

Richmond Pond Association
Minutes - Tuesday, April 26, 2016

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Tina Wixsom, vice president (Camp Russell); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield)

Directors Absent: Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Peter Fohlin (Interim Richmond Town Administrator); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

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

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Judith Powers (South Pond); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Susan Benner (Whitewood)

Guest: Neal Pilson (Candidate for Selectman)

RPA Business:

Opening items - Ken noted that a quorum was present. Minutes were approved for 10/27/15. Neal Pilson (candidate for Selectman) was introduced & welcomed as a guest.

Meeting dates for 2016 - All were confirmed for 4/26, 5/24, 6/28, 7/26 (annual meeting), 8/23, 9/27, 10/25, all at 5:30 pm except on 4/26.

Treasurer's report - Carl reported that there is currently a total of \$36,167 in all accounts, \$8,726 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Annual dues for 2015-16 have been received from all entities, totaling \$1,860. Contributions to date this fiscal year have been \$9,700, closely approaching the 2014-15 fiscal year's total contributions of \$10,230.

Ken reported that the Richmond Town Warrant, to be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting on May 18, includes \$20,000 for boat ramp monitors, \$15,000 for weed treatments, & \$5,000 for lake management. While not explicitly mentioned in the warrant, town beach lifeguard expenses are expected to be covered again as well. Jim reported that he anticipates that Pittsfield will contribute \$3,500 to the Town of Richmond to assist with lake management.

Active - Priority Projects:

By-Laws amendment - It was discussed and approved, in Para. 2.02.02, to replace the third ex officio non-voting representative, Massachusetts Office of Environmental Affairs representative, with Richmond Conservation Commission representative. (The Conservation Commission had recently discussed this & agreed that their participation in RPA could be mutually helpful. In anticipation of our By-Laws change approval, they have designated member Nick Martinelli as their representative, with Adam Weinberg as their alternate.)

Weeds – Results of the 2015 post-treatment assessment summary is posted on RPA website's *About the Pond* page. The action plan for 2016 is year #4 of the 5-year weed treatment plan (for invasive weeds). Solitude Lake Management's pre-treatment assessment (vegetation survey) is scheduled for May 4. Related permits are current and Pittsfield's Order of Conditions will be renewed in May. Treatment is likely targeted for late June & more weeds are expected due to a warmer winter & little ice cover. (Update note – It was learned after the meeting that the weed treatment is tentatively scheduled for May 25.) The native weeds strategies discussion is yet to occur with SLM staff, but Carl will be meeting with SLM's Michael Lennon on May 4.

Plan for canal dead weeds & remediation of increased canal turbidity – The drawdown occurred in the fall before dead weeds could be removed. In fall 2015, RPA had designated up to \$1,000 in the budget to assist with this project; these funds may be used for 2016. This will be a topic for discussion with SLM staff, Natural Heritage & Richmond Shores leadership.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Boating & swimmer safety - Susan & Jim bring experience & did research on other lakes' use of buoy markers for no-wake zones, including estimated costs, implementation strategy & related pros & cons. Given the total costs of about \$250/buoy (with chain & anchor), several other concerns, & existing designated public & semi-public beaches, Jim did not recommend purchase of or use of buoys as the most effective way to promote swimmer & boater safety.

Recommended next steps include: increased education through distribution of information by boat ramp monitors (MA Boater Guide), signage at boat ramp, Richmond Record article, & mailings to pond community associations. Jim & Susan will come up with a definitive list for further board discussion & action.

Draft Richmond Pond Management Plan - Cathy & Jim walked the board through the process of putting the draft together, sources used & content choices to create this *framework*. Experienced in this kind of project, Jim indicated he thought we were about 50% along.

Topics for further discussion at upcoming meetings: Goals & recommendations for implementation; collaboration with the Town of Richmond & City of Pittsfield, & roles in the finalization of the Plan. The target is the annual meeting conversation about the draft goals. Any suggested changes in the draft Plan should be sent to Cathy, who will work with Jim.

Donor Letter - Carl shared a draft letter & led a discussion on how best to communicate with & solicit input from prior RPA donors. It was generally agreed to re-craft a letter that was focused on the Pond Management Plan & perhaps include a Survey Monkey option for requested feedback.

Announcements:

- Town beach improvements - are on target for completion by Father's Day beach opening.

- Public boat ramp improvements – Dept. of Fish & Wildlife is staging materials there for fall renovations, which will include creation of a kayak/canoe launch area. No work will be done there during summer, so as not to interfere with the summer boating season.
- Backup roles - Carl & Ken raised the issue of needing backup positions for treasurer & webmaster. They have developed draft operations manuals for both functions. Any volunteers?
- Memorial ideas – There will be an event this summer at Camp Russell to recognize the lifelong work of Jim Mooney. The RPA will rely upon guidance from Tina on how the RPA can best participate.

Next meeting – May 24, 2016, 5:30 pm

**Richmond Pond Association
Minutes - Tuesday, May 24, 2016**

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Tina Wixsom, vice president (Camp Russell); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

Directors Absent: Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Peter Fohlin (Interim Richmond Town Administrator);

Alternates Present: Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Judith Powers (South Pond); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Susan Benner (Whitewood)

Guests: Linda Kay (Richmond Shores; former RPA president)

RPA Business:

Opening items - Introductions for Conservation Committee representative Nick Martinelli. Minutes were approved for 4/26/16. Board member contact sheet & camp director/community association contact sheet were both circulated for updating. Cathy shared that Mary Miller (now deceased) had been an alternate for South Pond.

Treasurer's report - Carl reported that there is currently a total of \$36,124 in all accounts, \$8,734 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Contributions to date this fiscal year have been \$9,700, closely approaching the 2014-15 fiscal year's total contributions of \$10,230.

Town Meeting actions on pond-related funding - Ken reported that at the May 18 Annual Town Meeting, all pond-related items were approved: \$20,000 for boat ramp monitors, \$12,845 for town beach (lifeguards & equipment costs), \$15,000 for weed treatments, and \$5,000 for lake management. Jim McGrath expects that the City of Pittsfield will again contribute \$3,500 to the Town for pond management.

Minutes distribution - Ken summarized issues relating to the current process for agenda & minutes distribution. He recommended that all board members be added as website subscribers, & that agendas & minutes be distributed only through the website subscriber system, including other subscribers. It is hoped that this will also alert other subscribers of agenda & improve engagement. The recommendation was approved.

Active - Priority Projects:

Discussion of goals and next steps of draft Lake Management Plan - Cathy, Jim & Kitty facilitated this discussion, resulting in the amendments noted below. Next action steps prior to the annual meeting will include fleshing out by the project group of action items with measurable achievements, board review of the entire report draft for comments and discussion at the next meeting; further discussion of meetings with Town of Richmond and City of Pittsfield to review the plan and discuss appropriate process for their acceptance or endorsement of the plan. At the annual meeting, the board will present the draft for discussion.

Draft of letter to prior donors - Cathy facilitated this discussion of the circulated letter, resulting in several amendments. The letter thanks donors for their support and offers them an opportunity to share their thoughts about the Plan goals. The letter will be sent by regular mail to those on the prior donor list about 100 people.)

Results of 2016 pre-treatment weed assessment & weed treatment postponement – Carl shared a summary of the pre-treatment assessment by Solitude Lake Management, conducted on May 4. Carl & Ken emphasized to the treatment team that when they came back to do the contact herbicide treatment for the invasives Eurasian Milfoil & curly-leaf pondweed, they must bring a boat that will fit through the canal tube under the road, so the entire canal will be treated. A follow up note from Solitude indicated that treatment areas will approximate those of last year – essentially the entire littoral area. Jim reported that, unexpectedly, the Pittsfield Conservation Commission tabled the extension of the permit for weed treatment, so the scheduled May 25 treatment had to be postponed until after their next ConCom meeting, June 9th. (NOTE – It was learned after the meeting that the vendor has rescheduled treatment for June 13. The pond will be closed that day only for swimming, fishing & boating.)

