

RICHMOND POND ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT - 2023

For the convenience of members and the public, the RPA met using the Zoom format with good attendance, monthly from April through October. The RPA's annual meeting was held August 22nd, in person, and was hosted at Camp Arrow Wood. The attendees enjoyed a meal of tacos and ice cream and heard reports on initiatives.

The Pond was not treated again this year, partly due to a lack of response from Natural Heritage to questions regarding herbicide treatment. The goal is to have new permitting approved for 2024 which would include herbicide treatment, weed harvesting, and the annual lake draw down. The RPA, in collaboration with the Town and City of Pittsfield, is exploring hiring a consultant to help develop a comprehensive lake management plan and assist with permitting. Weed mapping of the pond was done in 2023, paid for by the City of Pittsfield.

RPA officer elections were held in the fall. This year Ken and Carl left their respective positions of president and treasurer on the Board of Directors. Ken will remain an active Board member as the representative for the independent cottages. Re-elected were Louise Brogan as vice president, Laura Rosenthal as treasurer, Jonna Gaberman as the assistant treasurer and Doreen Donovan as secretary. The elections concluded with a vacancy in the role of president. To increase the pool of potential candidates for officer positions, an amendment was made to the RPA Bylaws, "If one of the RPA officer positions remains unfilled, following outreach to all eligible/voting members of the RPA board, an alternate or ex officio member of the RPA board may be elected to fill the position, on an interim basis and would serve with voting authority."

Ongoing:

- RPA volunteers conducted tributary monitoring, with testing done twice this summer. All beaches are tested weekly by their contracted agencies, for E. coli. The E. coli and nitrate counts have been low, below the warning levels. Phosphates continue to be high in Clarks Brook, which promotes algae growth in the northwestern part of the pond.
- Cyanobacteria testing was done bi-weekly by the Lakes & Ponds Association of Western MA, paid for by the RPA. The levels for cyanobacteria have been well below the state threshold. Ongoing monitoring is again planned for 2024.
- The Town funded and managed the public boat ramp monitors. They were able to staff the boat ramp with sufficient monitors. There were no applicants for the lifeguard positions again this year. The beach opened without a lifeguard and the gate was locked at 6 pm. The beach was cleaner this year. The Town is working on a solution to replace the deteriorated handicap access mat into the swim area.
- RPA's goose management plan was discontinued this year. There was no volunteer to manage the program.
- The Town worked with Camp Russell to restore the deteriorated detention basin at the camp.
- RPA board member Miles Garfinkle and Holly Stover have been working on removing purple loosestrife from around the pond and along Town Beach Road. This is a long range project to slow down the spread of this invasive plant.

- The RPA website and Facebook page were regularly updated. Bruce Whitman is managing the RPA website. He has updated the calendar and added live links. Pond updates were submitted monthly to *Richmond Record*.
- The annual “*Developments at Richmond Pond*” funding solicitation newsletter was distributed by mail in July.
- The picture book, *The Gem of Richmond - A History of Richmond Pond*, was a successful endeavor with 750 books published and over 600 sold. They remain for sale at Bartlett’s. Books have also been donated to Richmond School. Ken has shared his experience with publishing the book with other lake organizations, to encourage similar efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Brogan, Vice President

Laura Rosenthal, Treasurer

Jonna Gaberman, Assistant Treasurer

Doreen Donovan, Secretary