

MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, April 25, 2017

RPA Business:

Minutes – The minutes of 10/25/16 were approved. Two items were added to today's agenda: formation of picnic planning group; year-end weed control report from Solitude

Reminder about 2017 meeting schedule - 4/25, 5/23, 6/27, 7/25 (annual meeting with picnic format @ Camp Russell), 8/22, 9/26, 10/24

Treasurer's report – Carl reported a total of \$45,168 in all accounts, \$12,752 of which is in the dam maintenance account. FY donations to date are \$9,000 compared to last year's number of \$9,900 and \$10,274 for the prior year. All current fiscal year (2016) dues have been received of \$1,860. Total income for this fiscal year is \$10,733 with total expenditures of \$1,833, plus \$2,000 transferred to the dam maintenance account. Major expenses are fund raising \$1,185 and water monitoring \$604.

Report on 4 Winter Projects (with project group, lead person underlined):

#1 - Hydro-raking or dredging of canal – plan development & taking initial action steps – (Mark, Linda)

Ken reported from Mark's notes to him that there is not much to update on this topic. There has been little demonstrated interest in this project from those who live on the canal or in the surrounding area. This project will take a considerable amount of resources in the way of staff time and funding to proceed, neither of which the town has at this time. Mark has spoken with the Conservation Commission and they have a good understanding of what the permit process will look like if & when we go forward, but without some initiative from adjacent & nearby property owners, he can't see prioritizing this.

Ken expressed a similar sentiment. But since we know that the professional monitoring of Nordeen Marsh & pond water levels for 3 years was a previously expressed condition for Natural Heritage consideration of a deeper drawdown, that would appear to be a next step, as if we ultimately seek dredging, a deeper drawdown will be needed. Two possible vendors were identified by Conservation Agent Shep Evans, & Linda Kay has reportedly done some follow-up, but in the absence of a proposal & related cost, this item is tabled.

Ken mentioned that UMass is studying Richmond Pond & other area lakes to assess the effect of lake draw-downs, including measurement of water levels & impacts on plants & animals. This study by doctoral candidate Jason Carmignani & others is still in progress.

#2 - Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources; potentials of Geosyntec web tool for watershed management plan development – (Susan, Ken)

Ken reported that, while Susan had repeatedly inquired of him whether the web tool was yet live, action on this item was delayed by the delay in the launch of the Geosyntec the web tool. Ken was informed in March by Bob Hartzell of Geosyntec that the free watershed management web tool had been finalized & released for use. Ken shared this info with Mark. Mark asked Conservation Agent Shep Evans to evaluate the tool & make a recommendation. Ken spoke last Wednesday with Shep about the web tool after he had studied it.

Shep indicated that it's not limited to one access per entity, so each of us can open the link, create our own username & password, & study it. He also shared that part of the incentive from the Commonwealth is that any entity that uses this tool to create its watershed management plan then becomes potentially eligible for grant funding from Section 319 of the Clean Water Act for related projects, & if you're not using this tool, you're not eligible. The state is trying to standardize watershed management approaches with this leverage.

Both Mark & Shep suggested that the appropriate agency for the Town of Richmond (its ConCom), the appropriate agency for the City of Pittsfield (since the pond spans two jurisdictions), and the RPA each spend some time studying this resource. Following that, there should be a collaborative discussion about which entity should become the "lead" entity for developing the Richmond Pond watershed management plan. All are encouraged to click on the link: <http://prj.geosyntec.com/MassDEPWBP> & study it. Perhaps by the time of the RPA's May 23rd meeting, all three entities will have studied it & be ready to schedule a 3-way meeting about next steps. The watershed-based plan structure includes 9 elements, & its detail for our watershed includes a link to the 223 page *Diagnostic/Feasibility Study for the Management of Richmond Pond* that was conducted in 1990 by Baystate Environmental Consultants, Inc.

#3 - Develop education plan for boating & swimmer safety to include researching restricting jet-ski/personal watercraft (as does Stockbridge Bowl) – (John, Susan, Jim, Louise)

John reported on his research, recommending that RPA adopt & link on the RPA website the following related resources; by Red Cross: Swimming Safely in Lakes Rivers and Streams; and the following links on www.mass.gov: Water Safety; Keeping Kids Safe Around Water; Boater Safety Law; Personal Watercraft Safety Law; Stand-up Paddle Board Safety. Ken will add these links.

Discussion followed about possible components of an education plan. Suggestions included:

- Updating the related sign that's posted on the boat launch kiosk, perhaps also posting one at the Richmond Shores mailbox kiosk & at the fence post nearest the boat launch ramp. Jim will share the sign they developed for Onota & Pontoosuc Lakes, as a possible replacement.
- Sending a related email communication to each of the community association presidents, requesting its distribution to their homeowners, addressing both boating & swimmer safety & a boat washing/zebra mussels reminder.
- Developing a related handout for distribution by boat launch monitors to each boater. This will be explored with Mark.
- Exploring edits to the pond map to show the semi-private beaches (Richmond Shores, South Pond Farm, Camp Russell & Lakeside Christian Camp) & demark the 150-foot safety zone from a public or private swimming area, within which MA Boating Law prohibits operating a motorboat.

John reported that he has reached out to Richard Seltzer, president of the Stockbridge Bowl Association, requesting info on how they restricted jet-ski/personal watercraft, but they have not yet connected. John will pursue & report details at our May meeting. Jim volunteered to chair the subgroup to further study & implement boating & swimmer safety suggestions.

#4 - Facebook page enhancement – (Carl, Mark, John)

Carl reported that John had initially created the Facebook page & turned it over to him. Over the winter, Carl posted a few pictures. Some generated responses; some did not. His suggestions are: RPA needs to develop an exciting 2017 agenda to promote. The Facebook page needs contributors to post eye catching items and to add friends. Then we can pay to push exposure as offered by Facebook. (\$100 has already been approved but not yet expended for this purpose.)

Ken shared Mark's notes – Mark's experience starting the Gt. Barrington Historical Society's Facebook page, & starting Richmond's Facebook page, is that we'll want to have an outline for the summer, & post a lot of new & old pictures & news, but keep it light & brief. Getting people to follow the page takes time & effort, & some financial resources to target the geographic area. He's found that posting pictures makes the post stand out, & usually gets people "liking" & commenting, which helps promote the page. Spending some money this spring & summer on promoting the page will also help. For about \$20/week we could target everyone with a Facebook account in Richmond & Pittsfield, & this will bring in a number of followers. We should also promote it on the town website & the town Facebook page, & get as many people as possible to recommend it to their "friends" on Facebook. Once we've built up about 100 followers, the page kind of grows on its own as long as we continue to post fresh material.

Suggested items to feature in posts include our monthly meetings, the annual meeting/picnic, safe boating, & swimming safety, hopefully with a photo each time. Carl will work with Mark & John to implement as summer nears, & everyone's encouraged to send Carl photos.

