

AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2026 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: B. Pelegano, K. Patterson, L. Bowen, J. Caines, J. Arpin, J. Greenfield, T. Nixon, C. Rockoff.

Absent: A. Fichtel.

C. Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners

Karen Rustico, 253 Deepwood Drive, Hebron: A 20-year ALD resident, she's concerned about the weed and muck situation in the southeast cove and believes the cove is filling in. Something needs to be done before the cove looks like the Duck Pond at the northern end of the lake.

Christine Darczyn, 255 Deepwood Drive, Hebron: Her family also lives in the southeast cove and stated that the weeds are the worst they've been in 30 years. She presented the board with current photos of the cove, which can be compared to the photos she brought to a board meeting last year. There are algae blooms and cove is not swimmable. She suggested that all the coves be prioritized and addressed in order. She then read an email from resident P. Clements, below:

Paula Clements, 18 Sunset Drive, Lebanon: A 37-year resident, she attached photos of the southeast cove waterfront, which she stated has declined, especially in the last few years. They do not fertilize their lawn and believe that fertilizer from other residents' lawns is blown down the lake into their cove. The southeast cove is so overrun with lily pads and algae that it is not fit for swimming.

Jean Waleszczyk, 267 Deepwood Drive, Hebron: She asked what the next steps are when a resident violates ALD ordinances by using pesticides and fertilizer on their property. B. Pelegano has spoken on this subject before and reiterated that the ordinances prohibit their use on ALD property, but that, while discouraged, they are allowed on private property, as long as care is taken so that nothing enters ALD property (e.g., the lake).

Mia Berube, 514 Deepwood Drive, Lebanon: 1. A 16-year resident, she has always believed that chemicals were not allowed to be used on lawns in the District. 2. She was here when the southeast cove was dredged, which she believes didn't work, and stated that currently the cove is in the worst shape it's been since 1985. She reported that Eagleville Lake is doing "pull parties" in conjunction with the DEEP, where residents get together to remove invasive plants. 3. She stated that the residents at 500 Deepwood in Lebanon bought the waterfront lot next to them and received a permit to remove some dead trees on the lot to create a pathway to the lake. It appears that 95% of the trees on the lot have been removed, and the wetlands on the property have been covered with stone and wood chips. She forwarded pictures to J. Arpin. B. Pelegano responded that she should contact the Lebanon Inland Wetlands Commission (IWC) if she believes there was a breach of the permit.

Eugene Darczyn, 30 Wood Acres Drive, Hebron: His and his wife's families have been on the lake since the 1950s and says that the ALD can't wait any longer to do something about the coves – something needs to be done now to keep the lake pristine for future generations. He stated that residents used to be able to clean up their own waterfront, but now it seems like residents are discouraged from touching anything. If that's the case, the board needs to take over and clean up the waterfronts.

Olyvia Darczyn, 30 Wood Acres Drive, Hebron: She's lived on the lake her whole life and stated that the lake has never been this bad. Even Main Beach is only swimmable in one area. She implored the board to do something about it.

D. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2026 regular board meeting (J. Caines/K. Patterson), amended to clarify Item G – task list, that K. Hinch is spraying the poison ivy, and not K. Patterson. Minutes approved as amended without objection.

E. Presentation of Correspondence

B. Pelegano: Resident questioned why his car received a parking violation sticker, even though his ALD hang tag was displayed on his rearview mirror. It was determined that he had parked at Cove ROW, where there is a No Parking sign posted. **K. Patterson:** Email from ALA President John Matra, announcing dates for upcoming ALA events – Tiki Night July 25, Lake Day August 8.

F. Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action

1. 221 Deepwood, Hebron – Lake Wall Application: Resident requested to repair their existing stone wall, part of which has caved in toward the lake, with a dry stack stone wall. Both the resident and board member J. Arpin emailed photos to the board showing current conditions and examples of other walls the contractor has done at the lake. Although a permit is not required in Hebron, the property owner had spoken to the town, and after a brief discussion, the board had no objection to this project.
2. Trailer Parking on ALD lot: President B. Pelegano stated that use of this lot for trailer parking was discontinued quite a few years ago for several reasons, including liability, upkeep, and its current use as a storage location for the process stone used to repair the Lebanon private roads. For these reasons, he recommended that we not return to using it for trailer storage and the board unanimously agreed. He suggested that the resident who inquired about this could park their trailer on a friend's property if they didn't have room on their own property.

G. Task List and Action Items

1. Buoys for Sunken Island: The four buoys marking Sunken Island are back in place.
2. Plunge Pool at Lollipop Bend: B. Pelegano reported that he had reached out to the town of Lebanon, and once he hears back, he will coordinate a meeting with them and J. Arpin.

