal (J.Caines/A.Fichtel), unanimously approved. Results of Executive Session: contract with

Reliable Paving approved for re-grading and repairs on Kelly's Corner, Manion Lane and Ryan Terrace, Lebanon, at a cost of \$12,500.

J. New Business - Discussion and Possible Action

There was no new business to discuss.

K. Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting

There was nothing to add at this time.

L. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (K. Patterson/B. Pelegano) passed unanimously at 10:16 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.