AMSTON LAKE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
September 16, 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 7:03 p.m.

B. **Roll Call of Officers and Directors**
Present: B. Pelegano, K. Patterson, L. Bowen, J. Caines, J. Arpin, A. Fichtel, J. Greenfield, C. Rockoff.
Absent: T. Nixon.

C. **Recognition of Guests, Residents, and Property Owners**
Christine Darczyn, 255 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: She lives in the southwest cove and the growth of the vegetation over the years has made it difficult to get a boat or kayak through. She suggested redirecting some of the $40-50K the lake spends yearly on monitoring and studying the lake, data collection, and reporting, toward direct, targeted cove maintenance. She proposed a cove-by-cove assessment, a menu of real options and costs, pursuit of outside funding from beyond the District, and a public comparison with other lakes of similar size and type. B. Pelegano encouraged her to join both the Lake Health and Lake Usage Committees.

Karen Rustico, 253 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: She has lived in the southwest cove for 25 years and believes the cove is filling in toward the middle and that in the next 10 years, she won't be able to access the lake from her property. It is her belief that the Lake Health Committee doesn't test the coves. She stated that the District spends $37K on limnology reports every year, and suggested it could be done every two to three years, with the savings being put toward lake maintenance and management, as well as benthic barriers. She believes the Lake Health and Lake Usage Committees are competing against each other.

Murray Cruickshank, 25 St. Ronan Dr, Hebron: He had been a professional biologist in the past and attended the Lake Health Committee meetings for a year prior to joining. He believes the committee is objective and that the lake is a small, stable lake. He stated that any kind of major, or even moderate, change would upset the dynamics of the lake. He stated that the District needs to make decisions based on current, scientific evidence; and if the wrong decisions are made, it could cause major issues with the health of the lake. He also encouraged the previous speakers to attend the Lake Health meetings.

Jean Walesczcyk, 267 Deepwood Dr, Hebron: She joined the Lake Health Committee because she was impressed with the cleanliness of the lake. She's lived in the southwest cove for 15 years and does not believe she has lost any lake frontage, despite what other residents have stated. She has never been able to swim in the cove because it's inherently shallow and grassy – it's not a problem for her to swim at the beaches and ROWs, which are more conducive to swimming. She cautioned against the idea of hydro-raking, which could put the lake at risk for establishing invasive species.

Todd Angelucci, 260 Deepwood Dr, Lebanon: He has lived on the lake for six years, and is a member of the Lake Usage Committee. He's noticed significant lily pads and overgrowth in Lollipop Cove. He encouraged a comprehensive assessment of the problem, as well as comprehensive, healthy solutions. He supports the District taking a look at the weeds in many areas of the lake.

D. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
Motion to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2026 regular board meeting (J. Greenfield/K. Patterson) approved without objection.

E. **Presentation of Correspondence**

B. Pelegano: 1. Email from residents who've had a slip at Lollipop for 7 – 8 years. The location requires them to navigate their small fishing boat around a large pontoon boat, and on their second trip out this year, their electric motor collected so many weeds that it burned out and hasn't been used since. 2. Email from resident at 294 Deepwood, Lebanon, requesting permission to remove two trees that are on his property line adjacent to the Lollipop parking lot, and which are up against his fence and shed. The board approved the tree removal by email last month, a certificate of insurance was received by the contractor as they would be driving on ALD property, and the work has been completed. 3. Email asking if the new development on Spring Hill, Hebron was part of the District. 4. Email from historian Patrick White, who studies dams in Connecticut and would like to talk to someone from the ALD about the Duck Pond Dam. J. Arpin will respond to him.

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

There was no old business to discuss.

G. **Task List and Action Items**

B. Pelegano went over the task list for September and October, including hiring and scheduling a contractor for leaf removal and upcoming email blasts with end-of-season reminders.

H. **Receive President's Report**

1. President B. Pelegano emailed the owner of the dock that is over the property line at Francis ROW, reminding them of their promise to move it onto their property this season. 2. He has a meeting in October with the attorney for the owners of the property that abuts Elsmere ROW, to illustrate the danger that the planter that is over the property line presents. 3. In response to a resident that spoke at a recent board meeting, he said that he'd never heard a resident ask the District to pull their weeds – and tonight was the first he'd heard of a resident suggesting the District pay for residents' benthic barriers. 4. He also stated that although a few residents have come to the board recently warning about the dangers of dredging, no mention of dredging has been made in the last 8 – 10 years. 5. He said many residents come to board meetings with anecdotal comments about their experiences on the lake, but it's important to work together to come to a happy medium. 6. He spoke to Tax Collector Eileen Curtin, who plans to stay on as tax collector for the foreseeable future. 7. Greg Bugbee at CAES offered to review the recommendations from the District's lake health and lake management companies, and speak about what, in his opinion, makes sense for our lake. He also offered to come back to the lake and answer any questions and speak to certain issues that we might want addressed.