Active – Priority Projects:

Lake Management Plan – Ken reported that most of the publicity steps outlined in the October RPA minutes have been accomplished. Jim & Cathy will study the plan & develop "next steps" recommendations to present at the May meeting.

Shoreline fishing trail update – Ken reported that as a follow up to discussion at the 10/25 RPA meeting, he met with the Richmond Board of Selectmen on 11/23/16 & requested & received their approval to allow RPA volunteers to periodically trim that trail & to have 3 signs fabricated & placed by the Highway Dept. at the designated locations on the trail. Ken shared with the Selectmen Lakeside's concerns that the fishing trail not be actively marketed (as it could increase trespassing onto Lakeside property), so the first of the 4 initially proposed signs, which was to have been placed on the chain link fence at Town Beach, is being eliminated. Ken will request fabrication of the other 3 signs, so they should be up soon. He & Ted Potter will walk in & trim the trail this week.

Proposed Planning Board rezoning around the pond – Carl reported that there are no new developments, as Planning Board is awaiting comment from the Boys & Girls Club/Camp Russell.

Formation of picnic planning group – Peter confirmed Camp Russell's willingness to host the event on July 25. John offered that Lakeside would contribute some of the refreshments. Susan & Peter volunteered to serve on a planning group, but planning ramp-up will wait until closer to the event.

Announcements:

- Year-end weed control report from Solitude – Carl reported that the spring pre-treatment survey, the June application, & mid-summer assessment confirmed a successful treatment; the fall survey confirmed the same. Communication continues between Mark and Solitude to establish the budget for this year. Solitude plans to conduct the pre-treatment survey on May 5th and treat the lake in early June within the agreed upon contract with the town.
- Creation of Tracy Brook Wildlife Sanctuary – Ken noted the recent related articles in Mass Audubon publications, *Richmond Record & Berkshire Eagle*. The 21 acre parcel in Richmond with beaver ponds & the great blue heron rookery was donated by the purchasers of Camp Marion White. It is the 100th Mass Audubon sanctuary. Mass Audubon has erected a temporary sign. There are 2 parking spots in the adjacent pull-off, & the public is requested not to park on private property on the west side of Swamp Road. Holly raised a concern about the large size of the beaver dam, noting that about 30 years ago, a similar dam in that location had given way & resulted in a 4-foot wall of water rushing down to the lake. It was suggested that Conservation Commission explore installing beaver deceivers to prevent further build-up of the dam.
- Other Town-related announcements -
 - Annual Town Meeting will be May 17, 7:30 pm at Richmond School. The one pond-related warrant item is \$15,000 for weed treatment. The boat ramp monitors & beach lifeguards are level-funded & included in the public works budget.
 - Boat launch area improvements are starting this week, to be completed before Memorial Day. Closing of boat ramp access will only be needed for a couple of days, dates to be determined & posted/announced in advance.
 - Ken suggested that RPA consider purchasing one or two benches for the boat launch area, as they're not included in the plan, but details need to be developed, for possible action at the May meeting.
 - Formation of implementation committee for Open Space & Recreation Plan – Mark had indicated that he'd suggest that the Selectmen act on this, but in his absence, there was no update.
- Sewer user advisory committee & results of 3/29/17 information session – Ken reported that he'd attended the session & most recommendations made last summer had been implemented. Handouts from the info session should be posted on the town website soon. Four of the 6 spots on the advisory committee have been filled, but the group had not yet met.
- Richmond Conservation Commission perspectives (beaver deceivers at Nordeen Marsh, etc.) – No report
- Reminder - Wearing of PFDs by kayakers/canoe paddlers are required by law until May 15.

- Dead trees - Concern was expressed about the large number of dead trees behind the cottages on the south shore, which could potentially pose a forest fire hazard unless cut & removed. It was alternatively noted that the dead trees provide nesting sites for birds & should remain standing unless posing a danger to swimming or human activity areas.
- Invitation - It was suggested that the new owners of the former Camp Marion White property be invited to our meetings. Ken will reach out to them.

Any update items, of interest to all, from each camp & community association? New chief operating officer & camp director Peter Fish reported that orientation for Camp Russell summer staff was imminent, & he would include boater & swimmer safety information in the orientation. It was suggested that their staff, campers & parents be alerted not to rely upon GPS to access Camp Russell, as some systems direct the driver to Lake Road or Branch Farm Road, neither of which provide access to Camp Russell.

Next meeting – May 23, 2017

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Susan Benner, vice president, (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Peter Fish (Camp Russell); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

Alternates Present: Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell)

Guests present: Ted Potter (Richmond Shores); Holly Stover (Branch Farm)

Directors Absent: Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, May 23, 2017

RPA Business:

Minutes – The minutes of 4/25/17 were approved.

Treasurer's report – Carl reported a total of \$45,053 in all accounts, including \$12,752 in the dam maintenance account. FY donations to date are \$9,100 compared to last year's number of \$9,900. All current years (2016) dues have been received of \$1,860. Total income for this fiscal year is \$10,833 with total expenditures of \$2,049, plus \$2,000 transferred to the dam maintenance account. Major expenses are fund raising \$1,185 and water monitoring \$604. We were appreciative of the donation from BNRC in recognition for Ken's & Lenox Land Trust's support of their Parsons Marsh handicapped accessible boardwalks project.

Reports on Priority Projects:

Vendors for Nordeen Marsh water level study - Linda Kay reported that the meeting notes from the RPA's 4/3/12 meeting with Natural Heritage & other state agencies showed that Natural Heritage had asked for community input & 3 years of Nordeen Marsh water levels measurement data. Previous attempts at data collection had failed (measuring sticks disappeared), so a replacement plan is being explored. There have been preliminary discussions with Housatonic Valley Association as a potential vendor. Jim McGrath may have more information on measurement options. We now have the updated bathymetry depth chart data that Natural Heritage required. What we don't have is 3 years of data on the water levels for the marsh and pond, preferably measured every 2 weeks. Natural Heritage has stated that they will not accept data using volunteers, so a contractor needs to be hired. One of Natural Heritage's main concerns is the impact of a lake drawdown on marsh water levels & its resident plants & critters.

Ken reminded the RPA board that if hydro-raking is employed, it is not dependent upon a drawdown. However, if dredging were to be employed, a deep drawdown would be required. Closing out the topic, Ken & Mark will circle back to Natural Heritage for final clarification.

(Note – The following related information was received the next day from Shep Evans. No decision has been made about beaver deceiver(s) at the outflow of Nordeen Marsh. The Conservation Commission is waiting for a stakeholder group to form up for the purpose of installing and monitoring a stage gauge to track the water level in Nordeen Swamp and to establish nominally normal year-round water levels. An eventual flow management device would be maintained/managed by such a group or its nominee and would be informed by readings from the stage gauge. He envisions such a stakeholder group to include and/or draw upon the expertise of the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA, Stockbridge Office), Mass Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW, Dalton Office), and the Richmond Pond Association. Shep has discussed this concept with Alison Dixon at HVA and she may have started forming a stakeholder group; she & Linda Kay are in touch. Once the group holds a site visit (which Alison and Shep should probably attend) and decides where the gauge should be placed, Shep can get it installed by the highway

department.) Ken's note - If the HVA is to be the contracted vendor for monitoring & record-keeping, a contract cost & responsibilities will need to be defined & the procedure approved in advance by Natural Heritage.