Possible options for management of native weeds (coontail & tape grass) – Carl shared what was learned from Michael Lennon of Solitude Lake Management staff on May 4. Hydro-raking is an option for coontail. Shaker Mill Pond has been treated with chemicals for coontail. ConCom approval would likely have to be obtained for lake-wide or canal-wide hydro-raking or chemical treatment, but limited individual homeowner raking or weed-pulling may be allowed without a permit – the Conservation Commission will be asked to study & report back to the RPA on this. Carl reported that several used weed rakes have become available for a \$25 purchase price. With regard to tape weed, just taking off the top seed packet early in season can help – roots & the rest of plant don't have to be removed.

Ken shared what he learned about hand-harvesting on May 20th at the Lake Management Today conference cosponsored by MA Congress of Lakes and Ponds & New England Chapter of North American Lake Management Society. In a session on hand-harvesting, Mercedes Gallagher of Center Pond in Becket outlined how they exclusively use hand-harvesting for their Eurasian Milfoil. To a limited extent, it appears that these methods (paid & volunteer scuba divers, temporary marker buoys, & surface collection of filled divers' baskets by canoe) could perhaps be used for coontail as well, but would likely require ConCom approval.

There was also a session on Best Practices of Highly Effective Lake/Watershed Associations. While we're doing much of what was recommended, the absence of a social media presence (Facebook, etc.) appeared to be our most obvious shortcoming in connecting to the public. John offered the services of Lakeside to put together & manage a Facebook page. Kitty mentioned that Richmond Shores has Facebook page, & RPA should probably create a link to that as well. A session by Ken Wagner on algae blooms of blue-green algae, caused by bottom Phosphorus accumulation coupled with climate change, was also instructive. There was a session on Section 319 grants for lake management, which Ken couldn't attend; but we should perhaps research these.

Canal weed management plan development – Ken suggested that the Richmond Shores leadership study these options, reach out to ConCom to inquire about & obtain any necessary approvals, & organize a plan to address dead weeds and the proliferating native coontail. But Ken reported that his related May 2nd letter to their president, with copies to their RPA representative & alternates, has not resulted in a response. RPA has committed up to \$1,000 to assist in this effort, if managed by the Richmond Shores Association. Linda volunteered to assume the leadership for soliciting the engagement of canal residents & managing the condition of the canal on behalf of the Shores Association.

Nordeen Marsh beaver dam removal - Of great concern was the report that apparently the state or the Town Highway Department had removed the beaver dam on Town Beach Road causing Nordeen Swamp's water level to drop significantly, pushing silt, beaver excrement and water into the canal and the pond. Prior to the dam's removal, the beavers at that location were apparently trapped out by a licensed trapper hired by the state. There appear to have been no permits taken out for the dam removal action. The Richmond conservation agent (Shep Evans) has written a formal letter of complaint to the interim town administrator about the violation of

summary
phasized
Eurasian
the Mass Wetlands Protection Act and Regulations. His letter was shared with the RPA and read at the meeting. Nick reported that the Richmond Conservation Commission is actively working the issue.

Sewer user concerns - The following dates will be suggested to the Town Treasurer for a discussion with homeowners about sewer user concerns: last week in July or first week in August. Concerns include maintenance fee increases, sewer-related liens on homes that are preventing 2nd mortgages, status of the town's previous \$100,000 earmark for repairs, etc. The "sewer users group" that used to exist has not been convened in years, despite expectations that there would be an annual meeting. Linda will contact the Town Treasurer to set a date and will notify impacted homeowners around the pond through the community associations and RPA.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Education plan for boating & swimmer safety - Tabled

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – Tabled

Announcements:

- Richmond Conservation Commission perspectives – Nick welcomed the opportunity to participate in the RPA & will ask the Conservation Commission for clarification on permit requirements for the weed control strategies discussed today.
- Blue buoy off Camp Marion White will be removed
- Camp Marion White update – Ken reported that his recent communication with their chief operating officer, Suzanne Smiley, indicated that while the Girl Scouts remain interested in finding a low impact use for the property, their primary objective at this point is to sell the property and they are entertaining all offers. If they have potential buyers interested in conservation options, they'll try to connect them with the appropriate resources. In addition, the Girl Scouts are concerned that because of the public scheduled tours of the grounds during discussions about possible Town purchase, some area residents now think that the land is 'public,' which it is not. Vehicles have been blocking their entrance and people have been trespassing on the property.
- Ken shared that there will be an OLLI lunch & tour of Pittsfield Airport - Tuesday, May 31, 12 noon, \$20 to OLLI in advance

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

- Camp Russell to open June 20 for DARE program, then full-time for camps June 27
- Lakeside Christian Camp – camp sessions start June 19 through the 3rd week in August

Next meeting – June 28, 2016

Draft goals of pond management plan, as amended today:

1. Control nuisance aquatic plants and algae to a) minimize the ecological impacts and recreational nuisances of non-native plants, b) ensure a healthy environment for native plants, and c) ensure a quality fish and wildlife habitat that is also supportive of appropriate recreational activities.
2. Promote a management approach of the pond based on sound scientific principles and emphasize watershed management, in-lake management, pollution prevention, education, and recreational usages.

3. Minimize the negative impact on lake ecology from development around the lake and within the watershed.
4. Increase public awareness and knowledge through enhanced education and outreach efforts.
5. Develop quality data that can be used by local governments and state agencies in influencing decision on the management of Richmond Pond.
6. Improve the coordination of lake users and increase the Town and City's commitment to both lake preservation funding and the enforcement of existing boating safety and environmental protection regulations.
7. Promote independent initiatives that promote the maintenance and improvement of the quality of Richmond Pond by coordinating and integrating activities which impact the pond, organizing volunteer actions which will directly improve the pond, and raising public and private funds to assist in the foregoing activities.

MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Tina Wixsom, vice president (Camp Russell); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Directors Absent: Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

Alternates Present: Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm)); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Judith Powers (South Pond); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores)

Guests: Jay Bona (Richmond Shores); Bob Bohlman (Richmond Shores); Katherine Fenton (Whitewood); Ted Potter (Richmond Shores); Holly Stover (Branch Farm); Fran Schneit (Whitewood); Alan Schneit; Chris Thomson (Richmond Shores)

RPA Business:

Minutes & distribution process - Minutes for 5-24-16 were approved. Ken asked for reactions to the new minutes & agenda distribution process via website subscriber emails; those present indicated that it worked for them. Ken also shared readership results; 53% or 27 out of 51 subscribers read the 5/24 minutes & a somewhat different 53% read the 6/28 agenda. Of our board members, 54% or 13 out of 24 read the 5/24 minutes, but only 46% or 11 out of 24 read the 6/28 agenda.

Treasurer's report & budget - Carl reported a total of \$36,192 in all accounts, \$10,734 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Contributions to date this fiscal year have been \$9,884, closely approaching the 2014-15 fiscal year's total contributions of \$10,230. The proposed 2016-17 budget was reviewed and approved. The budget projects income at \$10,000 in contributions, \$1,860 in member dues and \$60 in interest, for a total of \$11,920. Projected expenses include \$2,000 for dam maintenance, \$7,000 for weed treatment, \$940 for mailings, \$550 water monitoring, plus incidentals for a total of \$11,145. A question was raised about payment for boat ramp monitors – RPA no longer contributes to this cost that is covered by the Town of Richmond.

Officers for 2016-2017 - Officers were nominated and elected as follows: President – Ken Kelly, Vice President – Tina Wixsom, Treasurer – Carl Foote, & Secretary – Cathy Deely. Past officers (who were all reelected) were thanked for their volunteer leadership.

