

POALH Board of Governors
Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Cindy Biancamano at 15 Lookout Drive, East Haddam, CT.

Board members in attendance: Cindy Biancamano, Angela Buccheri, Dave Edgington, Jason Griffing, Corinne Halliday, Evelyn Passan, & Kathy Sabo

Board Members Absent: Hema DeSilva & Gary Petersen

Association members in attendance: Lee Griffin - Treasurer, Ed Bader - Tax Collector

Minutes: *Dave Edgington made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 9, 2020 board meeting. Jason Griffing seconded. A vote was held, and all board members present agreed (7 yes).*

Public Comment: None

President's Report: Cindy Biancamano received a call from Pam Domeniello regarding a path by third beach that is hazardous. People are slipping and falling on the built-up stone area that needs to be raked out. Cindy will tackle this project. Cindy received an email from a resident regarding the need to mark the right-of-way from Briarcliff to the East Haddam Land Trust located in that area. There was a question if our association is in charge of that right-of-way. Dave Edgington has a site map and will look into it. A call was received from a resident on Wildwood regarding their brand new paved driveway that was disturbed by the water company. Contact information was given for the water company for this resident. Mike Trocci will continue doing the newsletter. Jason Griffing will get copies of all proposed articles for the newsletter to make sure the article is proper to include in the newsletter then forward them onto Mike for editing, etc. Trash collections for the upcoming holidays will be on Mondays instead of Fridays. Jason Griffing will send an email blast. Bonnie Sudell will continue to stay on as public safety. Cindy also reported that Lynn Macri will take on the project of finding a new swim instructor. The November 2020 BOG meeting will be virtual. Jason Griffing will let Mike know to post that meeting as virtual.

Financial Reports:

- **Treasurer:** Lee Griffin handed out his treasurer's report to all board members present. Since the last board meeting, we have received \$26,447.25 in income. Expenditures were \$16,536.00 Account balances as of October 13, 2020 are \$244,809.65, bank statements have been reconciled and all bills have been paid. *Dave Edgington made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Jason Griffing seconded. A vote was held, and all board members present agreed (7 yes).*
- **Tax Collector:** Ed Bader reported that tax collections for July 1, 2019 are at 99.5 % due to one delinquent property tax account unpaid. The one delinquent property owner filed for bankruptcy two years ago but did not notify us until last month. Our attorneys have submitted a six-month payment plan to her attorney for consideration. We will have an update at next month's board meeting. This payment plan covers both the current and prior year's tax delinquencies plus interest and lien fees. Tax collections of July 1, 2020 tax revenues are at 98.22% of billed tax revenue. Any July 1, 2020 property taxes not received by October 1, 2020 will be deemed late and will charged interest at the rate of 1.5% per month from July 1, 2020 through the month paid. At October 1, 2020 there are 12 delinquent accounts. Demand notices for payment will be sent out in November 2020 with notices to delinquent accounts that if payment is not received by December 15, 2020, a lien will be placed on the property and turned over to our attorneys for collection. Kathy Sabo asked due to the continuing circumstances with Covid if we are taking into account any circumstances of hardship. Ed Bader indicated that no one has contacted him inciting any hardship regarding nonpayment and that most of the homes on the lake are second homes. Jason Griffing inquired if the delinquent accounts are reoccurring offenders. Ed replied some of them are. Jason Griffing also pointed out that we have worked with homeowners in the past who have shown a hardship and reached out to us. *Jason Griffing made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report as presented. Angela Buccheri seconded. A vote was held, and all board members present agreed (7 yes).*

Committee Reports:

- **Events:** Angela Buccheri reported that she and Evelyn Passan have been investigating bands. Angela has set up a shareable calendar as a draft for events. They are looking at four bands for 2021. There have been six fishing tournaments scheduled. Angela is scheduling a fundraiser as she is concerned about the budget. This fundraiser would be with a company called Words on Wood that is willing to hold the craft event at the pavilion or it can be done as a "to go" kit. The events committee would receive \$10.00 for every order with a count under 20 people. If it is over 20 people, then the amount received would go up to \$20.00 profit per order. Dave Edgington mentioned that there is a couple here who lives by second beach whose company is set up to just do fundraising. Jason

Griffing mentioned continuing with the 50/50 raffle during the band events. Angela also is continuing to research a screen and projector as a capital investment. Jason Griffing suggested a Lake Hayward days Olympics. Dave Edgington conveyed that Heather Taylor is willing to do the Lake Hayward beach games for the carnival. Diane Nelson's name was also mentioned. Angela is looking into doing a survey gathering input on events people would like to see happen as well as volunteering to run or work at events. Jason Griffing mentioned that a survey was done about six years ago regarding events and he will share those results with the board again. Dave Edgington volunteered to run a setback and cribbage tournament. Evelyn Passan is really concerned about the budget and feels a lot of the events need to pay for themselves (not the kids – just adult events). A conversation was had regarding the budget process, how money was spent in the past and how to move forward budgeting money for events. A suggestion was made to hold a raffle as well, getting items donated.

