

**AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT**  
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 20, 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 7:00 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 February 21, 2024 meeting (K. Patterson/T. Nixon), approved unanimously.

**D. Presentation of Correspondence**

**L. Bowen:** 1. Resident asked why the "Significant Events and Expenditures" page on the website had not been updated recently. L. Bowen will discuss further under Communications. 2. Received several emails with questions about boat passes, which she referred to K. Patterson. **J. Caines:** Resident asked how much interest is generated in our different funds, and if the interest is credited back to that specific fund. **F. Hoisl:** Received an email from a resident who was in attendance and read from her letter:

Laurel Hennebury, 458 Deepwood Drive, Lebanon: As a result of anecdotal reports, she is concerned about the potential poaching and trafficking of freshwater turtles taken from our lake. She requests that the board adopt a rule prohibiting the removal of turtles from Amston Lake; post the CT DEEP fact sheet at the beaches, ROWs and website; and include an article in the Amston Lake newsletter.

The subject will be added to Old Business for the April board meeting, and will be considered for an article in the 2024 newsletter.

**E. Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action**

ROW Surveys: One quote has been received to survey the ROWs at Francis and Elsmere. Discussion ensued about the necessity of the surveys. F. Hoisl will contact our ALD attorney to get an opinion on what would be entailed if, in fact, an abutting property owner has encroached upon ALD property. He believes we should get additional competitive quotes, and in the meantime asked all board members to take a look at these ROWs in person.

**F. Task List**

F. Hoisl reported that he re-installed the weir boards for the dam, and listed some other spring tasks: coordinating the boat dock lottery, spring cleanup for the beaches and ROWs, evaluating road repairs, and scheduling email blasts reminding residents of our rules. K. Patterson will look at signage on the beaches and ROWs, as well as those stored in the shed, to see what might need to be replaced.

**G. Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners**

Joyce Clark, 6 Deepwood Drive, Lebanon: 1. An article in the March 8, 2024 Rivereast News Bulletin reported the presence of hydrilla at Lake Pocotopaug. Our limnologist, GZA, consults with Lake Pocotopaug as well, and they estimate the cost for their lake-wide treatment at \$135,000, \$75,000 of which they are seeking a grant for. 2. She asked treasurer J. Caines a number of questions: when was the \$125,000 Invasive Plant Fund established, what investments are held in that fund, if yearly interest can be returned to that fund instead of the General Fund, and could it

be established how much interest could have been credited to that fund over the life of the fund to date. She would like to know how the board proposes to replenish this fund that has now been reduced to approximately \$116,000. J. Caines will research this information.

#### **H. Receive President's Report**

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

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

1. J. Caines said that the tax collector's report noted that when the email blast went out regarding lake passes, there was a noticeable increase in collections. 2. The District collected approximately \$4,000 in February: \$3,700 in taxes and \$300 in interest. Expenses were \$23,400 including \$21,400 in administrative (\$20,000 for the ALA clubhouse repairs), \$2,000 administrative (lake passes), and \$4,000 for Lebanon roads (snow removal and repairs). He reported total year-to-date collections of approximately \$138,800 in taxes, liens and interest; and \$3,300 of interest or other income. Year-to-date expenses: \$81,000 in administrative, \$14,500 for lake health, \$15,700 for repairs and maintenance, and other lake expenses of \$28,900. Total net income for the year to date is \$2,100 which leaves approximately \$40,000 to go to hit the target of spending down the surplus. 3. J. Caines went over two versions of the 2024-25 budget that he and F. Hoisl have proposed, with year-over-year tax increases of 20.8% for Hebron and 36.1% for Lebanon. Much of this is a result of the District using the \$39,000 surplus in this current fiscal year. Discussion ensued. F. Hoisl would like to have the budget approved to present to the residents at the April meeting.

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

1. Long-Term Financial Planning: Chair K. Patterson, went over the committee's recommendations that had been emailed to the board:
  - Rename the Invasive Plant Fund to broaden the scope of what this fund could cover. Two suggestions were discussed: 1) Invasive Species Fund (would cover plants as well as animals, such as zebra mussels), and 2) Lake Health Fund (would broaden further to include anything affecting the health of the lake, such as accidental contamination of unknown source).
  - Rename Main Dam Fund to Dams Fund, and begin building balance to cover anticipated repairs of Duck Pond dam.
  - Create a new fund to cover ALA Clubhouse Capital Improvements.
  - Maintain a fixed dollar amount in the Emergency Fund rather than a percentage of the fiscal year budget. This would reduce the need to adjust funds every year. The committee recommends a \$50K balance in the Emergency Fund would be sufficient, and the additional \$25K could be allocated to the new ALA Clubhouse Capital Improvements Fund (\$20K) and the Dam Fund (\$5K).
  - Reallocate surplus funds in the General Fund at the end of the fiscal year into the Dam Fund, to build the balance to cover the cost of the Duck Pond dam repairs in a few years.