Decision on lead entity for watershed management plan development - Susan led the discussion amongst the parties about the Geosyntec web tool, but there was no report back from the Conservation Commission on their feedback, though Mark reported that Shep Evans had studied it. Jim said that the Geosyntec tool is complex & not for novices. He also said that between the land use GSI and Berkshire Regional Planning maps, they provide the basis for the watershed plan. Linda reminded the board that grant eligibility depends upon having used the Geosyntec tool to develop a water management plan. Pittsfield has applied for a \$45K planning grant to hire Geosyntec to implement it for the Onota Lake watershed, so Pittsfield will pilot its implementation, & Richmond & the RPA will learn from that effort. Ken Kelly will ask LAPA-West to put this topic on their agenda.

Results of research on restricting jet-ski/personal watercraft (a component of boating & swimmer safety plan) - John reported that Lakeside has a new policy that prohibits guests of the property (renters) from bringing or using jet skis, and doesn't allow them for their camp program. Jim reported that Stockbridge Bowl is the only MA great pond (pond over 200 acres) that prohibits jet skis, & that rule was made a long time ago & no one else has succeeded in doing so since. Sue pointed out that Richmond Pond is complicated by the fact that it's in two towns and Pittsfield probably can't make a rule for only one body of water. Note: 45 mph is the state speed limit for jet skis. Ken will explore editing the posted maps to show the swimming areas & the 150' swimmers' shoreline area where motorboat activity is restricted.

Facebook page enhancement - Carl has been more active with Facebook posts & "boosts" this past month. And there is a lot to learn about this tool. A picture of Solitude conducting the lake survey reached 3.4k people, & the Solitude boat picture produced positive comments. Then a copy of the orange "pond closed" flyer reached 5.4k. This "boost" did create some conversation, good and bad. Jim added that the Facebook page has 191 friends. Jim & Susan suggested that a posting be made once a week, but no more "boosting" as it costs money & is too widespread, rather than targeting town residents. Posts could focus on boating & swimming safety, boat launch ramp enhancements, town beach opening, & trout stockings. John was thanked for getting the page up & running.

Planning RPA all-town picnic at Camp Russell on Tuesday, July 25 - The purpose for the event is to raise awareness about RPA & the amenities & beauty of the pond - a celebratory, family event with a picnic & short comments by RPA (it's our "annual meeting").

Planning committee leads: Susan, Peter & Linda. The committee will meet initially **at Camp Russell on Tuesday, June 13 at 2:00 pm**. Linda will recruit additional shores residents, & all RPA board members & alternates are invited to the planning meetings.

- Event timing will be: Tuesday, July 25, 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Setup will be at 4:00 pm.
- Food & beverages: served in mess hall or tent depending on weather. Menu to be determined.

- Activities may include: games for children & adults, a STEM pond study activity, bouncy house, pontoon boat rides (with tour script), swimming with lifeguard, water volleyball, use of boats (with life preservers); short presentation by RPA with handouts ...
- Engagement of Town Recreation Committee – Mark will attend their meeting & suggest engagement. Carl will also reach out to Jeff Konowitch, committee chair.
- Budget: Lakeside is donating hamburgers; Camp Russell is donating space; RPA will pay for other expenses. Budget needs to be developed.
- Marketing plan: Was not discussed. Marketing plan needs to be developed.

Bench(es) for boat launch area – Ken shared the results of his research, identifying several alternative sturdy outdoor benches, with costs. Following discussion, a motion was made & approved to fund & order one or two 6-foot benches, total cost not to exceed \$1,800 including shipping, to be shipped to Town Hall. Mark reaffirmed that the town would absorb the costs of installing the benches, involving creating a concrete pad into which they would be anchored, but perhaps to be removed during the winter, located between the guard rail & shoreline at locations to be jointly determined by the highway department & the RPA. Linda suggested that the benches have a plaque to honor those who were lifetime friends of the RPA, including Jim Mooney & Lois Kelly; this motion was also approved. Ken will meet with Mark to select bench type & vendor.

Additional action items from review of Pond Management Plan – Cathy reported that the 4 executive officers met on 5/7/17 to review the eleven recommendations of the Lake Management Plan to determine which ones were already being implemented, & which ones might be targeted as additional priority projects for this calendar year. Those already being implemented, well in progress, or already identified as a targeted project this year: (1) annual reporting; (3) zebra mussel spread prevention; (4) sharing management responsibilities; (6) water quality monitoring (7) fishery; (8) recreation; (9) public access; (10) dam; (11) funding.

The following appear to need more attention: (2) nuisance aquatic species management – initiate the 3-year monitoring of Nordeen Marsh & engage Richmond Shores residents; (5) education & outreach – much is happening, including new Facebook page & new format for annual meeting/picnic, but engaging the schools should be explored. Peter will provide information to Cathy regarding Camp Russell's STEM curriculum work with Richmond public schools to see how RPA might engage.

Concern about goose strobe lights – Ken cited last year's history of neighbor concerns about Camp Russell's goose strobe light, & plans to reposition & baffle it this year. Ken raised similar concerns about South Pond Farm's annoying 2 goose green strobe lights, which are currently anchored off their beach & active. Information from the Night Sky Association was also shared. Cathy, representing South Pond Farm, informed the board that SPF & Ken had already been in touch & are working toward a solution asap. After a discussion, the RPA took no position on the issue, & left it to Ken &/or others to pursue as they wish, on an individual basis.

Announcements:

- Weed treatment – Results of May 9 weed assessment & May 22 weed treatment/pond closing – Carl reported that Solitude did the pre-treatment survey and all went well. To no one's surprise, the curly leaf pondweed is in all the same areas as last year, basically around the whole pond up to depths of 12' or so. Milfoil was observed right before the bridge, also as expected, and although they didn't go under the bridge it is presumed to be growing on the other side per usual as well. That all being said, treatment will be the same as last year, approximately 140 acres or so. Weed treatment was scheduled for Monday, May 22. Carl received orange pond closing fliers & posted them around the pond on Thursday, May 18th. Solitude will return in July for a post-treatment assessment.
- Boat launch area improvements – Mark reported that this project was behind schedule & that he's awaiting an update that he will share as soon as he knows more.
- Annual town meeting results – Mark reported that the Richmond Pond related item was approved - \$15,000 for boat ramp monitor funds. The board thanked him & Susan, who spoke on behalf of its approval.
- Shoreline fishing update – Ken reported that the 3 signs are being fabricated & will soon be placed, though Mark clarified that if stolen, they will not be replaced. The trail has been trimmed, with Ted Potter's assistance. Mark reported that there has been vandalism in and around the town beach.
- Formation of implementation committee for Open Space & Recreation Plan – Mark reported that he brought this topic up to the Board of Selectmen & it will be discussed at their June 14, 6:00 pm meeting. Susan recommended that we find ways to educate the Town about open land benefits. Richmond Land Trust, the Town Recreation Committee & RPA or representatives of each might play roles with OSRP implementation.
- Tracy Brook Wildlife Sanctuary update – Ken shared that the Sanctuary director has been advised of concerns about size of the beaver dam, & that strategies to reduce the potential for a "blow-out" are being researched. Mark reported that Shep was awaiting reach-out from Mass Audubon about this.
- Richmond Conservation Commission perspectives - Beaver deceivers at Nordeen Marsh & Tracy Brook WS were briefly discussed.

