

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, April 28, 2015

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

Directors Absent: Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); John Hultman (Camp Marion White)

Alternates Present: Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Tina Wixsom (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Deborah Mansfield (Camp Marion White); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Stevan Patterson (Richmond Shores); Bill & Judy Powers (South Pond); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Guests: Holly Stover (RPA founder); Ted Potter (Richmond Shores)

Opening items

- Quorum was confirmed and 10/28/14 meeting minutes approved.
- New Alternate Tina Wixsom was introduced (camp director at Camp Russell & associate director of Boys & Girls Club of the Berkshires). Chris Jacoby & Kais Abderrahim are also added as Camp Russell Alternates, though were not present.

RPA meeting schedule for 2015 – REMINDER - 4th Tuesdays – 4/28, 5/26, 6/23, 7/28 (annual meeting), 8/25, 9/22, & 10/27.

Treasurer's report

- Carl reported that donations received since 7/1/14, the start of fiscal year, are \$10,030. All membership dues for 2014 have been paid, totaling \$2,160, and we've received \$63 in interest this fiscal year to date, for total income of \$12,253. Our fiscal year budgeted income is \$14,180, so we're currently \$1,927 short of budget, but on track.
- Total fiscal year expenses to date are \$8,517, including \$3,750 to Lycott Environmental for the bathymetry study and \$2,000 earmarked for the dam maintenance fund. If the pond-related Town Warrant items are approved next month, RPA should not have to assist with boat launch monitoring or weed management expenses this summer.
- We currently have \$26,702 in the bank, \$8,703 of which is in the dam maintenance fund.

Richmond town warrant Annual town meeting is Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 pm, Richmond School.

- Matt reported on the budget line item requests impacting Richmond Pond - town beach \$10,864; boat ramp monitors \$20,000 (misabeled in warrant as Richmond Pond Weeds). No funds are requested for weed treatment, but some funds left from last year can be carried over for spot treatment of weeds.

Enhancements to boat launch area & town beach

- Matt reported that they are looking at the snowpack impact to make sure that parking lot gravel did not get into the pond. A landscape architect will survey.
- Matt expects to have a conversation with MA Fish & Game regarding boat ramp parking area improvements, for which state money is available.
- Town beach improvements would be a town project.

Camp Marion White update and Town of Richmond's Camp Marion White working group

- Ken reviewed actions since the 11/19/14 board vote by the Girl Scouts to divest. The town has formed a related working group; a website for the Richmond Land Trust has been developed and launched, and tours of the property for Selectmen, Land Trust members and others are being organized; one tour is planned for May 2nd at 2:00 pm. The property has not yet been appraised or listed by the Girl Scouts.
- Ken distributed a handout – *Camp Marion White Working Group - Activity Summary as of 4/28/15*. This listed working group participants, the draft vision statement, list of suggested activities, & pending agenda.
- Matt emphasized that the Town Selectman were committed to try and preserve and repurpose the property. There may be a Special Town meeting to take votes on actions and funding.
- Matt invited a representative from abutting South Pond Farm to be a part of the Working Group.

Formation of development committee for Open Space & Recreation Plan

- Ken distributed a handout – *Development of Open Space and Recreation Plan – Activity Summary as of 4/28/15*. Matt described the relationship of such a plan to Richmond Pond as a resource, how the town should proceed to preserve open space and develop recreational resources, & the future of the Camp Marion White property.
- The plan development committee has been formed, with representative membership (Kitty Levitan represents the RPA). A community input survey has been developed, & was launched on Friday, April 24; all are encouraged to take the survey, accessed at www.surveymonkey.com/s/richmondopenspace.
- Eammon Coughlin of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission asked for RPA members to participate in a focus group meeting to provide input to the plan. Volunteers included: Jim, Kitty, John, Ken, & Holly

250th Richmond Anniversary Celebration: RPA: Pontoon boat ride

- Draft script on history/features of the pond for pontoon boat was described by Carl for pontoon boat "guides" to use. He requested that each member review the section pertaining to their area and provide feedback to him by email by May 18.
- Carl asked for pontoon boats & drivers for June 21st. Volunteers included: Camp Russell (2 boats), & possibly 2 other privately owned pontoon boats, whose owners will be contacted.
- Carl also asked for volunteer boat guides and collected names.

Watershed mapping (to pinpoint possible pollution sources)

- Jim McGrath will send a related communication to the Richmond Board of Health asking them to get back to Matt and him by a specified deadline.

Lake Management Plan update

- Cathy, Jim and Kitty will study other area lake management plans, & will meet to put together a draft update and report back.