Annual solicitation letter - The annual solicitation letter was reviewed & approved, & it will be targeted to arrive in mailboxes 7-10 days before the July 26 annual meeting, to encourage attendance. Thanks to Carl, Kitty & Ken, who volunteered to handle the mechanics of the mailing to all Richmond property taxpayers plus prior donors who are not Richmond residents.

Active – Priority Projects:

Planning for July 26 annual meeting – Carl reviewed the draft presentation, & assignments were made for segment presenters. Publicity arrangements will be handled by Cathy, & refreshments by Alan. An allocation for up to \$100 for refreshments was approved.

Discussion of draft Lake Management Plan - The goals will be the focus for discussion at annual meeting. A question was raised about the bridle shiner and Jim McGrath addressed the regulatory requirements regarding the protected species that guide work with the pond. Ken will post the plan's goals more prominently on the website.

Canal weed treatment discussion - There was considerable discussion regarding the need to plan ahead so that the canal is usable by Memorial Day. The "no notice" removal of the beaver dam at Nordeen Marsh/Town Beach Road was also a concern. It was asked whether there should be a microbiologic test done to understand better what is coming in from Nordeen Marsh, particularly as it relates to the canal's turbidity. Jim McGrath suggested that this might be considered for an action item under the Lake Management draft goals regarding quality data collection. It was mentioned that in the past, the state funded dredging and built retaining walls; Mark offered to review town records for details on the canal dredging project.

June letter – Carl & Cathy reported that there were no responses so far from the June letter to about 113 prior donors seeking input on priorities for 2016. It did, however, result in two donations.

Observations on June 13 weed treatment – Matt, Carl & Ken were onsite for the work and reported that the treatment went as planned. The lake & entire canal were treated by Solitude Lake Management with Diquat aquatic herbicide using a combination of air boat & john boat (in the canal).

Consultation with Richmond Conservation Commission re weed management – Ken attended their June 14 meeting, and had shared with them in advance a summary of the RPA's weed-related concerns & a series of questions about which weed control measures required or did not require permits. Following discussion, it became clear that any activity that would "alter land underwater, i.e. alter habitat" should require a permit.

It was recommended by ConCom that rather than addressing each potential weed management strategy individually, or having each individual homeowner, homeowners association or camp seek approval for certain strategies, including clearing a small swim or dock area of weeds, the RPA as an "umbrella organization" should prepare a comprehensive Notice of Intent listing strategies (hand-raking, hand-pulling, weed harvesting/hydro-raking, chemical application, etc.), specifying known best practices for each strategy & targeted plant category – nuisance native weeds, invasive weeds, purple loosestrife, etc. Examples of best practices details might include, for homeowner action, radius from their shoreline around which they could rake or hand-pull weeds (of any kind), disposal/composting expectations, etc. For the semi-public beaches of the community associations or camps, similar best practice parameters would be listed. Some other Berkshire lakes reportedly have standing approvals for certain weed

management strategies. It was noted that back in 2004, DEP had no objection to hand-pulling invasives throughout Richmond Pond, as long as it was done according to DCR guidelines for hand-pulling.

Prior to preparing the NOI, Conservation Agent Shep Evans recommended that we engage a consultant, perhaps Marc Bellaud, president of Solitude Lake Management. Pittsfield ConCom should also be approached for approval of the NOI, as one of the camps and one community association are in Pittsfield. Once approved, the conditions approved would be good for 3 years, renewable for an additional 3 years, so RPA would not have to come back to either ConCom annually for these approvals.

However, Jim McGrath noted that the RPA does not have the legal or policy authority or protections from liability to do the above but might take on a monitoring role. The Town & City should be the ones to prepare the NOI and hold the permit. He suggested that he, Mark Pruhenski, Shep Evans (Richmond Conservation Commission) and Bellaud (Solitude) meet to talk about the native weed situation and treatment and seek advice from the State and DEP. Due to National Heritage issues and Conservation Commission meeting timing, any weed treatment action would not be anticipated until 2017.

Canal restoration plan development – Last month, Linda Kay had volunteered to serve a “lead person” from Richmond Shores Association regarding canal restoration planning. Carl reported on his communication today with Solitude Lake Management about scheduling an assessment for possible harvesting of native weeds in the canal and along Richmond Shores.

Purple loosestrife management – Ken was informed by Richmond Conservation Agent Shep Evans that homeowners, camps or the RPA could address the invasive purple loosestrife without a permit as long as the roots and soil were not disturbed, i.e. cutting the plant below the top or at the base & collecting seed pods for disposal away from the pond. This could be done immediately before it goes to seed in midsummer. Ken recommended that RPA do so, after notifying lakeside residents through the community associations. He asked for volunteers to circuit the pond with him for this purpose in early July – Matt volunteered.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Sewer User Concerns - Linda Kay reported that the meeting with the Town Treasurer about sewer user concerns has been scheduled for Thursday, August 4 at 7:00 pm at Town Hall. The four community associations are asked to invite their members to this meeting. Linda will submit a related meeting notice for insertion in the preceding week's Town e-News, encouraging people to submit questions in advance.

Education plan for boating & swimmer safety - TABLED

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – TABLED

Announcements:

- Ken reported that John Mead had “soft launched” an RPA Facebook page. Next steps are yet to be determined.
- Mark reported that the renovated Richmond town beach opened Father's Day weekend and is open all summer with longer hours than last year. Hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am to 7

pm. Qualified lifeguards have been hired and lifeguard hours will cover many of the open beach hours. When there is no lifeguard present, the town's plan is to staff those hours with an observer. There are no beach stickers again this year.

- Update on removal of Nordeen Marsh beaver dam – Adam reported that both the Conservation Commission and Health Department have been involved in the development of a new Beaver Conflict Resolution Application & Permit form. Its intent is to assure that all related local, state and federal regulations regarding the disturbance of a wetland, trapping, health and other concerns are appropriately taken into consideration prior to removal of beavers, breaching of a beaver dam or installation of water flow control devices.
- Carl reported that the culvert repair at the entrance to Branch Farm Road has been completed.
- Camp Marion White – Ken reported that the Girl Scouts were in negotiations with a prospective purchaser who intends to build a single family home.
- Status of LAPA-West – Ken shared that LAPA-West is trying to decide whether to offer a fall pond management workshop, and seeks a sense of interest, but no one from RPA expressed an interest in attending. Ken will share this back with LAPA-West, while indicating that the collaboration among Berkshire County pond associations that LAPA-West fosters remains important to the RPA.

Any update items, of interest to all, from each camp & community association – Kitty Levitan of Whitewood Association expressed concerns about geese excrement on shorelines. Camp Russell was no longer using their “goose lights,” but South Pond Farm has purchased and installed them. It was proposed that RPA purchase some and loan them to shoreline landowners around the pond. A motion was introduced to allocate up to \$1,000 to research & perhaps purchase up to 2 units; the motion was approved but with very few voting on the initiative.

Next meeting (ANNUAL MEETING) – July 28, 2016

Revised draft goals:

1. **Control nuisance aquatic plants and algae** to a) minimize the ecological impacts and recreational nuisances of non-native plants, b) ensure a healthy environment for native plants, and c) ensure a quality fish and wildlife habitat that is also supportive of appropriate recreational activities.
2. **Promote a management approach of the pond based on sound scientific principles** and emphasize watershed management, in-lake management, pollution prevention, education, and recreational usages.
3. **Minimize the negative impact on lake ecology from development** around the lake and within the watershed.
4. **Increase public awareness and knowledge** through enhanced education and outreach efforts.
5. **Develop quality data** that can be used by local governments and state agencies in influencing decisions on the management of Richmond Pond.

6. **Improve the coordination of lake users** and increase the Town and City's commitment to both lake preservation funding and the enforcement of existing boating safety and environmental protection regulations.
7. **Promote independent initiatives** that promote the maintenance and improvement of the quality of Richmond Pond by coordinating and integrating activities which impact the pond, organizing volunteer actions which will directly improve the pond, and raising public and private funds to assist in the foregoing activities.

MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Annual Public Meeting
Tuesday, July 26, 2016

The twenty-five attendees were welcomed and thanks were given to the Richmond Town Administrator for the cool space on a hot day!

Review of 2015:

Ken Kelly, President, shared highlights of last year. For the Town of Richmond's 250th year celebration, RPA put together a popular pontoon boat tour of the pond. The invasive weeds were successfully treated in late June. The pond's fish were tested for mercury contamination & were found to be below the threshold for any health consumption advisory. The RPA participated in the development of Open Space & Recreation Plan adopted by the Town of Richmond. The RPA also actively supported the town park initiative for Camp Marion White, which was ultimately not supported by voters at the fall special town meeting. Educational efforts included enhancements to the website & updating & circulating RPA brochures.

Weed Treatments:

Carl Foote, Treasurer, summarized recent weed treatment efforts. Weed treatments are managed by the Town of Richmond, using a vendor, targeting the invasives - Eurasian Milfoil & Curly Leaf Pondweed. The use in 2014 of a systemic herbicide, which kills the roots, substantially reduced Milfoil for several years. Diquat was also applied to target the leafy matter of the Pondweed.

In late June 2015, 85 acres of the pond, including the inlet, were treated with Diquat (mostly for Pondweed). The early fall post-treatment assessment showed no sign of Milfoil or Curly Leaf Pondweed. But the proliferation of native weeds (primarily coontail & tapeweed) in the canal & along Richmond Shores was very problematic last summer, as highlighted in last summer's annual meeting.

In 2016, on June 13, the pond & inlet were again treated for both invasives with Diquat. The post-treatment assessment done just before this annual meeting showed no evidence of Curly Leaf Pondweed. Native weeds are still in evidence, but they do not seem to be as prolific as last summer.

A discussion ensued about the concerns of Richmond Shores residents regarding the turbidity of the canal water as well as the two foot plus accumulation of dead leaf matter and muck. Hydro-raking to scrape the bottom is one option being actively explored with a vendor & the Conservation Commission for next summer. Issues of cost, funding sources & permitting are also being explored.

Lake Management Plan:

Cathy Deely, Secretary, & Jim McGrath, City of Pittsfield, outlined the RPA's progress to date in developing a comprehensive lake management plan for the pond. The plan provides background information on the lake & its watershed, a brief description of "stakeholder" organizations, a brief review of past & current lake preservation initiatives, a discussion of current & future issues & concerns, a statement of goals for targeting our efforts, & a set of recommendations for management actions to ameliorate the identified issues. The plan is also an important tool that will help provide a reference point for communications, education & funding.

Jim McGrath outlined the following goals that are being discussed by the board & the community & from which action items are being developed. During plan development, the RPA will engage with the appropriate governmental entities in the Town of Richmond & the City of Pittsfield. Once completed, the plan will be formally adopted by the RPA board & hopefully endorsed by both Richmond & Pittsfield. A draft of the evolving plan will be posted on our website & all comments are encouraged.

Lake Management Plan Goals:

1. **Control nuisance aquatic plants and algae** to a) minimize the ecological impacts and recreational nuisances of non-native plants, b) ensure a healthy environment for native plants, and c) ensure a quality fish and wildlife habitat that is also supportive of appropriate recreational activities.
2. **Promote a management approach of the pond based on sound scientific principles** and emphasize watershed management, in-lake management, pollution prevention, education, and recreational usages.
3. **Minimize the negative impact on lake ecology from development** around the lake and within the watershed.
4. **Increase public awareness and knowledge** through enhanced education and outreach efforts.
5. **Develop quality data** that can be used by local governments and state agencies in influencing decisions on the management of Richmond Pond.
6. **Improve the coordination of lake users** and increase the Town and City's commitment to both lake preservation funding and the enforcement of existing boating safety and environmental protection regulations.
7. **Promote independent initiatives** that promote the maintenance and improvement of the quality of Richmond Pond by coordinating and integrating activities which impact the pond, organizing volunteer actions which will directly improve the pond, and raising public and private funds to assist in the foregoing activities.

2016 Plans & Accomplishments:

Ken Kelly reported that the RPA's two focal efforts this year are continued work on a comprehensive Lake Management Plan & constant monitoring & study of treatment options for our invasive & nuisance native weeds.

Over the winter, RPA undertook a lake safety study focused on swimming/boating safety. While placement of marker buoys around the lake to separate swimming & boating areas was considered, it has been rejected as an option for multiple reasons. Safety education efforts will continue.

The Town of Richmond's fiscal support for Pond Management is substantial. At the spring 2016 Town meeting, the following was approved: \$20,000 - boat ramp monitors, \$15,000 - weed treatments, \$12,845 - town beach, including lifeguards, and \$5,000 - lake management. Pittsfield contributes \$3,500. The Town of Richmond manages the boat ramp monitoring program; Matt Palardi, the boat ramp monitor/supervisor, gave meeting attendees an overview of the duties of the monitors.

RPA relies on contributions for most of our annual budget, which augments pond management costs, supports special projects & assists Lakeside Christian Camp with a special fund (now at \$12,000) for maintenance & repair costs for the pond's dam. RPA fund raising letters were mailed in July & contributions are flowing in daily. Costs of the mailing have already been covered.

RPA volunteers conduct periodic water testing of the tributaries, & have amassed about 15 years of data; beaches are tested weekly for E.coli, & there's an RPA-developed beach closing & tributary testing protocol now in place. Volunteers also assist with education about & control of purple loosestrife, an

invasive that changes the soil chemistry & crowds out native plants. Our open monthly meetings are augmented by increased representation & input, as we now have representatives & alternates from each camp & community association. Our website (www.richmondpondassociation.org) & website subscriber list help too, as subscribers now receive advance agendas, minutes & special notices about pond matters.

Other Ongoing Concerns:

Ongoing concerns include the following: weed management, education of all to educate their visitors with car top boats that all watercraft (boats, kayaks, paddle boards) must be free of zebra mussels or be appropriately treated; keeping swales & retention basins free of debris; swimming & boating safety; and bears, beavers, geese, & seagulls.

City of Pittsfield:

Jim McGrath underscored that Richmond Pond is a shared resource. Collaborative efforts to manage the lakes in our community – Onota Lake, Pontoosuc Lake, & Richmond Pond - have been going on for a long time, as these water bodies are very similar.

Town of Richmond:

Mark Pruhenski, new Richmond Town Administrator & Harbor Master, outlined the extensive improvements to the Town Beach that are finished – parking, fencing, fence-enclosed porta-potty, handicapped access, & picnic tables. Importantly, there is a lifeguard on duty for many of the open hours, which was not the case last year.

Questions & Answers; Announcements:

A number of questions were posed by attendees & answered by RPA members. One concern expressed by several was that a strategy & sufficient advance planning occur so that the canal & shoreline of Richmond Shores be relatively weed-free by next summer season. Dredging of the canal should also be explored, though studies, approvals & funding for this would likely take several years. Geese continue to be a problem at Camp Russell & the Town Beach, but it's not as bad as in 2015.

In addition, the following announcements were made:

Camp Marion White - The Girl Scouts have informed the RPA that the Camp Marion White property is "now under agreement." They also indicated that the buyer's interest seems to be residential.

Interprint Construction - Interprint, whose plant is across the railroad tracks behind town beach, has informed the RPA that they are building an additional warehouse. Construction began in July & is due to be finished in November. All construction noise will be weekdays only, during the daytime.

Mapping Errors - Safety concerns about GPS errors in MapQuest & other online mapping systems were shared - most of these erroneously depict Lake Road & Branch Farm Road as connecting to Camp Russell, but access to Camp Russell via those roads is blocked. Volunteers have submitted correction requests to these services, and related "No Access to Camp Russell" signage is being ordered.