Items of interest to all, from each camp, community association or town official:

- Mark reported that the Town will be relocating the emergency siren used for major weather emergencies to the boat launch area.
- Signs to discourage boats in Tracy Brook WS ponds were suggested (so as not to disturb nesting herons).

- closing –
surprise,
'up
- Peter noted that Frank Ostrander, property manager of Camp Russell & the Boys & Girls Club of the Berkshires, was retiring at the end of May after 27 years of service – a round of applause ensued.
 - John Mead reported that Lakeside Christian Camp is scheduling a dam inspection, to cost about \$3,000, as well as related work on mature trees by the dam. It was mentioned that RPA can assist with a portion of these costs as needed.

Next meeting – June 27, 2017

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Susan Benner, vice president, (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Peter Fish (Camp Russell); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Present: Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission);

Directors Absent: Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Guests: Neil Pilson (Richmond Selectman)

MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, June 27, 2017

RPA Business:

Minutes - Approved 5/23/17 minutes, correcting one inconsequential typo.

Treasurer's report – There is currently \$44,741 in all accounts, with \$244 in recent expenditures (\$100 LAPA-West dues, \$144 for GoDaddy website software renewal). One donation of \$35. Carl recommended a mid-July mailing of our annual solicitation letter, to include an invitation to the 7/25 picnic, with an RSVP request for the picnic.

Priority Projects:

1. Nordeen Marsh water level study – Ken will be sending a communication to Natural Heritage, requesting an updated clarification of their expectations if we are to seek their approval for hydro-raking, perhaps next year, or for dredging the canal, perhaps in several years. The discussion revisited Natural Heritage's previous comment that a professional vendor was required for them to accept data. Ken asked whether ESS Group had been contacted by others regarding their automated water level monitoring devices; they apparently had not. The ESS Group monitors can be planted out of sight from the road, to discourage tampering. The purchase of their unit & its placement is preliminarily estimated at \$2,000, with additional costs for periodic data reading visits. Ken suggested their services should be explored; it was suggested that ESS Group also be asked to provide a former client reference. Mark is seeking Shep's advice (Richmond Conservation Commission).
2. Dam inspection & related tree work – Ken reported that the estimate for the dam inspection & related tree work at Lakeside Christian is now \$4,000 cost. Ken has advised John that if Lakeside would like financial support for this project, they would need to make a written request with a description of the work & name of vendor.
3. Planning for RPA all-town picnic at Camp Russell on 7/25 – Susan facilitated a discussion that resulted in the following clarifications:
 - Event description & schedule: Tuesday, July 25th, 5-8 pm, rain or shine, estimated guests #100+
 - Deliver food/drink/supplies to Camp Russell (in days prior)
 - 4:00 pm - set-up
 - 5:00 pm - family activities & live music
 - 6:15 pm - close down swimming; reopen swimming at 6:45 pm
 - 6:15 – 7:15 pm - dinner, including short RPA pitch
 - **Event educational materials** to include posters of pond map including swimming areas, depths, new town canoe/kayak launch dock, & pond history

Volunteer Needs & Assignments for picnic:

- **Set-up** (4): Susan (Event Coordinator), assisted by Cathy, Ken, Peter, Al
- **Activities** (with persons needed): Face Painting (2) ??; games (2) ??; pontoon boat guides (4) 5 pm Cathy + 1 more, 7 pm Ken + 1 more; 2 pontoon boats & drivers to be provided by Camp Russell; cooks (2) ??; Food area monitoring/stocking (1) ??; Music (1) Lucy arranges; Clean up (3) ??
- Peter will explore whether Berkshire Museum could provide a STEM-related activity.
- Posters: Susan, Ken, Shep
- **Marketing:** RPA website subscriber email list, RPA website info, invitation in annual solicitation mailing (Carl); announcement inclusion in the weekly Town of Richmond email subscriber communication (Mark); posting event on Town website (Mark); *Richmond Record* article and paid ad (Ken); announcements at each community association annual meeting
- **Costs:** Motion was approved for funding up to \$1,500 for costs of the picnic. A separate motion was approved for funding up to \$1,200 for the annual solicitation letter mailing, to include a picnic invitation.
- **Preparations:** Much preparation work needs to be done for this event, & RPA board members, alternates & other volunteers are encouraged to contact Susan at Bbenner@rnetworx.com to volunteer for tasks.

Announcements:

- Status of boat launch area improvements, including benches – Mark reported that the project is nearing completion. The 2 fishing platforms & the car-top boat launching dock are all installed, & work on the parking lot & the paving approach to the boat launch ramp is nearing completion. The boat launch ramp will be closed Wednesday, 6/24 for the paving; notices went out today & related signs are up. Mark & Ken reported that decisions on the benches to be ordered will be made with the highway department head Gerry Coppola in early July.
- Recent vehicle break-in & theft at boat launch area – Mark reported that the perpetrator, a Pittsfield resident, has been arrested by State Police & charged with possession of stolen property.
- Town Beach opening & lifeguard staffing – Mark reported that the town beach opened as scheduled on Father's Day & is open 7 days/week, 11 am to 7 pm, with lifeguard staffing Tuesday through Sunday.
- Status of implementation committee for Richmond Open Space & Recreation Plan – Mark reported that the plan was discussed at the 6/14 Board of Selectmen meeting, where concerns were expressed by several attendees that the recommendations in the plan might be forgotten unless one or more entities were charged with periodic review & action on the strategies. The Selectmen were enthusiastic about the plan, & implementation responsibilities will be further discussed at their next meeting (on 7/14), following review of the Plan by the Selectmen.
- Sewer system concerns about “flushable” wipes, etc.; see related 6/22/17 *Eagle* article – Mark reported on the Town's outreach for this expensive, pervasive problem.