Announcements:

- Richmond Land Trust – new website – www.richmondlandtrust.net
- Boys and Girls Club of the Berkshires – Tina reported that a full summer camp schedule is again being offered, and they're transitioning to a new name, with a new website – www.bgcberkshires.org
- Light pollution remediation update at Lakeside Christian Camp – John reported that the light bulbs will be replaced by gold ones and will face down until a better plan can be devised.
- Fish testing by DEP for Mercury contamination will take place this summer. Jim and Matt cautioned that they will find some contamination and that we should take a measured approach.
- Results of October bathymetry - Ken circulated copies of the resulting depth mapping of the pond & draw-down scenarios. The deepest part of the lake is 55 feet. A laminated copy of the depth chart will go up on the boat launch kiosk.
- Weed treatment update - Matt reported that he just received the year-end Lycott summary analysis of the weed treatment. He will share the report, which notes that while the treatment was successful, the creek near the boat launch still shows signs of Milfoil.
- There were no update items, of interest to all, from each camp & community association.
- Community association email contact lists - Ken reported that while 3 of the associations have updated email contact lists, Richmond Shores does not. Such lists can be very helpful in getting the word out quickly, through the association presidents or secretaries, about time-sensitive pond-related issues. Ted volunteered to follow up to see if their very outdated one could be updated.
- No-wake zones - A request was made that our May agenda include a discussion about no-wake zone state regulations, & possible education strategies & buoy marker deployment.
- Reminder to put back up the signs on beaches regarding Zebra Mussels.
- **Next meeting – Tuesday, May 26, 5:30 pm**

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, May 26, 2015, 5:30 pm

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

Directors Absent: Matt Kerwood (Richmond Town Administrator); John Hultman (Camp Marion White); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell)

Alternates Present: Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Tina Wixsom (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Deborah Mansfield (Camp Marion White); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Stevan Patterson (Richmond Shores); Bill & Judy Powers (South Pond); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Votes - Approved the RPA minutes of 4/28/15.

Richmond town warrant – Ken reported that at the Richmond annual town meeting, all the pond-related items passed as presented. This included town beach - \$10,864 and boat ramp monitors - \$20,000. The Consent Calendar, Article 2, also included \$5,000 in revolving funds for lake management. No funds were requested for weed treatment, given the 2014 systemic treatment for milfoil, which target their root systems, & as there are some leftover funds for spot-treatment of milfoil & curly-leaf pondweed this year.

Boat Ramp Monitors – While Matt could not attend, he asked that it be reported that the 2015 Ramp Monitors have been hired and began on Monday, May 25th. There are two shifts per day, seven days a week. The shift times are 6AM to 12PM and 12PM to 6PM. While the schedule provides for two monitors per shift, early on there may only be one at times.

Boat ramp improvements – Matt asked that it be reported that due to a failure to transfer the money to Fish and Game by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, this project is stalled at the moment. The funding matter is resolved and it is anticipated that the project will begin to move forward shortly. This project will be bid out by the state.

Town Beach Improvements – Matt asked that it be reported that a site visit with the landscape architect & the Pittsfield Conservation Agent was conducted on May 21st. At that visit, Matt was provided with a conceptual design for the property, which he attached to his email to RPA members; several copies of this were circulated at the meeting. However, Matt noted that as a result of the site visit, some of the elements shown on the plan may change. Matt will be presenting the design concept to the Board of Selectmen during their May 27th meeting. Next steps include finalizing the design and the filing of a Notice of Intent for the project before the Pittsfield Conservation Commission. The plan is to have the project out to bid by mid to late May with work to begin after the beach is closed for the season. The town will be responsible for bidding this project.

Weed Treatment - Matt has received a proposal from Lycott to provide spot treatments for any milfoil and curly leaf pondweed that returns. The cost of the proposal will not exceed \$9,999 and will be paid out the funds that remain in the FY15 weed treatment line item. Notices will be posted in advance of any treatments.

Outcomes of Lakes & Ponds Association of W. Mass (LAPA-West) meeting with Legislative Delegation, May 8 – Ken reported that four officers of LAPA-West met with area legislators (Senator Ben Downing, Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier, & Representative Gailanne Carridi); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield) also attended, as did representatives from Richmond Pond, Onota Lake & Lake Garfield.

Discussion topics focused on limited lake management funding from the state. Laurel Lake (zebra mussels) was acknowledged as a priority. Senator Downing suggested that LAPA-West submit a request for a lakes grant program to support our lakes, either as a western MA program or as part of a statewide program. A case needs to be made for the economic benefits of lakes to the local and state economy.