Sewer Issues – A sewer users meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 4, at 7:00 pm at Richmond Town Hall. Town officials will be present to provide financial & operational information about the system & related charges & they will field questions.

Nordeen Marsh – The beavers have reconstructed the beaver dam at Town Beach Road, & the water level in the marsh appears to have recovered from the substantial lowering that occurred when the beaver dam was removed.

Next meeting: 5:30 pm, August 23, 2016

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Directors Absent: Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Tina Wixsom, vice president (Camp Russell)

Alternates Present: Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Judith Powers (South Pond)

Guests: John Charles; Peter & Janet Lockery; Deb Orth (Richmond Shores); Matt Palardy (boat ramp monitor); Neal Pilson (Select Board); Alan & Fran Schneit (Whitewood); John & Daniel Scorpa (Richmond Shores); Kris & Mary Lou Wechter (Richmond Shores)

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, August 23, 2016

RPA Business:

Approval of Minutes – The minutes of 6-28-16 & 7-26-16 were approved.

Nomination of new Vice President – Though absent, Susan Benner & Louise Brogan were nominated for consideration. Ken will speak with both of them.

Treasurer's report – The annual dues mailing went out yesterday. Carl reported a total of \$38,164 in all accounts, \$12,734 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Carl shared a comparison of contributions to date compared to contributions made by the same date last year. We are about \$1,000 behind where we were last year. He also shared a breakdown of where our contributions came from in the 2016 fiscal year, which just ended. South Pond Farm owners had not yet received the solicitation letter; Cathy will reach out to them. It was suggested that several local businesses be contacted to solicit a contribution. A suggestion was also made that the RPA invite their employees to enjoy the town beach.

Evaluation of July 26 annual meeting – The meeting & its attendance were reviewed. Several suggestions emerged, resulting in the well-received offer by Chris Jacoby of converting the event into a late July public all-pond picnic hosted on the grounds of Camp Russell.

Active – Priority Projects:

“Adoption” process for the Lake Management Plan – The complete draft of the evolving plan was posted on our website several weeks ago, with a preface encouraging comments. Cathy reported that to date, no input has been received. Jim shared Pittsfield's adoption process experience and recommendations for this plan. A timeline was developed:

- Jim will undertake a detailed review of the plan with Cathy.
- That final draft will be distributed to board members in advance of our September meeting, for discussion at that meeting.
- The final draft will be voted on at the October RPA meeting.
- The plan will then be submitted as a working draft to the Richmond Conservation Commission, Pittsfield Conservation Commission, Richmond Select Board, LAPA-West and the state Lakes and Ponds Program. Any comments from those entities will be considered by the RPA.

Proposal for future hydro-raking of canal – Carl summarized the recommendation recently received from Solitude Lake Management suggesting hydro-raking of the canal as a strategy to enhance both navigation & turbidity. The cost for hydro-raking & removing the first ½ to 1 foot of sediment & associated vegetation would be \$51,000 to \$57,400. The cost of onshore material handling & removal & composting off-site, which might perhaps be done by the town, is not included. Permitting costs are also not included.

Tom Grizey reviewed the late 1960's or early 1970's dredging of the canal by the Army Corps of Engineers that he oversaw. That project was done during a 6½ foot lake drawdown that year coinciding with the construction by the state of the public boat launch ramp. He believes that there is currently 2 to 2½ feet of silt in the canal, so both he & Al Hanson suggested that dredging should also be explored as a strategy that would yield longer-lasting results than hydro-raking. It was also noted that many of the retaining walls along the canal are collapsing, so replacement strategies should also be researched. The

Richmond Conservation Commission was asked to study the removal/replacement of old docks, barriers & retaining walls. Responsibilities for developing an implementation plan were discussed, as the town of Richmond & city of Pittsfield, the Richmond Shores Association, & Richmond Pond Association would need to clarify their responsibilities & related financial commitments. Linda posed the question, "What are the consequences of doing nothing?"

Next steps – Conservation Agent Shep Evans, in consultation with the Town Administrator, will research the dredging and hydro-raking solutions and then consult with Solitude Lake Management and perhaps others for estimates of the costs for a plan, design, permitting and execution. Their findings will be shared with RPA.

Investigation of possible pollution of Clark Brook – On August 9th, Ken received a call from a local writer for *Field & Stream Magazine*, who was researching Richmond Pond for an article on Berkshire County ponds. He had noted what appeared to be visible pollution coming into the pond through Clark Brook, aka Mt. Lebanon Brook. Ken notified Richmond & Pittsfield conservation agents & his contacts at Interprint, since Interprint was known to be remediating in-ground soil contamination adjacent to the marsh draining into Clark Brook. (The contamination is historic; it predates Interprint's operations at that location, formerly owned by Nash Steel.) The RPA drew several water samples from the brook, one after a heavy rain, & has received the testing results, which were limited to E-coli, Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Ammonium. The results revealed high levels of E-coli. Interprint has had their engineering firm draw additional samples for more comprehensive testing for other contaminants, but results have not yet been received. Related investigation is ongoing, with collaborative communication among the various entities. (NOTE: After the meeting, results of the Interprint testing came back 100% clean - no volatile organic contaminants & no petroleum products were detected. It is therefore surmised that the extended dry spell this summer reduced brook flow to the point that, while clear of pollutants, it appeared almost stagnant.)

Purple loosestrife management update – The overgrown field on the western shore of Camp Russell earlier appeared to be the only perceptible growth area at the pond. Camp Russell was notified by RPA & a strategy was agreed upon. RPA volunteers, including two children, removed & bagged the flowers & seed heads of the loosestrife in that area, & disposed of them off-site. Camp Russell was contacted & they agreed to mow that field to cut stalks to the ground, further retarding its growth. Since that time, however, late blooming plants have been spotted along the shorelines of the town beach, Richmond Shores, Branch Farm, & behind the boat launch area. An action plan was discussed & volunteers designated. Mark will speak with DPW about their possible help at town beach.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Education plan for boating & swimmer safety - Tabled

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – Tabled

Announcements:

Sewer Users - Detailed draft notes summarizing the well-attended August 4th informational meeting with the Town Treasurer Paul Lisi about sewer user concerns were taken & are currently being reviewed for accuracy by Paul & by Mark Pruhenski. They will soon be posted on the town website, & a link to the meeting notes will be identified on the weekly Town e-News. Once that has occurred, all RPA website subscribers will be sent a link to that summary.

Nordeen Marsh - The beaver dam has been rebuilt & appears to have brought Nordeen Marsh back up to its pre-dam removal water level. ConCom is studying whether & what form of beaver deceiver should be installed.

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Town-related announcements – A discussion ensued about the new chain link fencing around the town beach. Mark said there has been considerable controversy about access as well as the need to keep out vandals. The fencing conversation will continue at the Town Select Board. Goose control & the related shoreline barriers at town beach continue to be a challenge, but they are actively monitoring it.

Update of Camp Russell access signage & erroneous GPS issues – Branch Farm has posted 2 new signs at its entrance saying No Access to Camp Russell & something to the effect of Private Road - Turn Around. Whitewood is likely to do the same at the Lake Road entrance.

Camp Marion White status update – The prospective buyers & their engineering firm appeared before the Conservation Commission on August 9th requesting ConCom approval to remove a number of trees & understory to create an open sight line to the pond from their proposed house, which would be at least 200 feet from the shoreline. They were asked to mark the trees that would be removed & the ones within that area that would remain, for review by a second ConCom site visit. They are to return to the September ConCom meeting for review & possible action on their request.

Walking trail – There was a brief discussion about one of the RPA's long-term goals - restoring a walking trail all the way around the pond.

LAPA-West pond management symposium – Will be held Saturday, Oct. 22, 8:30 am to 12 noon at BCC. There is no registration fee, & board members are encouraged to attend.

