

RPA Annual Report 2021

COVID-19 again prevented meeting in person. The RPA met monthly using the Zoom format with good attendance. The RPA's annual meeting was held July 27th, in person, and was hosted at Camp Arrow Wood. The camp staff led tours for the many attendees.

The former Lakeside Christian Camp, initially named by Mill Town as The Camp at Bousquet, was subsequently rebranded as Camp Arrow Wood. They have been making renovations to the property and applied for permits from Pittsfield's Conservation Commission to make improvements to the athletic fields. They have also been working on a master plan for remediation work that needs to be done to the dam. Their 2022 summer camp sessions will span from late June to mid-August. The coed sports-themed overnight camp will be for children between the ages of 8-15. Carrie Holland, managing director for Mill Town, is the voting member for the camp. Jon Millburg, director of construction, is the alternate. Both have been actively involved with the RPA.

With the Town's financial support, the RPA and the Town continued the vendor's management of invasive weeds. The pond's invasive weeds were treated on June 8th with good success. However, the planned test treatment of the native tape-weed could not be done, as the Town had not filed for the necessary permits through Natural Heritage. The Town is working on this, and hopes to have the permits ready for tape-weed treatment in summer 2022, in addition to the regular treatment for invasive weeds.

The canal restoration initiative began on June 22nd. A 3-year permit was issued by the Conservation Commission and Natural Heritage, and Aquatic Roots was contracted by RPA for this project. The first phase of the project began at the outflow of the canal into the Pond and back to the Shore Road bridge. A 10-foot-wide path was created to help promote access for boating and swimming. The weeds were hand-pulled by scuba divers; support staff in kayaks transported the weeds to shore. The weeds harvested were removed away from the Pond for composting. Weeds harvested were primarily Elodea, a native weed, and Brittle Naiad, which is invasive. These were carefully removed. A second harvesting was done August 17th. The next phase of the project, in summer 2022, will be to harvest a channel of weeds from the Shore Road bridge back to Town Beach Road.

RPA officer elections were held in the fall, with most reelected. Susan Benner declined to be re-nominated to serve as vice president due to work obligations, though she continues to serve as the voting member for Whitewood. Laura Rosenthal of South Pond Farm was elected to serve as vice president.

Ongoing:

- RPA volunteers conducted tributary monitoring, with testing done twice this summer. Lab results after a heavy rainstorm showed higher than average E. coli counts, especially at Tracy Brook and Whitewood Brook. The beaver dam at Tracy Brook Wildlife Sanctuary was partially breached, bringing high water and debris into the Pond. All beaches are tested weekly for E. coli. The beach at Richmond Shores tested positive once for E. coli and was closed, but was able to re-open the next day when its next test was satisfactory.
- Cyanobacteria testing was done bi-weekly, paid for by the RPA. While cyanobacteria are present at deeper levels, the amounts did not approach concern thresholds. Ongoing monitoring is again planned for 2022.
- The Town funded and managed the public boat ramp monitors. This year, they were able to staff the boat ramp with sufficient monitors and hire lifeguards for the town beach.
- RPA's goose management plan was continued for its third year. In general, the overall goose population was lower than it has been for the past two years. The decision to continue with the current management plan for 2022 will be discussed in spring and likely will continue.
- The Town has been working with Camp Russell to schedule the restoration of the deteriorated detention basin at the camp.
- The RPA website and Facebook page were regularly updated. Pond updates were submitted monthly for the *Richmond Record*. The Lakes and Ponds Association held their symposium by Zoom in the fall.
- The annual "*Developments at Richmond Pond*" funding solicitation newsletter was distributed in July. Contributions starting July 1, 2021 were down somewhat from the previous year.
- With the help of many volunteers, and start-up funding by the RPA and several sponsors, the picture book, *The Gem of Richmond - A History of Richmond Pond*, was finalized, and was published in January 2022. With over 165 books pre-ordered, its initial press run of 300 sold out, and a second printing was ordered. Its 30-chapter Table of Contents and how to purchase it or have the book shipped to you is posted on this website, under the More tab on the menu bar.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Kelly, President

Louise Brogan, Vice President

Carl Foote, Treasurer

Laura Rosenthal, Assistant Treasurer

Doreen Donovan, Secretary