- **Lake Quality:** Corinne Halliday reported the committee met to get the Watershed Management Plan on track to be completed by early next year. The amount of \$15,000 had previously been set aside in capital reserves specifically earmarked to get this plan done. Jean Gouin who lives on the east side of the lake is a civil engineer and vice president of an international company that does a lot of this kind of work. She specifically oversees the water resources engineering and environmental science group. She has offered to have her company do part of the work for this management plan at a savings of thousands of dollars. At this time, it cannot be determined if we will need the whole \$15,000 budgeted but based on this reduced rate by Jean's company, we will probably not have to spend the entire amount budgeted for the Watershed Plan. The Watershed Plan is important to complete so we can try to get grants for funding for different projects. Once the proposal from Jean's company is presented to the lake quality committee it will be forwarded to Cindy Biancamano for her review and signature. Corinne also reported that Randy and Felicia Miller will be stepping aside as the East Haddam Lake Association's budget coordinators. This association is made up of the three lakes in East Haddam – Moodus, Bashan and Lake Hayward. Randy had been very key in getting that organized and is the budget coordinator who takes everyone's expenses every year and presents it to the Town of East Haddam. This is how we get money back from the Town of East Haddam to support our lake quality budget. Randy is looking for someone to take over this job and has sent an email out to all three lakes. Corinne will forward that email to the board.
- **Properties:** Cindy Biancamano reported the right-of-way near 100 Wildwood is in bad shape and Gary has asked John Allegra to take care of that. Jason Griffing reported that the rest of the road signs are almost ready. Lee Griffin reported that he will have the port-o-potties closed by November 1st. He will be taking down the flags to wash and store them over the winter. He will also clean out the kiosks. Cindy Biancamano asked Lee and Ed to provide her with keys to the file cabinets in the pavilion closets at First Beach. Gary Petersen is working on refurbishing the benches at second beach in Sandy Z's honor. Lee Griffin is getting the plaque for those. Jason Griffing is working on the no smoking signage. Evelyn Passan inquired about the kayak removal from the beaches. It was noted it needed to be done by October 31st. Evelyn would like to work with owners before they are removed from the racks to the ball field. Evelyn will check out the boat racks the week before they are to be removed contacting owners to remind them of this policy.
- **Secretary:** Nothing to report.
- **Strategic Planning:** Lee Griffin is stepping down from being on this committee. Hema DeSilva sent an email to all board members asking for their input on projects to be included.
- **Technology:** Nothing to report

Old Business:

- **Coronavirus Update:** Nothing new to discuss.
- **Rights-of-Way & Encroachment:** Cindy Biancamano spoke with our attorney, Adam Cohen, regarding this issue. He advised her that we have two choices, to do nothing or sue to evict. The option of to sue to evict is hard to put a price tag on. The amount of \$5,000 is reasonable but if he has to fight it the sky is the limit. If it goes to the state supreme court, he said \$30,000 is nothing and will probably be more than that. Cindy Biancamano did review the property maps with Gary Petersen and discussed perhaps paying for Mr. Byron to get a survey, which Cindy thought was a good idea. Cindy then spoke with Mr. Wright who could not speak for Mr. Byron but felt that he would not accept that as his lawyer has advised him if he accepts that and he is wrong then that could be a problem. Dave Edgington felt the property lines have been this way forever and we should leave it alone. Jason Griffing agrees but he feels we need to have consistency and we cannot treat one property owner different from another property owner. Cindy asked how many other properties might be having issues. It was mentioned there might be a few more. Cindy felt we could not get into this with all these people. It is not fiscally possible. Jason Griffing asked about the right-of-way issue and if the attorney had commented on that. Cindy responded that she wanted to get the preliminary conversation and questions with the board discussed first before she invited the attorney to speak with us. Lee Griffin noted the association is paying taxes on that property so if Mr. Byron is not willing to get a survey, we should take our property back. Dave Edgington asked if we pay taxes on the right-of-way. It was indicated we are more concerned with the lake front property not the right-of-way. Kathy Sabo asked

if the town maps show it to be his property? Ed Bader indicated that tax map shows the property to be ours. Evelyn Passan suggested we let Mr. Byron know there is a liability issue if someone falls on the property. Cindy asked can we quit claim the property. Kathy asked if we could grant him an easement? Kathy asked how can you quit claim something that you don't really know where the line is? Cindy suggested that perhaps we can ask Mr. Byron to survey his property with the understanding that we will quit claim him some property to maintain 15 feet. Cindy further commented that regardless of what we do it will cost more than what the board is authorized to spend. We will have to bring it to the membership. Corinne feels we have to be very careful as a board setting a precedent. Jason commented that the land is not used by the association. Can we quit claim it, so we don't have to pay taxes and there is no liability? Lee Griffin feels if this happens Mr. Byron should reimburse us for the survey. Ed Bader noted Mr. Byron has 15 feet and the association has approximately 60 to 70 feet. Ed Bader feels that Mr. Wright has encroached on Mr. Byron's property and Mr. Byron has encroached on association property. Cindy did indicate that Mr. Wright does have a survey showing his property to be what he says it is. We just keep going around and round because the bottom line is Mr. Byron refuses to get a survey. Cindy again posed the question if we should sue to evict or let it be. Dave Edgington reiterated to just let it be. Jason Griffing feels torn on this. Kathy Sabo feels on a personal level she would let it be but also feels she has been voted in as a board member to represent all the members of the association. She is not sure how the association members would feel about letting this issue go. Jason agrees. Cindy suggested we bring it to the membership then and let them make the final decision on how to proceed and vote on spending the money to go to court if they want to. In the long run we could sell Mr. Byron the land. The long-term goal is to present different options to the association to vote on. Cindy Biancamano will be in contact with the attorney with our many questions or coordinate for him to attend a board meeting.