- LAPA-West - Identification of issues for the LAPA-West fall (9/9) meeting with legislators @ Onota Lake – Carl shared his proposed presentation & solicited feedback.
- Shoreline fishing signs update – Mark reported that the signs are scheduled to be installed next week.
- Swimming & boating safety action updates; signage & notices – State of MA laws are to be posted, using summary used at other Pittsfield lakes. Susan brought up that there is not enough information for boaters on where the swimming areas are, & this information will be added to various pond maps.
- Update on goose strobe lights – Shore Road resident Paula Patterson outlined the problems with both Camp Russell & South Pond Farm goose lights as well as governmental ordinances re light pollution. Camp Russell will be looking at placement of their light to address the concerns. Ken is communicating with the South Pond Farm board on reaching a possible solution for their two goose lights. Suggestions made included baffling the entire light – not just one side, anchoring the lights on a dock or shore so they don't rotate, or replacing them with goose lights from the vendor whose marketing material claims they have developed goose lights that successfully eliminate neighbor complaints.
- Facebook page update – Carl reported that he continues to post with good results.
- Siltation concern – Susan expressed concern about silt runoff into the pond from the area of the former Camp Marion White that has been cleared of some trees & all shrubs & ground cover. The siltation devices initially placed at shoreline appear to have disintegrated. The Conservation Commission will be advised of this concern.
- RPA officer elections – Ken reminded all that officer elections are planned for our August meeting, & to be thinking about who may wish to run for each of the four officer positions.

Next meeting – July 25, 2017 – Annual Meeting/Picnic @ Camp Russell

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Susan Benner, vice president, (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Peter Fish (Camp Russell); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Present: Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

Directors Absent: Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Guests: Neil Pilson (Richmond Selectman); Paula Patterson (Richmond Shores); Lucy Hoffman (Richmond resident; Monument Mt. grad heading to Northeastern; interested in political science & community work)

MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, July 25, 2017
Annual Meeting/Picnic at Camp Russell

RPA Business:

Given the new experimental picnic format, with all Richmond residents invited, no votes or formal actions were taken. While the weather had been drizzly & cool most of the day, perhaps impacting the number of attendees, the rain stopped at 3:00 pm. RPA & other volunteers arrived at 4:00 pm for set-up. Guests began to arrive at 5:00 pm. They were greeted at the parking lot by parking attendants, & were provided with a shuttle by golf cart as needed, to the dining hall – the “center of activities.” Live music was provided throughout much of the event by Richard Stanmeyer & Ted Michaels (guitar & trumpet). Announcements were made about narrated pontoon boat rides around the pond (2 before dinner & 2 afterward), swimming in the pond at the enclosures staffed by lifeguards, & the children’s activities available beside the dining hall.

Dinner was served starting around 6:15 pm (burgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, chips, salad & drinks). While waiting in the food service line, the approximately 70 attendees perused the colorful & informative posters prepared by volunteer Lucy Hoffman – one describing the Richmond Pond Association & another describing key features of Richmond Pond. A depth map of the pond and a poster with key features of Camp Russell were also available.

Many chose to eat at the picnic tables on the patio, while others ate inside the dining hall. As dessert was served, Ken introduced himself & welcomed all to Richmond Pond, Camp Russell, & RPA’s new format for our “annual meeting.” He shared the primary goals for the event, which were to introduce Richmond residents to the pond, introduce them to the RPA, & have fun.

Ken briefly shared the mission of the RPA (preserve & enhance Richmond Pond), our history (founded in 2000; 17 years old), how we’re organized (21 volunteer board members), & a few of the major things that we do. He acknowledged RPA board members present, & mentioned our new Lake Management Plan, our website, & our Facebook presence.

Mark Pruhenski briefly talked about how he & Richmond town officials work closely with the RPA on pond matters, & introduced the other town employees present. He described the recent enhancements to the public boat launch area, including 2 fishing platforms & the kayak launch dock. Town beach hours (11 am to 7 pm daily) were also shared. The assistance from Pittsfield, through Jim McGrath, was also acknowledged.

Ken thanked Camp Russell for hosting the event. He introduced Peter Fish, who provided a short summary of the various camp activities & events that are hosted at Camp Russell. Ken also thanked RPA volunteer Lucy Hoffman for creating the informative posters about the RPA and the pond. He encouraged folks to pick up an RPA brochure & peruse the posters if they had not already done so. He mentioned the letter that was recently mailed to many in the community, encouraging their contributions to support the work of the RPA.

He introduced Cathy Deely, RPA secretary, & turned the mike over to Susan Benner, RPA vice president, who had very ably chaired the small planning group for the event. Susan thanked our musicians for the delightful background entertainment they provided. She also asked for a moment of reflection in memory of Herb Zweig, long-time RPA board member & volunteer, who passed away last week in NJ.

Remarks closed with encouragement for attendees to help themselves to seconds on dessert (Ardelle's fresh-baked brownies & cookies) & an announcement that the second round of pontoon boat rides would again be leaving the docks very shortly.

Next meeting – August 22, 2017 – Town Hall

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Susan Benner, vice president, (Whitewood); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Peter Fish (Camp Russell); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)
Alternates Present: Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

Directors Absent: Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Guests: Counting the RPA directors & alternates present, several additional town employees, and family members & friends who volunteered to help with the event, approximately 70 persons attended the event. Several brand-new residents of Richmond attended, as did many town residents who had never before visited Camp Russell.

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, August 22, 2017

RPA Business:

Minutes – Minutes of 6/27/17 & 7/25/17 were approved.

Treasurer's report – Carl reported that there is currently \$45,471 in all accounts, with \$3,415 in recent expenditures, including the 2 benches: \$1,655 (up to \$1,800 had been allocated). The mailing of our annual solicitation letter (to 975 Richmond property taxpayers & prior RPA donors), including an invitation to the 7/25 picnic, went out in the mail about 7/18, at a cost for duplication & mailing of \$609 (up to \$1,200 had been allocated, for the mailing & picnic-related publicity). To date, since July 1 (in fiscal year 2017-18), \$4,102 in contributions have been received from 53 individuals/families. Carl read several notes of appreciation that were received with the donation checks.

Officer elections for 2017-2018 – Nominated: Ken Kelly - President, Susan Benner - Vice President, Carl Foote – Treasurer, Cathy Deely - Secretary. All were reelected by unanimous vote.

New RPA Alternates – Ken remarked on the pattern of absenteeism from most alternates. It was also noted that Shores alternate Herb Zweig passed away last month, & Shores alternate Karl Volkman was moving to China. Those from the Shores & South Pond Farm were especially urged to consider nominating additional alternates going forward. Ken shared his recent communications with Lucy Hoffman, the volunteer who created the posters for the RPA picnic, regarding possible service as an alternate on the RPA. He read By-Laws paragraph 2.02.01 – “The seventh director shall not be affiliated with the six organizations listed above and shall represent independent residential property owners with private access to Richmond Pond and members of the general public who are not affiliated with any of the above organizations.” Lucy could perhaps serve as an alternate for the members of the general public constituency. While she expressed interest in doing so, she was unable to attend today's meeting, so no action was taken on her status.

Priority Projects:

1. Evaluation of RPA all-town picnic at Camp Russell – See 7/25/17 minutes for a summary. Attendance was about 70, impacted by weather. We had planned for up to 150, given RSVP's of 70, but later publicity did not request RSVP's. Carl provided an expense report: Up to \$1,500 was allocated; expenses totaled \$973. Breakdown: food: \$641; lifeguards, parking lot monitors & musicians: \$332. Though absent, Mark had asked that the following be shared – “From the town's perspective, great event – positive feedback; the 7/25 minutes summary of the event looks good. Having people RSVP to Town Hall worked well.”