Action items –

LAPA-West will submit a request to the delegation for a continuing grant program to support protection and preservation of our lakes; \$500,000 per year, either as a western MA program or as part of a larger statewide program seems appropriate.

LAPA-West will submit a request to the delegation to obtain funds to take action in Laurel Lake to reduce the probability of zebra mussels infecting other MA or CN water bodies.

LAPA and COLAP are to organize a meeting with Secretary Matt Beaton to discuss the above topics.

LAPA-West will submit a request to our federal legislators to remove restrictions on use of 319 funds, with copies to the western MA delegation.

The desired result is to increase funds from the state and reduce the burden on the towns and lake associations.

Town of Richmond's Camp Marion White Working Group progress report – Matt asked that it be reported that the Camp Marion White working group continues to meet to develop the Mission/Vision Statement as well as to develop a list of activities that could take place on site. The results of this work, as of the group's May 13 meeting, are depicted in revised draft form below. (Its next meeting will be June 10.)

Vision: The former Camp Marion White property is effectively-stewarded, safe, family-friendly open space that enriches the lives of Richmond residents and nonresidents while simultaneously sustaining the aesthetic qualities and ecological integrity of Richmond Pond and its surrounding watershed in perpetuity.

Mission: To cultivate a stronger sense of community and convey significant value to the Town of Richmond by:

- (1) offering facilities and open spaces that enable resident and nonresident visitors to take part in a wide range of passive and active forms of outdoor recreation, environmental interpretation, and special events in a setting that is accessible and inviting to all, and
- (2) engaging in natural resource management practices that effectively conserve and/or enhance habitat for populations of native wildlife, provide for the long-term protection of environmentally-sensitive areas, and ultimately facilitate levels of environmental quality that reflect the high standards the community sets for itself.

List of Suggested Activities for a Town Park at Camp Marion White – This draft may be amended based upon the results of the Open Space and Recreation survey currently in progress (until June 1).

Hiking, picnicking, canoeing/kayaking (housing/storage; access/launch), fishing, camping, children's play area(s), multi-functional playing field/bocce court/horseshoe pit, winter activities, concerts/special events, interpretive/educational programming, wildlife viewing, photography, citizen science. Swimming remains on the list, but with mixed support & concerns.

Matt has briefed the Selectboard in Executive Session on how the town should approach the Girls Scouts to express its interest in the property. The Selectboard has endorsed this plan and he is moving forward with it, details of which will be released when appropriate. It is Matt's understanding through a third party that the Girl Scouts' appraisal has begun.

Open Space & Recreation Plan development update – The Open Space & Recreation survey is still active, & can be accessed at www.surveymonkey.com/s/richmondopenspace until June 1st. A suggestion was made to look for additional ways to promote the survey by the town, the RPA and the pond's community associations.

Updated script for pontoon boat rides at 250th Anniversary celebration Sunday, June 21 @ Camp Russell & pontoon boat commitments & tour guide commitments – Carl reported that he has updated the script & the tours are expected to take 30 minutes. Ken will test out the timing of the script. Tina reported that the tours will likely be run from 1 pm to 4 pm, with docking at Camp Russell. Camp Russell will provide two boats with drivers. Two private pontoon boats with drivers still need to be confirmed. Four tour guides are needed, and Carl does have 3 volunteers. A ride sign-up system will need to be created & staffed, & volunteers are needed to staff that on June 21st as well.

No-wake zones & possible buoy markers – Cathy shared information from the Stockbridge Bowl Assn. website, which states, "The SBA was involved in establishing sensible lake rules that were accepted by the Town of Stockbridge, and approved by the Attorney General of the Commonwealth..." Their plan has the following components:

- Jet skis prohibited
- Motorized craft must circulate counter clockwise
- 40 mph maximum speed 10 am to sunset; between sunset and 10 am, 6 mph
- Safety zone of 300 feet from the shoreline
- Swimmer outside the safety zone must be accompanied by a boat
- Moorings and floats prohibited more than 300 feet from shore

Buoys were designed, funded and are set out annually by the SBA delineating the safety zone. A discussion ensued, endeavoring to determine the exact specifications for Richmond Pond and whether and how we might proceed with similar provisions for Richmond Pond. The MA Boating Law was cited regarding safety zones from shoreline, no-wake zones, & maximum speed limits. The lake community associations were encouraged to put out buoys and educate their members & guests about swimming & boating safety. Harbormaster Matt Kerwood & Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield) will be asked to clarify related rules & regulations at our next meeting.