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

1. Treasurer J. Caines summarized the tax collector's report, and is still waiting for the final rate book from QDS to finalize last year's books. The tax collector will be attending the November meeting of the Connecticut Tax Collectors Association. 2. J. Caines reviewed the August financials, which are posted on the website. 3. He confirmed that the ALD does not need to have an audit prior to destroying any records, so he will proceed with the destruction of records that are appropriately aged.

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

1. Committee Assignments: This item was removed from the agenda.

2. Long-Term Financial Planning: Chair K. Patterson reported that the next committee meeting is scheduled for October 6.

3. Lake Health: Chair J. Arpin reported that the latest deepwater sampling took place on October 8. Clarity and dissolved oxygen are very good. The lake is currently in isothermal conditions, 72 degrees, and has cooled down approximately 10 degrees from last month. Beach water sampling was completed on Labor Day, with only one high reading for the season. 2. He met with residents about installing benthic barriers, removing cattails, and re-inspected 500 Deepwood, Lebanon. 3. Regarding the President's report from the August 2026 board meeting: a.) he disputed the change in the amount of plant growth in Lollipop Cove from 2006 – 2026, b.) he said that the reason Amston Lake does more testing than any other lake is because the committee is out every other week doing multiple tests. 4. A. Fichtel mentioned that 2014 was the last year of a 3-year spraying program of vegetation in the lake.

   Discussion ensued regarding the appropriateness of adding editorial content into committee meeting minutes, and working to find common ground among the committees. It was suggested that minutes should reflect the actions of a committee, and not refute the actions of another committee.

4. Lake Usage: B. Pelegano reported that the committee is waiting for the report from Solitude, with the results of the inspection they performed at the lake on August 25.

5. Dams: Chair K. Patterson stated that the report summarizing the inspection of both the Main and Duck Pond Dams on Monday, August 17 will be available to us in a few months.

6. Docks: Chair J. Caines stated that he is planning on scheduling a meeting for October. So far, one resident has volunteered to coordinate setting up the docks up for the winter, but it would be helpful to have a few more volunteers. B. Pelegano offered to help.

7. Beaches and ROWs, Boats: 1. Co-chair C. Rockoff had nothing new to report. A. Fichtel stated that he continues to work on a plan to modify the ropes and poles at Main beach. 2. There are two boats on the ROWs that are out of compliance, and if the owners are not found, they will be removed. 3. K. Patterson is in the process of getting a quote for next year's lake passes and should have it to present at the October board meeting.

8. Beach Pass Checkers: Chair J. Greenfield reported that things ran smoothly and they had most of the shifts filled throughout the summer. Just over $16,000 was spent in this fiscal year, which leaves the District in good shape, budget-wise, for the beginning months of next season.

9. Lebanon Roads: Chair B. Pelegano reported that our contractor promptly removed tree limbs from some of the private roads last month. The contractor quickly repaired a few areas on Manion Lane where runoff was a concern, and the two residents who brought it to B. Pelegano's attention were pleased with the results. Pothole repairs will begin this weekend.

10. Communications: L. Bowen reported that several end of the season email blasts will start going out soon, and that she will send the proposed BOD meeting dates to the board in the next several weeks so that they can be voted on at an upcoming meeting.

K. **New Business – Discussion and Possible Action**
   There was no new business to discuss.

L. **Executive Session to Discuss Possible Ordinance Violation:**
   Motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a possible ordinance violation (K. Patterson/A. Fichtel) at 8:29 p.m. unanimously approved. The board came out of Executive Session at 8:51

p.m. Motion to approve fining resident Joseph Hart of 322 Deepwood Drive, Lebanon $100 for launching a boat that he does not own from a trailer from his yard, in violation of ALD ordinances. The boat must be removed within seven days at the Main Beach boat launch, under the supervision of a boat inspector. (L. Bowen/K. Patterson.) Motion unanimously approved.

M. **Prepare Agenda for Next Meeting**
There was nothing new to add at this time.

N. **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn (A. Fichtel/B. Pelegano) passed unanimously at 8:54 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.