Following discussion, there was unanimous agreement that RPA should use the picnic format again for our annual meeting. While Lakeside was suggested, there was no representation from Lakeside present at this point in the meeting, & the general sentiment was that the event should be in Richmond, i.e. at Camp Russell. Peter indicated that hosting the event had enhanced exposure for Camp Russell, & it was likely that their board would approve hosting the event next year. It was agreed that co-sponsorship of the event with the Recreation Committee should be explored.

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2. Herbicide Treatment for invasive spiny naiad – The pond will be closed Thursday, 8/24 for application of Diquat herbicide by Solitude Lake Management on 30 acres, mostly along Richmond Shores & in the canal. There will be a one-day closure for swimming, fishing & boating. Fliers have been posted around the pond & additional posters were shared at the meeting. In addition to posters, the closure was posted in the Town e-News, on the town's Facebook page, on the RPA website, & an email was sent to all RPA website subscribers to increase awareness. The boat ramp monitors have been given cones to close the ramp the night prior. Community Associations were asked to inform their members. The cost of \$5,100 is to be shared by town (\$2,500) & RPA (\$2,600). A vote was taken to approve \$2,600 in RPA funding for the treatment.
 3. Nordeen Marsh water level study – Ken summarized the proposal from ESS Group for automated water level monitoring system. The purchase of 3 units (one water level unit in the marsh – out of sight from the road to discourage tampering, one water level unit in the canal, & one barometric pressure/temp gauge) & 3 subsequent download visits for \$6,200, for first year. In subsequent years, it would be \$800 for each periodic data reading visit (4 @ \$800 = \$3,200). Mark had asked that we be informed that Shep Evans, Conservation Agent, had reviewed the proposal, but Mark had not yet received his assessment; Nick reported that the Conservation Commission had not yet seen it.

Three years of marsh level data is one of Natural Heritage's conditions for consideration of a deeper drawdown (which would be needed if future canal dredging were to be done). Natural Heritage has previously indicated that a professional vendor was required for them to accept marsh water level data. But deeper drawdown is not required for hydro-raking, as it is done from a boat while water level is at summer levels. Solitude has previously provided a quote for hydro-raking of one foot of debris from the canal - \$51,000 to \$57,400 if the town disposes of the debris - but permits & multiple funding sources would need to be lined up first. A motion was made & approved to contract for the ESS monitoring service, at a cost not to exceed \$6,200, to make possible the option of future dredging, under the conditions that Shep provide his assessment of the proposal, Alison Dixon of Housatonic Valley Association likewise be asked for her assessment, and ESS Group is to be asked to provide a former client reference before any contract is signed. Ken will also inquire about the results of the U. Mass study on the impacts of draw-downs on ponds and pond life.

A discussion ensued with the following points made:

- Deep drawdowns of the pond work to control the weeds in the canal & elsewhere.
- There may be limits on how deep a drawdown can occur based on the dam & the accumulated silt in front of it.
- If hydro-raking requires periodic maintenance in addition to the annual herbicide treatment for the invasives, the recurring significant cost of hydro-raking can't be sustained by the RPA & the town.
- A review by the two town conservation commissions is needed, looking for their endorsement for monitoring and drawdown.
- If nothing is done for the canal, it will die & return to a natural atrophied state.
- The canal is the largest of the 4 tributaries that feed the pond. We don't know the impact of losing that tributary.

Linda reported that she had identified scuba divers willing to do hand-pulling of weeds in the canal, but after her consultation with Shep Evans, it was determined that this could not occur without a permit, so the idea was shelved for this season. Concerns were raised by Kitty about the native tape grass that has again sent its stringy shoots to the surface in August. Carl volunteered to contact Solitude to see if there is a program that will address the tape grass, though it is expected that, as a native weed, strategies will be limited.

Announcements:

- Benches at boat launch ramp – Both of the benches that were purchased by RPA were permanently installed by the Town Highway Department at no cost to RPA. Proposed wording for plaques for both benches was discussed & approved as follows, to be ordered from Randall Trophies, Pittsfield, @ about \$20 each):

*Gift of Richmond Pond Association
in memory of Jim Mooney
a lifetime friend of RPA*

*Gift of Richmond Pond Association
in memory of Lois Kelly
a lifetime friend of RPA*

- Fishing platforms – These have become a very popular enhancement to the pond.
- Town Beach – Mark had asked that it be reported that while the lifeguards have completed the season as of last Sunday & are returning to school, the town beach will remain open until Labor Day. Off-season, the vehicle barrier at the boat launch and the fencing across the road by the beach closes the town beach area to vehicle access. But the town beach area will remain open to walkers & joggers off-season, with access through the pedestrian gate. Cathy reported that for wheelchair use, the new fishing platforms are terrific for getting close to the water, but the mesh ramp at the town beach area needs to be kept clean of gravel to be easily accessible.
- Implementation plan for Richmond Open Space & Recreation Plan – Mark had asked that it be reported that the plan has been distributed to board/committee chairs with a request from the Selectmen that they review it periodically & report progress back to the Board of Selectmen. (The Plan already specifies one or more responsible entities for each implementation item in the Plan.)
- LAPA-West – Carl will attend the LAPA-West fall (9/9) meeting with legislators @ Onota Lake & will share our issues of concern with them, as was discussed at the June RPA meeting. He will ask for their support with weed management regulations, boating & swimming safety, & more flexibility to enact jet ski prohibitions.
- Swimming & boating safety action updates; signage & notices – State of MA laws are still posted, using summary used at other Pittsfield lakes. The various pond maps have not yet been updated to show where swimming areas are.
- Update on goose strobe lights – Peter reported that the Camp Russell goose light was removed on their last day of camp, 8/18. Ken reported on his recent communications with the South Pond Farm property manager. Their board was to have met this past weekend to discuss their goose light. Cathy & Jessica had viewed the goose light & have shared with the South Pond Farm board their recommendation that the goose light be removed. Ken encouraged decisions now by both entities that will set the stage for the 2018 season either without goose lights, or with other models & unit placements that will not disturb the serenity of the pond. Information about alternative goose lights will be shared with South Pond Farm & Camp Russell.
- Tributary monitoring results & pond water clarity measurement (on 8/17) – Carl reported that the E.coli measurements at all 4 tributaries & the outlet at the dam were all below the “swimming closing

threshold" of 235 ppm, with Whitewood Brook providing the highest reading, of 121. Nitrates were also within the acceptable range. Clarity of the water at the deepest point in the pond (55 feet), using the secchi disk visibility methodology, exceeded clarity measurements in recent years.

- Facebook page update – Carl reported that he continues to post with good results. We need to determine how many "friends" the page has.
- Any update items, of interest to all, from each camp & community association – Peter reported that the Chili & Chowder Festival, a fund-raiser for Camp Russell, will be held at Camp Russell on Saturday, 9/16, from noon to 5 pm; tickets are \$25. He encouraged the group to attend & invite others.

