

AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT

Annual Meeting

MINUTES

May 31, 2025 10:00 A.M.

Douglas Library of Hebron, 22 Main Street, Hebron, CT 06248

www.amstonlake.org

A. Call to Order:

President F. Hoisl called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. He went through the agenda and how the meeting would work, asking people to keep their comments to under two minutes.

B. Roll Call of Officers and Directors:

Present: President F. Hoisl, Vice President B. Pelegano, Treasurer J. Caines, Clerk L. Bowen, and Directors J. Arpin, T. Nixon, and K. Rustico. Absent: Directors J. Greenfield, K. Patterson.

C. Introduction of Board of Directors:

F. Hoisl introduced the current officers and directors.

D. Acknowledgements:

This agenda item was skipped, as the committees and volunteers were going to be acknowledged in the presentation.

E. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve the May 18, 2024 meeting minutes (E. Curtin/B. Pelegano), approved without objection.

F. Review Lake Operations and Committees:

The meeting included a slide presentation, which is available on the website. F. Hoisl reviewed the slides, highlighting the committees and the work done over the past year.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: He's been doing maintenance on the private roads for over 40 years and believes there is an easy fix to the water problems on the roads by building the roads up high enough. Additionally, he is available to talk to any homeowner that lives on the Lebanon roads.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: Stated that he has been involved with all five dredging projects at the lake and believes we are losing the lake. He stated that five years ago \$10,000 was spent on water clarity and has heard through the grapevine that the number is now \$40,000. He believes a catch basin should be installed in the cove near Lollipop.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: **Q:** He is concerned about E. coli bacteria from the geese at Main Beach. **A:** F. Hoisl clarified that the ALD tests for E. coli weekly during the season at both beaches, and our numbers are generally far below the limits, as they have been with the two tests done so far this season. Test results are available on the website.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: He believes there should be plunge pools in the cove northeast of Lollipop Beach.

Peter Gandelman, 14 Cove Road, Lebanon: Maybe there should be a limit on how many times a person can take the floor at this meeting.

F. Hoisl continued the presentation, giving an update on the structure spanning the Duck Pond Dam.

Greg Fontaine, 356 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: **Q:** What happens if the dam fails? **A:** F. Hoisl explained that the bridge over the Duck Pond Dam is not technically part of the dam itself. If

the bridge were to fall in the summer when water was flowing through there's a good chance that there wouldn't be any impact. The board is in the process of gathering more information for next steps. **Q:** If that bridge fails, are we losing the lake? **A:** No. The Duck Pond Dam is a separate structure from the Main Dam, which, if it were to fail, could be catastrophic. The Main Dam is a Class B dam, which is inspected on a regular basis and has an Emergency Action Plan.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: He stated that he is a DOT certified welder and can offer a simple fix for \$2500 that will make the structure over the Duck Pond Dam last another 100 years, but that the District shouldn't wait too long.

John Matra, 265 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: He spoke as president of the Amston Lake Association (ALA). He went over the ALA presentation slides and discussed the year-round activities that ALA provides, as well as the marquee summer events. He reported that the Phase 1 clubhouse renovations have been completed, thanks to donations from ALA members and the ALD. As the clubhouse roof is long past its useful life, Phase 2 includes replacement, and thanked the board for including a cost share in the upcoming budget. He thanked the ALD board, and especially President F. Hoisl, for their continued support.

G. Consider and Act Upon Proposed Ordinance Revisions:

President F. Hoisl explained that the board spent months working on cleaning up and revising the ordinances, which had not been updated in more than 10 years. The updates were discussed at multiple board meetings, as well as at a special meeting asking for resident comments in April. Per the ALD bylaws, the board would be voting to adopt them at this meeting. Motion to approve the May 26, 2025 proposed ordinance revisions (B. Pelegano/K. Rustico). Discussion ensued.

Michael Kelly, 47 Lake Rd, Hebron: **Q:** Regarding the change in definition of motor vehicles to include remote controlled (RC) vehicles and drones, there should be more discussion regarding already existing state and federal laws regarding drone use. He is licensed by the FAA to operate small un-manned aerial systems and wants to inform everyone that trying to regulate drone use on ALD properties is not going to remove drones from the airspace around the lake or the right for anyone to operate drones or to hire a commercial drone service. He stated that state law #975 prohibits municipalities from enforcing ordinances related to commercial aircraft operated by drone pilots. There are already laws on the books that protect your privacy and safety. **A:** Our ordinances only deal with ALD-owned properties. After researching, it was determined that many drones and RC vehicles are not toys and can reach extremely high speeds. After receiving feedback from residents, it was decided to add the words "without board approval" to the prohibition of these items on ALD property. **Q:** M. Kelly believes the process of securing board approval should be more transparent.

Al Fichtel, 203 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: **Q:** He is concerned about the approval process for the ordinance revision and believes that the bylaws don't say that the ordinances must be voted on by the board, it but that they may, and that the residents should vote on their passage. Also he believes that the 2014 ordinances were voted on by the residents. **A:** F. Hoisl quoted Article IV, section 4 of the bylaws that states that "the District's ordinances shall be deemed enacted upon the approval of a majority of the Directors at any duly-called annual or special meeting of the Board."

Jim Delisle, 32 Ames Rd, Hebron: **Q:** Does the new definition of motor vehicles include golf carts? Can they park on ALD property? **A:** F. Hoisl stated that the towns consider golf carts to be motor vehicles and that drivers must be licensed and have all the safety devices that a car would. A golf cart parked on ALD property must have a hang tag, because they are taking up a

space.