- **Dam Reconstruction:** Corinne Halliday reported that the committee is planning a campaign to educate the residents on the age of some of the structures and the need to do the work as dictated by the inspection that was done. Jason Griffing feels we need to say it is not "if" we do the dam it is "when" we do the dam. There is not a choice with this project. Dave Edgington asked do we do the work first then go to the town and/or state for reimbursement? Corinne indicated the estimate the association members saw was put together by our engineer to wrap our minds around what the potential cost could be once we do finally put this project out to bid as we need funds to get the process started. Dave Edgington feels that this project and pricing process was not explained well to association members. We need to explain much better to members how the grant process or reimbursement process works for this project in that we get the reimbursement or grants after the project is done. Kathy Sabo also thought members did not realize that the price estimate put forward was not the actual price as it has not gone out to bid yet as we could possibly pay less than that. Ed Bader stated that we would be going out for grants and it is a possibility that we may get 25 % to 50% of what we spend from the town, but it is not guaranteed. There is no money in the form of grants from the state to pay for dam repairs. The Watershed Management Plan will help with the grant writing process. Angela Buccheri commented that regardless of whether we get the money or not from the town or state the method was not clear to the members about the reimbursement or grant process.
- **Geese:** Evelyn Passan reported that she has a proposal from Nutmeg Farms for under \$5,000 to do a pilot program on First Beach to include adding the eggs in March, April and May and harassing the geese. Evelyn will email the proposal to the board. Jason Griffing asked if she is only visiting First Beach will the geese then just populate on Second Beach? Evelyn felt that we have to start somewhere, and this is why it is a pilot program to see if it even works. Evelyn commented that this is a community effort, and everyone will need to harass the geese. She feels we may need different fencing and to get rid of the grass near First Beach. Use of motion detector sprinklers and dog volunteers. To begin we would need to get approval for Nutmeg Farms to start in March. Corinne asked how many times they would come out to addle the eggs? Evelyn said Nutmeg would find the nests and replace the eggs with wooden eggs and then harass the geese. Evelyn also thinks investing in better fencing is a good idea. Jason Griffing thinks a better fence is a good idea. Dave Edgington does not agree with a bigger fence. Angela Buccheri thought perhaps a bigger fence in the spring and then a smaller version in June, July and August when people are most frequenting the beach. Cindy Biancamano asked why we would want to do fences when we are paying someone to take care of the geese. How would we know if the service works? Dave Edgington asked if all the geese at our lake have nests here or are their nests somewhere else. Evelyn stated that we think there are about 8-12 pairs of domestic geese on the lake and the rest are Canadian. Cindy Biancamano asked about a cost for the fencing. Kathy Sabo asked what Nutmeg's time frame is for the dog's to be present harassing the geese. Evelyn said that the current proposal is for March, April and May only. Kathy feels that we would need dogs through August. It was noted that this is where volunteers would come in. Corinne Halliday asked if this was a three-year commitment or is it a one and done? Evelyn stated that it would be a long-term commitment. Angela Buccheri asked about Nutmeg's success rate just adding eggs with volunteers picking up the slack to harass the geese. Jason Griffing noted that we would need to ask for references. Jason also mentioned the geese article that Cindy Biancamano sent to all board members referencing the fact that the goose poop does not affect lake water quality in regard to E.coli. Evelyn also reiterated the need to put some tall grass around to prevent the geese from coming

ashore. Evelyn will send the current proposal from Nutmeg Farms along with other documentation to all board members to their review so we can make a decision at the next board meeting.

- **No Smoking Signs:** See discussion under properties.
- **Sandy Z Memorial at 2nd Beach:** See discussion under properties.
- **Spring Packets:** Jason Griffing brought up the issue that we were not going to mail out the spring packet. He feels we should send out a postcard letting association members know how to access the spring packet information. Kathy Sabo asked if there are some people who would still be getting it by mail. Jason indicated no. It would all be online. Angela Buccheri asked if it is an issue that we do not have everyone's email address. Jason indicated that is why he would like to send out a postcard because we do have everyone's mailing address. This way association members would know where to access it on the Lake Hayward website. Cindy Biancamano would like to print out some and put them in the kiosks at the beaches. Dave Edgington asked about how we would handle mailing out parking passes as they used to be included in the spring packet. Jason indicated that those would just be mailed out separately every three years.

Dave Edgington made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Angela Buccheri seconded.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.