Next meeting – September 26, 2017 – Town Hall

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Peter Fish (Camp Russell); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

Alternates Present: Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); John O'Brien (Branch Farm)

Directors Absent: Susan Benner, vice president (Whitewood); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Guests: Linda Auswald (Richmond Shores); Alan Schneit (Whitewood); Fran Schneit (Whitewood); Marvin Smith (Richmond Shores); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm)

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, September 26, 2017

RPA Business:

Minutes – Minutes of 8/22/17 were approved.

Treasurer's report – The balance in all accounts is \$38,065, with \$12,775 in the dam maintenance account.

- Good news! Contributions to date are \$5,452, up from \$3,905 for the same period last year.
- Major expenses in September:
 - ESS Group, for water level measurement project \$6,200
 - Solitude Lake Management, for August spiny naiad treatment \$2,600
- Dues collected to date = \$960. Dues are still due from Lakeside Christian Camp, Richmond Shores & South Pond Farm.

New RPA Alternate(s) – Ken shared additional recent communication with Lucy Hoffman's & requested endorsement of her application as an alternate on the RPA, representing "...members of the general public who are not affiliated with any of the above organizations" (RPA By-Laws paragraph 2.02.01). Lucy would primarily be a seasonally present alternate, as she is attending college out of the area (study abroad in Greece this fall, & at Northeastern University subsequently; intended majors of political science & criminal justice); she's been a Richmond resident since age 3, loves the pond, & is a graduate of Monument Mountain HS. Lucy was voted in as an alternate.

Proposed 2018 meeting schedule – The request for Town Hall for fourth Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, April through October, except the annual meeting/picnic in July at Camp Russell, has been approved by Town Hall. On behalf of the RPA, Cathy thanked the Town of Richmond for making the space available.

Priority Projects:

1. Nordeen Marsh water level study – Following study of the detailed "Standard Conditions" that were referred to in the ESS Group contract but not initially provided, Ken & Carl met with Mark, & a proposal was subsequently presented to & approved by the Richmond Board of Selectmen to have the Town of Richmond be the contracting agent for this project. The cost will be paid for by the RPA (\$6,200 previously approved). Mark & Ken then reported on the site visit today by ESS Group to install the automated water level monitoring system units.

Ken has inquired about the results of the U. Mass study on the impacts of draw-downs on ponds and pond life, but has not yet received a response. It is anticipated that the study of several lakes may still be in the "write-up" phase.

2. Identifying possible winter projects – Cathy brought up a previously mentioned project of RPA working with Richmond Schools on pond information & issues. RPA members will collect preliminary information from the Richmond School (Louise), Berkshire Museum (Susan), the Housatonic Valley Association (Susan), & Mass Audubon (Ken); the topic will be discussed in October to assess whether this might be of interest or how RPA might be a part of an existing effort. Ken will contact the Richmond Recreation Committee to see if they'd like to be a partner in the RPA annual meeting & picnic. These & other ideas will be discussed at the October 2017 meeting.

Announcements:

- Report on results of LAPA-West fall (9/9) meeting with legislators @ Onota Lake:

Carl presented to Senator Adam Hines and Representatives Tricia Farley-Bouvier & Smitty Pignatelli & all assembled, introducing our 218 acre pond, & stating that we want deep drawdown, as we are spending \$15K to \$100K a year on aquatic herbicide weed treatments. Deep drawdown worked for 30 years, but Natural Heritage has blocked its use in recent years. Now the canal is filling in, & its bottom is collecting dead leaf matter and muck.

Carl also asked that state legislation be amended so that lake associations or towns could ban jet skis from small lakes. Smitty and Patricia said "good presentation!"

About 11 lakes presented, and common goals & projects were aired. Laurel Lake stated that they had not been successful with their filing for Notice of Intent with Lenox ConCom to obtain approval for a deeper draw down to address the zebra mussels. Jim McGrath volunteered to meet with them to review this further. It was noted that the ConComs in different towns apply drastically different standards for approval. Rep. Pignatelli suggested that these goals should be pooled to create a greater impact from our state legislators on agencies like Natural Heritage & standardization of ConCom approaches.

- Spiny Naiad post-treatment assessment – Carl reported that on 9/25, Solitude conducted a post-treatment survey of their spiny naiad treatment, & it was very effective. The native tape grass is still proliferating at this time of year, as expected. Their final report is expected in late October.
- Results of 9/12 tributary monitoring – Carl reported that the inlet at the canal had an "unsafe for swimming" E.coli reading of 325, up from 157 at the 8/17 tributary sampling. The high reading is from the geese & ducks, as there is little flow-through; the beavers are working hard at the beaver dam & there's been little rain since mid-August. The outlet E.coli reading at the Lakeside dam is very low - at 1 – which implies that the lake is delivering clean water into the Housatonic.
- Removal timing of kayak launch dock – Mark reported that the removal will be later next year. RPA members reported that there is vibrant use of the new fishing platforms & benches.
- Reminder about requirement for wearing PFD's – Ken reminded all that state law requires that from September 15 - May 15 life preservers **must be worn** by canoeists/kayakers, personal watercraft users, water-skiers & youth less than 12 years of age.
- Draw-down to begin November 1 – Mark reported that the permit for the winter 2-foot drawdown was submitted to Pittsfield ConCom. John said that Lakeside is awaiting a dam inspection report.
- Facebook page update – Carl reported that the recent picture of benches at the boat ramp was seen by 762 people with 11 likes.
- Richmond Conservation Commission perspectives – No update at this time.
- Emergency equipment access to beach area off season – Mark reported on learnings from the 9/25 medical emergency incident at town beach, also sharing that all local & area emergency personnel have keys to both gates.
- Wildlife harassment by a jet ski – Ken reported that waterfowl harassment by a jet ski on Sunday, 9/24 was reported to the MA Environmental Police, with the registration # of the boat & a photo.
- Goose light update – Ken reported that South Pond Farm removed their goose light for the season.

Next meeting – October 24, 2017 – Town Hall (last scheduled meeting of 2017)

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Susan Benner, vice president (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Present: Louise Brogan (Branch Farm);

Directors Absent: Peter Fish (Camp Russell); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Guests: Don Champlin (Whitewood); Penny Champlin (Whitewood); Daniel Scorpa (Richmond Shores); John Scorpa (Richmond Shores); Holly Stover (Branch Farm)

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, November 28, 2017

RPA Business:

Minutes – Minutes of 9/26/17 were approved. (The October meeting was postponed because of a severe inclement weather forecast.)

Treasurer's report – The balance in all accounts is \$39,209, with \$12,775 in the dam maintenance account.