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

Camp Russell – Their annual Chili & Chowder Festival family event & fund raiser will be held Saturday, Sept. 24 from 1 pm to 6 pm at Camp Russell. Tickets are \$20; those 12 & under are admitted free if accompanied by an adult. A road race will precede it. More details are on their website.

Camp Russell – A complaint from a Richmond Shores resident about Camp Russell's goose strobe light was discussed. The strobe, anchored just off the Camp Russell swimming dock, intermittently emits varying patterns of bright green lights. While largely effective in diverting the geese (and their excrement) from their shoreline, it is annoying to those whose pond view includes the strobe. It is being removed at the end of the camp season, and its relocation will be studied for next year to try to obscure its visibility from the Richmond Shores shoreline.

Next meeting – September 27, 2016

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

Directors Absent: Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Present: Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm)); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Judith Powers (South Pond); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg

(Richmond Conservation Commission); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores) (Cathy reported that Judith Powers has resigned from the board; South Pond Farm is seeking new alternates.)

Guests: Al Hanson (Richmond Selectman); Tom Grizey (Town Constable & Richmond Shores)

Revised draft Lake Management Plan goals:

- **Control nuisance aquatic plants and algae** to a) minimize the ecological impacts and recreational nuisances of non-native plants, b) ensure a healthy environment for native plants, and c) ensure a quality fish and wildlife habitat that is also supportive of appropriate recreational activities.
- **Promote a management approach of the pond based on sound scientific principles** and emphasize watershed management, in-lake management, pollution prevention, education, and recreational usages.
- **Minimize the negative impact on lake ecology from development** around the lake and within the watershed.
- **Increase public awareness and knowledge** through enhanced education and outreach efforts.
- **Develop quality data** that can be used by local governments and state agencies in influencing decisions on the management of Richmond Pond.
- **Improve the coordination of lake users** and increase the Town and City's commitment to both lake preservation funding and the enforcement of existing boating safety and environmental protection regulations.
- **Promote independent initiatives** that promote the maintenance and improvement of the quality of Richmond Pond by coordinating and integrating activities which impact the pond, organizing volunteer actions which will directly improve the pond, and raising public and private funds to assist in the foregoing activities.

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, September 27, 2016

RPA Business:

New South Pond Farm alternate - Jessica Baumgarten was introduced & shared highlights of her background & interest in the pond.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes of 8-23-16 were approved.

Update on election of new Vice President – Ken reported that Louise Brogan has declined the nomination. While we're pleased that Susan Benner is interested, she has a work commitment this evening, so she had requested & it was agreed to defer a vote until the October meeting, when she can attend.

Treasurer's report – Carl reported a total of \$39,895 in all accounts, \$12,734 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Annual dues invoices were mailed on August 20th and 66% of the dues have been collected. Outstanding dues are Richmond Shores and Lakeside Christian Camp. In addition to dues, \$975 in contributions has been received since the last meeting, bringing our fiscal year contributions to date total to \$4,035.

Cathy reported that she will be sending out a solicitation letter soon to the South Pond community, as they did not receive the summer solicitation letter. Suggestions were given to Ken about possible businesses to solicit for contributions.

Active – Priority Projects:

Review of completed draft of Lake Management Plan – Cathy distributed copies of recent additions & edits that she & Jim had made to the plan. She & Jim (in absentia) recommend the following next steps that were enhanced by the meeting's attendees:

- Board final consideration & vote today to endorse the final draft plan - *Passed*, incorporating additional corrections & edits mentioned today
- Cover letter and draft plan to be submitted to Richmond and Pittsfield Conservation Commissions, Dept. of Environmental Protection, Natural Heritage, Ward 5 Councilor Donna Todd Rivers, & Richmond Selectboard members asking for any comments on the plan that they may wish to make. Deadline 10/17
- Cathy will incorporate/'red mark' their comments and send an annotated copy to the board prior to the 10/25 meeting
- At the 10/25 RPA meeting, the board will consider comments and vote on the final Lake Management Plan
- Send the Plan with cover letter to those above & post the endorsed version on the RPA website
- Initiate PR associated with the Plan to include an article by Ken in *Richmond Record*; mention of & a link to the plan in the *Richmond Town e-News*, & articles by Cathy in the *Berkshire Eagle* & *Pittsfield Gazette*

Year-round pond access – to town beach, adjoining shoreline, shoreline fishing, dogs, etc. – Mark shared that a compromise had been reached in order to keep out ATVs and provide walkers' access. A two foot wide unlocked pedestrian gate has been installed next to the chain link vehicle access gate, so year-round pedestrian access to the beach is accomplished.

Following study by the Board of Selectmen of several dog-related incidents, dogs remain banned from the entire fenced-in beach area, year-round. Dogs are allowed at the boat launch & on the road between the boat launch & town beach, but must be leashed in both areas.

The shoreline path & fishing points to the north of the town beach, as well as the town beach, are part of a 10 acre parcel that is north of the Pittsfield town line, but is owned by the Town of Richmond. The path has never been maintained by the Town of Richmond. While it is marginally accessible around the north end of the fence at the water line, the Board of Selectmen will study whether to maintain that fishing area or ask whether RPA volunteers might do so. Fishing is already allowed from the shoreline of the boat launch area and the town beach, though not in the sandy roped off swimming area during summer.

Proposal for future hydro-raking or dredging, weed management of canal – Reviewed were costs, permits, responsibilities, & next steps of plan development. Mark reported that he'd met with Town Conservation Agent Shep Evans to inquire as to what the options would look like. Shep recommended that the Town start with a Notice of Intent (NOI), to be prepared by Solitude Lake Management or Berkshire Engineering or a similar agency, as the 12-page application requires an engineering component. The resulting Richmond Conservation Commission copy would be submitted to Natural Heritage for their review.

Mark had asked the Board of Selectman about hydro-raking. They requested information on how many homes on the canal would be impacted (about 20) and indicated that the impacted community would need to demonstrate support for and interest in this project, as there are competing priorities for limited funds. Kitty pointed out, and RPA agreed, that this project impacts the lake as a whole, not just the homes on the canal.

Carl pointed out that the initial cost estimate from Solitude Lake Management for hydro-raking the canal was \$51,000 to \$57,400, not including on-shore handling & off-site disposal of the resulting sediment & vegetation. It was noted that hydro-raking would likely be an annual expense.

Mark shared that Shep recommends the dredging option be sought, though it will be a more lengthy application & approval process – likely two years – as it requires approval from the Conservation Commission, Natural Heritage, & the Army Corps of Engineers. But it should result in longer term benefits. An estimated cost for the dredging was not discussed.

RPA made it clear that Richmond Shores was not being asked to shoulder most of the cost of any project and that RPA would consider contributing funds to the cost. The Town Administrator underscored the funding process, which includes a warrant to be voted on during the annual town meeting thus, again, requiring demonstrated support from Richmond Shores and RPA. He also cautioned that if retaining walls along the canal were added to the project, that would negatively impact the Town's consideration of the project, as those were likely to be considered the responsibility of each homeowner.

Herb noted that engagement by homeowners in Richmond Shores is very weak, in part because many are not permanent residents of Richmond. However, that leaves a majority of the RPA very interested. Carl noted that homeowners in Richmond Shores have shown little interest in financially supporting the RPA. Ken will talk to project lead Linda Kay about a related communication to the Richmond Shores homeowners.

Next steps: Mark will secure cost estimates from the engineering firms for NOI preparation and look for ways to fund that initial step of NOI preparation and engineering. Interested parties will continue to talk and work on this project, with an update & possible actions to be taken at the October RPA meeting.