The vote was called, and the new ordinances were unanimously approved by the board of directors.

H. Election of ALD Board of Directors:

Nominations for the three open seats on the board of directors for 3-year terms, July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026:

- Jim Caines, Lebanon (nominated/seconded by B. Pelegano/K. Rustico)
- Jeff Arpin, Hebron (F. Hoisl/K. Rustico)
- Cathie Rockoff, 29 Lake Rd, Hebron (M. Dagon/A. Fichtel)
- Todd Angelucci, 260 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon (B. Pelegano/K. Rustico)

Sue Matyszyk, 87 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon. **Q:** Don't you need certain qualifications for the treasurer's role? **A:** J. Caines, treasurer, and J. Arpin, chair of the Lake Health Committee, are current board members with specialized responsibilities, and since neither of the other two candidates were interested in taking on those tasks, both J. Caines and J. Arpin were re-elected without opposition.

A paper ballot vote was taken to decide between the other two candidates, with Cathie Rockoff elected to the board. Her three-year term begins July 1, 2025.

I. Election of ALD Board Officers:

Nominations for the officers listed below for one-year terms, July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, and re-elected without objection:

- Brandon Pelegano, President (F. Hoisl/T. Nixon)
- Karen Patterson, Vice President (T. Nixon/K. Rustico)
- Jim Caines, Treasurer (K. Rustico/B. Pelegano)
- Liz Bowen, Clerk (F. Hoisl/T. Nixon)

Following the elections, Board Vice President B. Pelegano presented outgoing President F. Hoisl with a gift basket from the other board members, and thanked him for his many years of service to the District.

At this point in the meeting, there was a computer problem, but paper copies of the proposed budget were distributed to the residents.

J. Tax Collector's Report: Not presented due to the computer malfunction.

K. Treasurer's Report: Not presented due to the computer malfunction.

Since the PowerPoint presentation was not going to be able to continue, there was a motion to approve the budget as presented on the ALD website (A. Fichtel/N. Salerno). Discussion ensued.

Mike D'Andrea, 49 Ryan Terrace, Lebanon: **Q:** Does the District have the ability to borrow? **A:** J. Caines said the answer is yes, with caveats. Because we are a non-profit municipality, banks would require a personal guarantee from some or all of the board of directors, which is unlikely to happen. F. Hoisl said that in the last few years the board has been trying to create the budget for what the District needs without relying on surpluses.

Larry Zimmerman, 183 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: **Q:** Why did the line item for Beach Pass Checkers go up almost \$7,000? **A:** Due to an increase in the number of hours of coverage in August, as well as an increase in the per hour stipend, which had not been increased in four years. **Q:** How do they get paid? **A:** F. Hoisl outlined the process, from filling out their time cards, to being paid biweekly. **Q:** What is the rate of the stipend? **A:** \$16/hour. Tax Collector E. Curtin reminded the audience that Connecticut's minimum wage is \$16.35, but as a private District, we are able to pay less.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: **Q:** Does the ALD have workers comp insurance? **A:** Yes.

Maureen Dagon, 144 Deepwood, Hebron: **Q:** What is the increase in administrative costs? **A:** \$8,000 for a cost share for the ALA clubhouse roof, and the remaining \$3,450 is for inflationary increases – property taxes, insurance, office supplies, website, etc. The increase year-over-year without the \$8,000 for the clubhouse is approximately 4.7%.

Larry Zimmerman, 183 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: **Q:** Is the increase in administrative costs an anticipation raise? You don't know for a fact? **A:** The budget has to be prepared before some bills are paid so yes, in some cases we need to anticipate. **Q:** Are you allowed to modify the figures during the year. **A:** If we don't spend money in one category of the budget, we have the option to potentially spend it in another category, or to refund the money to the residents, or use it as surplus. **Q:** Can you move money from one fund to another. **A:** Yes – it's in the bylaws.

Joyce Clark, 6 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon. **Q:** How much is the gate monitor paid? **A:** \$2,100 for the season, twice a day, at both beaches.

Jeff Arpin, 225 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: Every month Treasurer J. Caines presents the financials at the board meeting, so it's easy to see where the money is going. You can also view the monthly financial reports on the website.

Brett Harlow, 403 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: **Q:** Is it worth \$2100 to pay the gate monitor to put up and take down a rope twice a day? **Q:** Thinks the lake health budget is overkill since we have no issues.

L. Consider and Act Upon Proposed Budgets for FY 2025-26:

Motion to approve the FYE 6-30-2026 General Fund spending plan of \$212,721, of which \$209,000 will be funded with new tax revenue and the balance of \$3,720 will be funded using non-tax revenue (J. Caines/ T. Nixon), passed with only one objection.

Motion to approve the FYE 6-30-2026 Lebanon Roads budget of \$40,000 which will be funded entirely by new tax revenues of \$40,000 (J. Caines/M. D'Andrea) approved by the Lebanon residents only, without objection.

Tax Collector E. Curtin stated that the ALD mill rate for Hebron will be 1.8, and for Lebanon, 2.13.

M. Establish Date for 2026 District Annual Meeting:

Motion to hold the annual District meeting on Saturday, May 30, 2026 at a location to be determined (F. Hoisl/L. Bowen), passed without objection.

N. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:54 a.m. (B. Pelegano/J. Arpin) passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by
Liz Bowen, Clerk
Amston Lake District

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