- Contributions to date are \$6,052.
- Annual Federal & State tax forms have been filed.
- Dues collected to date = \$1,560. Dues are still due from Richmond Shores Association.
- Participation in Giving Assistant was shared; Ken has been trying to set up the account.
- Initiating end-of-year targeted solicitations to businesses that use the pond for their events was endorsed (Canyon Ranch – 10 trips scheduled for 2018; bass fishing clubs for tournaments – Lip Rippers; others).
- Seasonal advertising in *Richmond Record* was suggested, & \$128 was approved for this purpose (1-column small ad \$14/month x 5 = \$70 & 2-column small ad \$29/month x 2 = \$58 for July picnic = total \$128 for the year). Monthly ad might read: Richmond Pond Association; Attend our Monthly Meeting; 4th Tuesday, 5:30 pm, Richmond Town Hall; www.richmondpondassociation.org.

Priority Projects:

1. Nordeen Marsh water level study – Since drawdown is now complete, ESS Group will be visiting Richmond Pond this Wednesday to extract the first batch of pond & Nordeen Marsh water level & temperature data, from the equipment installation date of 9/26 until this Wednesday, 11/29. They will return in the spring following pond refill, to retrieve the next batch of data from the 3 units. Based on visual observation by RPA members, Nordeen Marsh is holding its normal water level, after drawdown is complete. But the ESS Group data is expected to provide the scientific documentation that Natural Heritage requires.
2. Winter projects – Updates are due to Ken on 2/1 and on 4/1 from each lead person
 - 1) *Collaboration between RPA with the Richmond Consolidated School & perhaps Berkshire Audubon Sanctuaries for study of Richmond Pond.* **Louise Brogan (lead), Susan Benner.** Ken shared the result of his discussions with Audubon staff Becky Cushing & Dale Abrams. Mass Audubon already has an educational partner relationship with Richmond Consolidated School – with 2 teachers (Lisa Callahan, 5th grade science) & Heather Ostrander (6, 7, & 8 grade science; land ecology-based; native plants). Also with many other schools. They already go into many schools & do a segment on watersheds – how water moves, impacts on water quality, includes lakes & ponds & what gets into the water; could include a field trip with water testing, etc. These segments are usually funded by grants to support the efforts of Mass Audubon staff time. Grant request pending to Berkshire Environmental Endowment for 6 schools. RPA could fund a grant to Mass Audubon to have their staff target Richmond School students, using Richmond Pond &/or Tracy Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, or could perhaps provide the staffing on its own. RPA goal = introduce Richmond school students to Richmond Pond & Tracy Brook WS.

- 2) *Explore possible partnership for the annual RPA picnic with Richmond Recreation Committee.* **Susan Benner (lead), Lucy Hoffman, Peter Fish, Holly Stover.** Initial promotion plan regarding advertising in *Richmond Record* approved.
- 3) *Enhance the Richmond Pond map.* **Susan Benner (lead), Ken Kelly.** Include private and public swim areas, wake control. Check Solitude map for changes.
- 4) *Write Richmond Pond Association Annual Report* **Cathy Deely (lead).** Generation of an annual report is noted in the Lake Management Plan. Post on website and Facebook page; hand out at picnic and use in fundraising.
- 5) *Review Richmond Open Space & Recreation Plan.* **Ken Kelly (lead), Holly Stover.** Review Plan for identified RPA roles, & develop action steps to ensure our participation/collaboration on implementation.

Announcements:

- Sewer Users Advisory Committee – Ken reported for Mark that while they now have a fully staffed committee, they had not yet met. A quarterly sewer users info session was held on 10/18. Related financials were posted on the Town website on 10/19.
- Draw-down progress – John reported that winter drawdown was completed several days ago. He also shared details on the early spring pond re-fill schedule.
- Status of UMass pond drawdown study of Richmond Pond & other Massachusetts lakes – Ken has received an update from UMass researcher Jason Carmignani on the status of the U. Mass study on the impacts of draw-downs on ponds and pond life. This is still a “work in progress” but he anticipates finishing with the bulk of the project by the end of next year (2018). Once he has it finalized, he will send Ken the data specifically from Richmond Pond. Jason mentioned that he is also involved in a deep winter drawdown study involving Stockbridge Bowl & Lake Buel (serving as their “control” lake); Richmond Pond is not part of that study.
- Celebration 11/6 of boat launch area improvements – Mark & others from the town were present. Carl spoke for RPA, & commented that RPA is keenly interested in preserving the health of the pond for recreation. He thanked Gerry Coppola for the Highway Department’s help with installing the benches donated by RPA. The event was covered by *iBerkshires* the next day and also in the Sunday 11/19 *Berkshire Eagle* article by Gene Chague, including Ken’s photos of launch area enhancements.
- Fishing trail signs – Ken reported for Mark that these signs were installed last week.
- Facebook page updates – Carl reported that on 10/27 the posted picture from Lenox Mountain reached 247 with 6 likes; the 11/16 drawdown picture reached 233 with 2 likes; the 11/18 copy of the *Berkshire Eagle* boat launch article reached 99 with 3 likes.
- Website updates - 2018 calendar items include RPA meeting dates. Page hits are 5,779 since 3/5/15. Carl reported that the highest number of hits took place regarding Camp Marion White (perhaps due the property listing for sale).
- Richmond Conservation Commission perspectives – While there was no report, Holly asked that the Commission take into account the wildlife, e.g. eagle habitat, & watershed in their decision making.

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- Clarification on use of CPA (Community Preservation Act) funds for lake-related projects – Ken shared excerpts from an 11/6/17 email to Jim McGrath from Stuart Saginor, Executive Director, Community Preservation Coalition. Maintenance of pond health (weed control, etc.) is not an allowable use of CPA funds; other uses for lake-related projects is very limited. While the City of Pittsfield has just begun participation in CPA, the Town of Richmond currently does not participate (voters must approve participation).

Update items, of interest to all, from each camp & community association:

- Peter reported that Camp Russell has experienced major vandalism, with copper piping stripped out of their buildings.
- Ken reported that one of the plaques on the boat launch area benches was vandalized; he will take care of replacing it.
- The Solitude weed management final report for 2017 is expected soon; Carl Foote will follow up.
- Carl reported that a LAPA work group was recently formed, involving Smitty Pizzatelli, to study how to encourage more consistent approaches to decision-making by town conservation commissions & Natural Heritage; Carl will follow up to check on its progress.
- Ken reported that the recently developed Geosyntech watershed management plan development software is being piloted at Onota Lake, so we will await the results of that study before revisiting whether to use that system to develop a watershed management plan for Richmond Pond.
- Ken reported that Kitty Levitan is home from the hospital & we all wished her well.

Winter project groups are to meet periodically over winter; each convener/lead person to provide updates to Ken by February 1st & April 1. There will then be scheduled an early/mid-February & an early/mid-April meeting of the 5 conveners (with Ken's apple pie) to help prepare projects for action at our April RPA meeting.

Next meeting – April 24, 2018 – Town Hall (first scheduled meeting of 2018)

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages, Susan Benner, vice president (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Peter Fish (Camp Russell)

Alternates Present: Louise Brogan (Branch Farm)

Directors Absent: Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Lucy Hoffman (independent/public); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission);

Guests: Daniel Scorpa (Richmond Shores); John Scorpa (Richmond Shores); Holly Stover (Branch Farm)