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Purple loosestrife management update – Following the August removal of loosestrife flowers & seed pods by RPA volunteers in the overgrown field on the western shore of Camp Russell, that field has not yet been mowed by Camp Russell staff to further retard purple loosestrife growth, though they have committed to do so. Town DPW employees mowed the purple loosestrife growing behind the boat launch area & along the shoreline at town beach, but apparently did so without first removing flowers & seed pods, thus spreading the loosestrife seeds & likely further exacerbating the problem. Some but not all homeowners along the shoreline with purple loosestrife growing have responded to RPA overtures by removing isolated growths along their shorelines.

Proposed rezoning by Planning Board of Camp Russell, Swamp Road, and Branch Farm – Carl provided an update on the recent Planning Board meetings of August and September. The Planning Board is developing a draft proposal to create a Richmond Pond Overlay District, comprising the Branch Farm cottages and the properties of the Boys & Girls Club of the Berkshires (Camp Russell) and the Girls Scouts of Central & Western Massachusetts (the former Camp Marion White). The purpose of the Overlay District would be to protect the scenic, historic and natural beauty of Richmond Pond, maintain safe and healthful conditions, prevent and control water pollution, and preserve habitat and vegetative cover while supporting continued recreational use of the land. A Richmond Pond Sensitive Impact Area that is within the Overlay District is also proposed. The latter would extend a specified distance from the high-water mark. Parameters of allowable and prohibited activities for both areas are being explored.

The Planning Board discussed this idea with the public during their September meeting, and plans further discussions with potentially impacted parties. Also contemplated but not yet proposed are amendments to the zoning by-laws for the Whitewood and independent cottages, possibly to mirror those enacted last year for the cottages at Richmond Shores. If pursued, there will be formal public hearings before any such proposals are placed on the town meeting warrant.

Winter projects list – Will likely be finalized at our October meeting. Cathy suggested that board members look at the goals & recommendations of the Lake Management Plan that provide the basis for action items. One item brought up was to research banning or limiting personal watercraft, as does Stockbridge Bowl.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

1. Education plan for boating & swimmer safety - Tabled
2. Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – Tabled

Announcements:

Results of investigation of possible pollution of Clark Brook – Ken reported that Interprint's testing came back 100% clean – no contaminants & no petroleum products were detected. Additionally the network of wells dug along the perimeter of their soil remediation project has been & remains clean. Since all test results were clean of contaminants, Ken speculated that the stagnant & murky appearance of the brook had been the result of the extended summer period with no rain.

Sewer user concerns – It was reported that the Q&A information & other details about the sewer system & its related costs & billings will soon be posted on the town's website.

RPA participation in LAPA-West pond management symposium, Sat., Oct. 22, 8:30 am to 12 noon at BCC – No registration fee. – Ken reported that the focus is on weed management. He, Carl & Kitty plan on attending, & others are encouraged to join them.

Update on RPA Facebook page – Mark shared that he has considerable experience with Facebook start-up and fostering engagement. He offered to help, possibly as a winter project.

Update on plans for Nordeen Marsh water level & beaver dam – Nick reported that there was no new information.

Update on Camp Russell access signage & GPS issues – Ken reported that Andrew Oltsch's efforts have resulted in some improvements in the accuracy of GPS mapping, but it is not fully fixed yet. Both Lake Road & Branch Farm Road now have "No Access to Camp Russell" signs up.

Camp Marion White status update – Nick confirmed that the Richmond Conservation Commission and Natural Heritage had approved a tree cutting and planting plan for the potential new homeowner, who required those actions prior to closing on the property.

Dept. of Fish & Wildlife fish shocking/sampling on 9/9/16 – Mark has requested and is awaiting results.

Pediatric Development Center (PDC) 5K road race & 1K walk – Camp Russell, Oct. 16, 10 am

Any update items, of interest to all, from each camp & community association: *None*

Next meeting – October 25, 2016

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); Nick Martinelli (Richmond Conservation Commission); Mark Pruhenski (Richmond Town Administrator)

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

Alternates Present: Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond Farm); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission)

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, October 25, 2016

RPA Business

Approval of Minutes – The minutes of 9-27-16 were approved.

Election of new Vice President – Ken introduced Susan Benner, RPA alternate from Whitewood Association, who had been previously nominated for Vice President. She shared some of her related academic/professional skills & perspectives about living on & enjoying all aspects of the pond. Since an officer of the RPA must be one of the directors, not an alternate, Kitty Levitan and Susan agreed to “trade” roles on the RPA representing Whitewood, thereby making Susan eligible to serve as vice president. A vote was then taken electing Susan as Vice President, effective immediately.

Proposed meeting schedule for 2017 – The proposed meeting dates of 4/25, 5/23, 6/27, 7/25 (annual meeting), 8/22, 9/26, & 10/24, all at Town Hall, were approved. Thanks to the town clerk & Town of Richmond.

Treasurer’s report – Carl reported a total of \$40,300 in all accounts, \$12,734 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Annual dues invoices were mailed on August 20th and 66% of the dues have been collected. Outstanding dues are Richmond Shores and Lakeside Christian Camp. In addition to dues, \$395 in contributions has been received since the last meeting, bringing our current fiscal year contributions to date total to \$4,430. The state & federal fiscal reports for the 2015-16 fiscal year that are due each fall have been prepared, reviewed & cosigned by Ken; they were mailed today. Fiscal year collections were \$11,819, including \$9,900 in donations. Expenditures totaled \$2,201.

Cathy reported that she sent out last week a solicitation letter to the South Pond community, and she hopes for a healthy response. Ken reported that he had just sent to Interprint a contribution suggestion letter with an invitation to Interprint employees and their family members to enjoy the Richmond town beach next summer, as offered by Mark at last month’s RPA meeting.

Active – Priority Projects:

Lake Management Plan – Cathy advised the Board that a Final Draft Plan finalized by Jim McGrath & Ken Kelly was posted on the website. Following thanks to Jim, Kitty, Ken & Cathy, the RPA voted to adopt the plan.

Next steps:

- A cover letter & the Plan will be submitted to Richmond and Pittsfield Conservation Commissions, Dept. of Environmental Protection, Natural Heritage, Ward 5 Councilor Donna Todd Rivers, & Richmond Selectboard members asking for any comments on the Plan that they may wish to make, to be sent to Cathy. Endorsements are also welcome!
- Ken will amend the draft version of the Lake Management Plan on the RPA website to indicate its adoption.
- Ken will prepare an article for the *Richmond Record* & ask for a mention & link to the plan in the *Richmond Town e-News*. Cathy will pitch the *Berkshire Eagle* & *Pittsfield Gazette*.
- Action items flow naturally out of the plan & several will be considered as winter projects.

Proposal for future hydro-raking or dredging, weed management of canal – Carl reported on his multiple conversations with Solitude Lake Management staff, which included an advance verbal report that their recent post-treatment assessment detected no remaining invasives. While Mark could not be present, Mark had made copies of the report on projected costs that Mark had just received from Solitude & these were shared. Details follow:

Solitude Lake Management's estimate for preparation of the Notice of Intent = \$3,500

Mobilization and demobilization of Solitude's related equipment = \$3,400

Mechanical Services (itemized, for 2 levels of removal):

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u># of Days</u>	<u>Amount of Removal</u>
Hydro-raking service for the upper section	\$19,200-22,400	12-14	0.5 to 1 foot
Hydro-raking service for the lower section after the bridge...	\$28,800-32,000	18-20	0.5 to 1 foot
Total	\$48,000-54,400 for 0.5 to 1 foot of removal		
Hydro-raking for the upper section	\$38,400-44,800	24-28	1.5 to 2 feet
Hydro-raking service for the lower section after the bridge...	\$57,600-64,000	36-40	1.5 to 2 feet
Total	\$96,000-108,000 for 1.5 to 2 feet of removal		

Important footnote: Cost estimates assume that the Town of Richmond would be responsible for onshore material handling, disposal, & erosion control measures as stated in the permit.