H. Receive President's Report

President B. Pelegano attended both the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) and GZA presentations last month. After listening to the experts, seeing the data, and reexamining the comments made by residents over the years as well as tonight, he thinks the ALD needs to act to make sure the coves and our shoreline are better maintained. CAES presenter Greg Bugbee lives in a cove on a 29-acre lake, which he said they manage with a combination of hand-pulling and chemical application. He stated that if you do nothing, you will have problems. He displayed photos of Lollipop Cove in 2006 and 2026 which showed a startling loss of the water area. B. Pelegano believes it is unacceptable to turn our backs on the residents that have been complaining for years. His goal is to address the increase of the land mass and weeds that are causing a decrease in the usage of our lake. In 2022, the ALD received a \$30K estimate for hydro-raking Lollipop Cove, which was never acted upon. A suggestion would be to begin to trim the Lake Health budget (approximately \$350K over the last 10 years) slightly to start building up funds for maintaining our coves and shoreline. The presenter for our limnologist, GZA, said there is not another lake in Connecticut that does the extensive testing that we do. B. Pelegano would like the Long-Term Financial Planning Committee to add "Repair and Maintenance of Coves and District-Owned Shoreline" as an agenda item, and add \$30K as a placeholder.

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

Treasurer J. Caines reported that the preliminary numbers for FY 2025-26 show that the District is underspent, although the numbers have not been finalized – he is waiting for the final rate book from QDS. He reviewed the June financials, which are posted on the website.

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

1. Committee assignments: B. Pelegano asked that we table this item until all board members are present.
2. Long-Term Financial Planning: Chair K. Patterson said the committee had not met recently, so there was nothing new to report. In response to B. Pelegano's request to add the coves for consideration by this committee, she mentioned that the coves have been on their list of discussion topics for two years, but have not been presented with a proposal.
3. Lake Health: 1. Chair J. Arpin reported on test results, which, along with their committee meeting minutes, are available on the website. 2. GZA performed an invasive plant inspection recently, with no invasives found. They reported that overall plant population is lower compared to last year, but there are more areas of filamentous algae. 3. J. Arpin will visit the property at 500 Deepwood to compare what was permitted by the IWC, versus the work that was done. 4. There were sewer blockages in the main in early July and the link for emergency calls on the Lebanon WPCA website was broken. 5. The benthic barriers for the dock area at Lollipop need to be installed. J. Caines reported that the contractor said that while will be able to install them, he will not be able to remove them. If we have no way to remove them this year, it may not make sense to install them until next year.

Discussion ensued regarding the weeds in the coves. J. Arpin believes that residents have never been discouraged from hand-pulling weeds in front of their property, but he would like to inspect the property beforehand. B. Pelegano said we just had an invasive weed survey done that show no invasive weeds, so he believes residents should feel free to pull the weeds in front of their homes. There will also be another survey done soon of the littoral zone to check for invasives.

4. Lake Usage: Committee member B. Pelegano reported on behalf of committee chair F. Hoisl, that they will be having a meeting soon so that they can schedule the littoral zone weed study.
5. Dams: Chair K. Patterson reported that the contract for the dam inspection has been executed and she will work on scheduling the required inspection of both dams for the fall of 2026.
6. Docks: Chair J. Caines stated that they had not met since April, but will likely meet again sometime this fall.
7. Beaches and ROWs, Boats: 1. Chair T. Nixon reported that the Main Beach picnic table had been repaired by volunteers, and new umbrellas have been installed at the two beaches. 2. More damage has been done to the ropes and poles at Main beach, so our contractor is putting a proposal together for a more permanent solution. 3. A volunteer collected 25 pounds of goose waste from the beaches and also cleaned up the fireworks debris left after the Fourth of July.
8. Beach Pass Checkers: Chair J. Greenfield reported that they have 15 checkers this year and all seems to be going well.
9. Lebanon Roads: B. Pelegano reported that the Lebanon Roads Fund finished the fiscal year with \$500 left in their budget. The new maintenance contract with BASE Construction has been executed, and

residents seem pleased with the condition of the roads.

10. Communications: 1. L. Bowen thanked everyone for their help with the annual meeting. 2. She was pleased with the company that's taken over printing our newsletters, Minute Man printers in Wethersfield, and encouraged other board members to use their services when possible.

K. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action

There was no new business to discuss.

L. Executive Session to Discuss ROWs

Motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Elsmere ROW survey (J. Greenfield/J. Caines) at 8:09 p.m. The board came out of Executive Session at 8:20 p.m., with an action for B. Pelegano to follow up with the attorney that represents the resident whose property abuts the ROW.

M. Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting

Add committee assignments for discussion.

N. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (J. Caines/L. Bowen) passed unanimously at 8:22 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.