

AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2024 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. Arpin, A. Fichtel, J. Greenfield, T. Nixon, K. Patterson.

C. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2024 meeting (K. Patterson/T. Nixon), with item J.3 regarding the results of the vote approving a list of residents to serve on the Weeds Committee amended to say that A. Fichtel opposed, instead of "one director" opposed. Six directors approved the motion, one abstained, and the minutes were approved as amended.

D. Presentation of Correspondence

F. Hoisl: Several board members received an email from a resident voicing his concern about the new committees' talk of addressing plants in the lake. He believes that removing plant life could result in an algae bloom or be replaced with Eurasian watermilfoil. The resident wants the board to request that the Connecticut Attorney General investigate what happened in the past so that mistakes are not repeated. The resident feels that our lake limnologist should be responsible for making decisions on treating the lake.

E. Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action

There was no old business to discuss.

F. Task List

F. Hoisl noted that the busy spring season has started, and asked all board members to go through the task list to make sure everything was covered, although he is aware that many of the items are already underway. A first draft of next year's budget is in process. A. Fichtel reported that he had contacted a surveyor and received an estimate for surveying the ROWs, in particular Francis and Elsmere.

Motion to move item K, New Business, to earlier in the agenda, after item G (L. Bowen, B. Pelegano), unanimously approved.

G. Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners

John Matra, 265 Deepwood Drive, Hebron: 1. As president of the Amston Lake Association (ALA), he gave an update on the repairs at the clubhouse: two new exterior doors, two bathroom doors, the siding was delivered, and new bathroom windows will be installed next week, among other things. He is very pleased with the contractor. In terms of funding, they received \$20K from the Amston Lake District, \$5,600 was raised by a resident sponsorship drive, and the ALA contributed approximately \$1,000. 2. He highlighted some scheduled ALA events: July 4 parade on July 4, Yoga Fest July 6, Tiki Night July 20, Lake Day August 3, Paella Dinner August 17, Oktoberfest October 5. 3. This year's membership drive and merchandise sales will be in conjunction with the pass distribution events at the clubhouse and memberships will remain at \$30 per household.

H. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action

1. Annual Meeting: L. Bowen went over the pros and cons of the alternatives for the meeting – doing it entirely in-person, hybrid, or on Zoom. A hybrid format was dismissed due to the logistics of combining in-person and online voting. Motion to hold the annual meeting on Zoom (A. Fichtel/ B. Pelegano) – four directors approved, four opposed. F. Hoisl cast the deciding vote to oppose the Zoom format so the 2024 annual meeting will be held in person May 18 at 10 a.m. at the Douglas Library in Hebron.
2. CAES Workshop: J. Arpin has tentatively scheduled a workshop to be held by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's (CAES) Office of Aquatic Invasive Species for Saturday, May 18 at 1:30 at the ALA clubhouse. The purpose is to discover which invasive aquatic plants are threatening waterbodies in Connecticut and how they are being managed, including the new strain of hydrilla in the Connecticut River. Key identification skills will be presented, along with a display of live plant specimens, which is particularly important considering the Eurasian watermilfoil found at Amston Lake last summer. Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of holding the workshop the same day as the annual meeting. J. Arpin will look into possible alternative dates.

I. Receive President's Report

F. Hoisl ceded his time in consideration of the already lengthy agenda.

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

1. J. Caines said that the tax collector's report stated that the delinquent liens list would be published in April. 2. The District collected approximately \$21,300 in January: \$19,400 in current taxes, and \$1,800 in back taxes and interest. Expenses were \$9,800, including \$2,300 in administrative, \$7,100 for Lebanon roads (snow removal and repairs), and \$400 from the Invasive Plant Fund for DEEP permitting for the 2024 season. The net inflow to the District was approximately \$19,000. He reported total year-to-date collections of approximately \$162,100: \$126,400 in current taxes, \$8,700 in back taxes, and \$3,000 in other income. Year-to-date expenses total \$158,000: \$116,000 from the General Fund (lake operations and administrative), \$34,200 from the Road Fund, and \$7,500 from the Invasive Plant Fund. 3. He has changed the way the financials are presented, by illustrating the ins and outs by fund to make the source of funds clearer. It will help to show the General Fund more clearly, especially when we are trying to spend down that fund. It was suggested that we add a note to the website explaining the new format. 4. J. Caines is proposing to rearrange some expense items on the detail lines of the financials from one group to another. He will summarize the proposed changes in an email to the board members. 5. In February, there will be a disbursement to the ALA for the repair work underway at the clubhouse.

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

1. Long-Term Financial Planning: There was nothing new to report by Chair K. Patterson, as the committee hadn't met since the last board meeting.
2. Lake Health: 1. J. Arpin stated that the GZA report had been issued and posted to the website. 2. The committee is working on a flyer to make residents aware of invasive plants. 3. He feels that there are too many board members on the Long-Term Financial Planning Committee, which could create bias when making recommendations to the board of directors. A. Fichtel agreed. Discussion ensued about the makeup of board sub-committees.
3. Weeds: Chair F. Hoisl reported that the committee met twice since the last board meeting. 1. One meeting was held specifically to discuss grant money that they became aware of on short notice that the DEEP had available for invasive weed activity. The grant was predicated on matching funds, with a minimum of 25% from the grant recipient. It was determined that there was insufficient time to fill out the grant form. He believes the grant

money is available every year, so they will discuss the possibilities for next year. 2. At the second meeting, they worked on formulating a series of questions for the limnologist, GZA. The charter of the committee is to address the aquatic plant life in the lake and its impact on lake use, without impacting the overall health of the lake. They hope to provide enough information to the board so that they can make some recommendations going forward.

4. Dams: 1. F. Hoisl had nothing new to report, other than he is still waiting for engineer K. Acimovic's report on the Duck Pond Dam.
5. Beaches and ROWs: 1. T. Nixon reported they received a few quotes for work installing Geocell at Ryan Terrace ROW to minimize erosion. They would like to have the work completed by April 1. 2. There is interest from multiple vendors for the District mowing contract for next year, so they will be tweaking the contract and adding a few items and will be reviewing quotes over the summer and fall. 3. Committee meetings resume in March. 4. K. Patterson reported that a new "pre-fill" online lake pass registration procedure will be available this year for residents that registered last year. The first date for pass distribution is April 13, and the rest of the dates are listed on the website.
4. Boats: 1. A. Fichtel had nothing new to report.
5. Lebanon Roads: 1. B. Pelegano is pleased with our snow removal and roads contractor, BASE, who has been very responsive by doing some last-minute repairs and catch basin cleaning, and has been very fair with pricing. As a District resident, the contractor knows and cares about our roads. 2. We have approximately \$15,000 remaining in the Road Fund. The committee is contemplating milling another road, as well as adding 1.75" process on another road to see how they compare over time. 3. A. Fichtel gave kudos to both B. Pelegano and contractor B. Harlow for their work on the roads this past winter.
6. Communications: 1. L. Bowen created a new space on the website for committee minutes so that they are all in one place and easier to find. 2. She has been working with K. Patterson and resident D. Ciarfella to create personal pre-filled pass registration forms that will allow residents to simply update their forms from last year with just a few clicks. The emails with each resident's unique link will be emailed to residents beginning later this week.

L. Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting

Add discussion of surveying the ROWs.

M. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (T. Nixon/J. Arpin) passed unanimously at 8:52 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.