A cost estimate for dredging was not yet provided. It is also unknown whether the preparation cost for the NOI for dredging would be higher than the \$3,500 estimate for the NOI for hydro-raking.

Linda suggested that we start now in gathering the three years of data required on Nordeen Marsh water levels that we expect will be required for various permits. (Natural Heritage has previously indicated that this would be one of the conditions of approval for a deeper lake drawdown.)

Extensive discussions ensued noting both the realities of the problem and the costs to resolve them, as well as the need for more information. While two funding motions were made (\$3,500 to \$5,000 for NOI preparation; \$1,500 for Nordeen Marsh water level monitoring), neither one was seconded or voted upon, given lack of related information.

Ken summarized the pieces of information needed before the next steps can be identified:

- Estimated cost for dredging
- Estimated cost for preparation of a Notice of Intent for dredging

- Estimated cost of a professional vendor to place water level monitor(s) & collect 3-years of data on Nordeen Marsh water levels, including water levels during winter drawdown.
- Would Natural Heritage accept the results as adequate documentation if Berkshire Community College conducted the Nordeen Marsh 3-year water level monitoring effort as a student project, supervised by a faculty member? And if so, will BCC take this on?
- Is a deeper lake drawdown required to have hydro-raking work done, & if so, how much of a drawdown is required? Same questions for dredging.
- Will beaver deceivers be placed in the beaver dam at Town Beach Road?
- If the beaver dam at the Town Beach Road start of the canal is allowed to stay in place, without beaver deceivers, how does that impact the goal of returning water flow from Nordeen Marsh through the canal? Same question with beaver deceivers installed.

Mark, as Town Administrator, was suggested to serve as the lead on this project, with Linda representing the Richmond Shores Association. Others from RPA & elsewhere may also need to be added to project team. Linda reported that she has started an initiative to engage Richmond Shores residents.

Development of winter projects list – Following discussion of a number of options, the following were selected, with lead person/convener (listed first) & additional project members:

- Dredging or hydro-raking the canal - plan development & taking initial action steps – Mark, Linda
- Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources (using a robust software application currently close to public release, as reported at the LAPA-West fall symposium) – Susan, Ken
- Develop education plan for boating & swimmer safety, to include researching restricting jet-skis/personal watercraft (as does Stockbridge Bowl) – John, Susan, Jim, Louise
- Facebook page enhancement – Carl, Mark, John While Mark could not attend, he'd recommended that \$100 be allocated to do locally targeted audience advertising of the Facebook page @ \$5/day over a 20 day period, which usually results in 5 to 15 new sign-ups daily. This generates a core group of subscribers, which then mushrooms numbers as their Facebook friends see it & also sign up. A motion was made & approved to allocate \$100 for this purpose.

Project conveners were asked to report to Ken on project progress in mid-December, late February, & early April, & be prepared to present the results of their work at the April RPA meeting.

Shoreline fishing update – As a follow-up to the discussion at the 9/27 RPA meeting, Ken reported that he met with the Board of Selectmen on 10/12. While they have no interest in assigning the town highway department to periodically trim the trail, they were open to RPA volunteers doing so, as long as we first walked the trail with Jerry Coppola or his staff to determine what was and was not appropriate. Ken met Jerry Coppola & his assistant Bob on 10/21 at town beach & walked the trail with Bob. Very little trimming appears necessary to maintain a footpath, & agreement was reached on what we would & would not address. The initial section of the foot path, before it reaches the section where ATV's have accessed, will not be widened beyond a narrow foot path. Some brush trimming at a couple of the fishing openings will be done. Given past experience, no new barrier to ATV access will be tried at the "new" access point from the RR tracks partway down the trail, as ATV users would just create an access around it or move

the barrier. (It is acknowledged that ATV or other public access by way of railroad tracks property is illegal, but it is happening.)

Ken reported that several related signs are to be created & placed as agreed, including a sign at the north end where the fishing trail leaves the pond that says "END OF PUBLIC ACCESS – Private Property - Do Not Enter." Jerry, Bob & Ken agreed that Lakeside Christian Camp would be consulted prior to sign fabrication & placement.

John expressed concern that raising the profile of this public fishing access is likely to exacerbate the trespassing, vandalism & ATV encroachment that Lakeside Christian Camp is already experiencing, recognizing that the recent gating of the town beach does not prevent illegal ATV access to the trail & camp property from the railroad tracks. He also expressed concerns about liability & potential trespasser injury on the high ropes course stations on the camp's property that adjoins the town's property. He recommended that no sign advertising the public fishing trail be placed on the town beach fence & that other signage be limited.

Further discussion with town officials will follow, regarding signage recommendations that had been developed. RPA did agree, however, to assume responsibility for periodic volunteer trimming of the town-owned public access portion of this trail (historically a Native American trail), but only that portion that is adjacent to the pond.

Proposed rezoning by Planning Board of Camp Russell, Swamp Road, & Branch Farm – Carl reported that the Branch Farm Association board will be meeting soon to hopefully develop a recommendation for the Planning Board's next meeting, in November.

Announcements:

LAPA-West Fall Symposium – Carl & Ken reported on learnings from the 10/22 LAPA-West pond management symposium. Key elements of successful lake management (including the "3-legged stool" of science, economics & institutions), with examples of each, were presented by Ken Wagner.

Impacts of winter drawdowns on lake ecosystems was also a major topic. The many factors involved in related decision making, beneficial & negative impacts, & international research on drawdowns were summarized. Richmond Pond is one of several Berkshire County lakes being extensively researched by Dr. Allison Roy of US Geological Survey & Jason Carmignani, PhD student at UMass, in a comprehensive study of the effects of lake draw-downs. The study includes ongoing measurements of our water levels, plant & animal life assessments, etc. Once the study is completed, the comprehensive data collected will be available to us & could help us in a number of ways.

A robust web tool for watershed management plan development was previewed by Robert Hartzel of GeoSyntec Consultants. This free online tool, with 9 components including soil GIS data, should be available soon & could be used to develop a Richmond Pond non-point source pollution control plan.

Lake drawdown – John reported that the annual drawdown will begin November 1, but they may not draw down a full 2 feet, as water levels have been low. Around April 15, they will start gradually raising the water level.

Wearing of PFDs by kayakers/canoe paddlers are required until May 15.

Special Town Meeting - 10/27, 7:00 pm, Town Hall; warrant is on Town website.

Update on planned boat launch area improvements (kayak launch, etc.) – Ken reported that Mark had indicated that there was no new information on this.

Sewer User Concerns - The Q&A information & other details about the sewer system & its related costs & billings are now posted on the town's website (last link on bottom of town homepage), & this was mentioned in the 10/21 *Town e-News*.

Richmond Conservation Commission perspectives – Adam said that he will report back on the Commission's decision regarding beaver deceivers at the Nordeen Marsh beaver dam.

Camp Marion White property status update – Ken reported that the purchasers, Richard & Patricia Levy, bought the property for \$1.35 million, & are in discussions with Mass Audubon to possibly donate the beaver ponds parcel to them. They have posted the property west of Swamp Road as No Trespassing, and have already thinned out the trees & brush in one area, as approved by Richmond Conservation Commission & Natural Heritage, to create a viewscape from their proposed home location. The board supported Ken's plan to reach out to the new owners to welcome them to the pond.

MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife fish shocking/sampling on 9/9/16 – Ken reported that results just came in & will be posted on the website. Documented, with sizes & frequency, were bluegill, brown bullhead, bridge shiner (many), chain pickerel, golden shiner, largemouth bass, & yellow perch. There are other fish known to be present in Richmond Pond, but they were not collected in this sampling.

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

None reported.

Next meeting – April 25, 2017

Attendees:

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp)

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

Alternates Present: Susan Benner (Whitewood); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Linda Kay (Richmond Shores); Adam Weinberg (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Jessica Baumgarten (South Pond 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); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell); Karl Volkman (Richmond Shores); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)