Discussion ensued about each of the items, and it was determined that the board needed more time to understand and discuss them before voting on these proposals. It will be added to Old Business for April.

2. Lake Health: 1. J. Arpin stated the committee has received a proposal from GZA. 2. The committee has created an invasive species action plan, including printing 4X6 cards to be distributed with the boat passes, and an 8.5X11 invasive species handout that will also be used for signs around the lake. 3. He has obtained a rate sheet from GZA, for any additional work/ questions over and above their contract. 4. L. Bowen will send an eblast to remind

residents that wearing life jackets is a state law until May 30. 5. The committee is working to arrange another presentation by GZA in June to coincide with the plant survey. 6. The CT Agriculture Experiment Station (CAES) workshop is scheduled for Saturday, May 18, after the annual meeting, time to be announced. 7. Stormwater and deepwater testing will begin soon.

3. Weeds: Chair F. Hoisl reported that the committee hadn't met since the last board meeting, but will be meeting on Monday, March 25. Their most recent minutes, along with the committee charter, are posted on the website.
4. Dams: 1. F. Hoisl received engineer K. Acimovic's interim report on the Duck Pond dam and it's been posted to the website. He asked the directors to review the report so that the engineer's recommendations can be discussed further at the next board meeting.
5. Beaches and ROWs: 1. T. Nixon reported that the porta-potties will be installed soon, silt fences at the beaches and ROWs are being removed, and they will be doing a spring cleanup, probably just focusing on the problem areas. 2. K. Patterson reported that many residents were happy with the new "pre-fill" lake pass registration system. The response rate has been excellent, way ahead of last year. First distribution date is April 13. 3. F. Hoisl held the first meeting of the Beach Pass Checkers, including three new people. There will be additional coverage of the beaches in August.
4. Boats: 1. A. Fichtel confirmed that boats are allowed on the racks beginning April 1. The owner of the swim raft that floated down to Cove ROW has been identified but has not removed it yet. 2. ALD Dock Procedures: Discussion ensued about the docks at Main and Lollipop Beaches. For this season, the docks will remain as-is, with the lottery occurring sometime in April, and the subject will be looked at again after this fiscal year is over.
5. Lebanon Roads: 1. B. Pelegano ceded his time so that the board could discuss two Lebanon roads proposals in executive session at the end of the meeting.
6. Communications: 1. L. Bowen asked all the directors to look at the Significant Events and Expenditures page on the website and asked for input to bring the document up to date. 2. L. Bowen has received a few articles for the newsletter and will send out a list of topics and deadline dates to all board members next week. 3. L. Bowen thanked K. Patterson and especially resident D. Ciarfella for their work in creating the personal links for the pre-filled pass registration forms.

Motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing two Lebanon Roads contract proposals (B. Pelegano/J. Arpin), unanimously approved.

Results of Executive Session: motion to approve a 3-year contract with BASE Construction for snow removal at the current price of \$18,000 per year, and sanding at \$3,000 per year, provided that the amount is approved at each annual meeting of the District (B. Pelegano/ L. Bowen), unanimously approved. Contract will begin fall, 2024. Motion to approve \$2500 labor contract with BASE Construction to repair all potholes for the Lebanon private roads, as well as twice-yearly debris cleaning of the Island Beach, Cove, Ryan Terrace, Manion and Kelly's Corner catch basins and culverts (B. Pelegano/L. Bowen), unanimously approved. Contract is for ALD fiscal year 2024-25.

#### **K. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action**

B. Pelegano requested that F. Hoisl ask ALD attorney A. Cohen if, in an attempt to keep non-residents and their boats out of our lake, we could create a rule and post that anyone caught trespassing or launching an unauthorized boat on Amston Lake, in violation of our ordinances,

could be fined \$500.

**L. Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting**

Add discussion of turtles, Duck Pond dam.

**M. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn (B. Pelegano/J. Gaines) passed unanimously at 10:14 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.