Pittsfield Airport Noise – Ken & Cathy shared their summary notes on their May 14 meeting with the interim airport manager. Their summary will be distributed with the minutes, but highlights include that the airport is open 24 hours/day, with no scheduled flights and little control over timing of take-offs and landings. However, the recent runway expansion, which extended the primary runway 1,000 feet to the east, results in planes achieving higher elevation before traversing the pond. This, coupled with other noise abatement measures, should mean reduced airplane noise over Richmond Pond. It was noted that the airport is an important asset in local economic development.

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources; results of outreach to Richmond Board of Health – This was tabled, in the absence of Jim McGrath & Holly Stover.

Lake management plan update – Cathy reported that she, Jim McGrath, & Kitty Levitan are scheduled to meet soon and will report back.

Treasurer's report & summer solicitation plans – Treasurer Carl Foote provided highlights on our current financial status; while we are currently under budget, we are also somewhat short of contributions, compared to last year. Ken will draft the annual solicitation letter, to be delivered by mail before the annual July meeting. Carl also reported that he has added the RPA to the Amazon Smiles program, enabling purchasers of items through Amazon.com to designate that a small percentage of their purchase be donated to the RPA. Related publicity about this will be developed.

Town of Richmond Annual Report – Ken will ask Matt to include a report from the Richmond Pond Association in these future reports, as the Richmond Land Trust already has a report included.

Announcements:

- RPA brochures are available again at the boat launch ramp, Bartlett's & upon request.
- Fish testing by DEP for possible Mercury contamination will be occurring soon.
- Other 250th Anniversary event details – There will be detailed information outlined in a June *Richmond Record* article. Matt asked that it be shared that there will a meeting May 27th with the state Fire Marshall regarding the permit for the June 21st fireworks display. At this point, the preferred launching site is the boat launch ramp, which would likely require its closure for the day. This may create some issues that will need to addressed. Matt hopes to have more detail after his meeting with the Fire Marshal.
- Richmond Shores Association leadership changes – No one was present to provide report.
- Richmond-W. Stockbridge Artists' Guild Fine Art Show, June 4-7 & 11-14, W. Stockbridge 1854 Historic Town Hall, 9 Main Street – Ken distributed fliers with the daily time details; paintings & photography featuring Richmond Pond scenes are included..
- It was requested that the camps & community associations make sure that all the boat cleaning signs are up.
- **Next meeting – 5:30 pm, Tuesday, June 23, 2015**

DRAFT MINUTES
Richmond Pond Association
Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Kitty Levitan, vice president (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Matt Kerwood (Richmond Town Administrator)

Directors Absent: John Hultman (Camp Marion White); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell)

Alternates Present: Tina Wixsom (Camp Russell); Susan Benner (Whitewood); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Deborah Mansfield (Camp Marion White); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Stevan Patterson (Richmond Shores); Bill & Judy Powers (South Pond); Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

Guests: Alan & Fran Schneit (Whitewood)

Minutes Approved: 5/26/15 minutes

Preparations for annual meeting July 28, 5:30 pm, Richmond Town Hall - Carl distributed a draft outline for the meeting, & responsibilities were assigned as follows:

- Updating the Powerpoint – Carl
- Presentation of program segments – these were assigned
- Advance publicity, to include Richmond Record (Ken), Berkshire Eagle calendar item (Cathy), Richmond e-News (Matt), fliers distribution – all (including the 4 pond community association bulletin boards /mailbox units, local venues, etc.)
- Refreshments – Alan & Fran Schneit, Herb Zweig
- Setting up for Powerpoint projection – Matt
- Display table - Ken

Weed treatment plans, timing, & status of canal - Matt K. reported that weed treatment, including the canal, is scheduled to occur on June 29, 30 or July 1, primarily for the invasive curly leaf pondweed that is present throughout most of the littoral area. Posting of related notices will be managed by Matt – there will be restrictions on swimming, boating or fishing this year. There is \$20,000 for the treatment left over from last year's budget and what is not used for this treatment will be returned to the town's fund balance. Any additional treatments this year would have to come from another source.

Matt distributed a map of the pre-treatment weed assessment conducted by Aquatic Control Technology (formerly Lycott), and as was expected, there was a dramatic drop in density and intensity of Eurasian Milfoil. The expectation is to spot-treat the Milfoil with the contact herbicide Diquat, along with the curly leaf pondweed treatment. The inlet is slated for treatment; Ken encouraged Matt to instruct the vendor to find ways to get into the inlet farther than last year.

Camp Marion White Working Group progress report & next steps - Matt K. reported that the group last met on June 10, where it was agreed that Matt would update the Selectboard & suggest to them reaching out to a consultant to conduct a preliminary site analysis including an assessment of repair/initial renovation costs

associated with a list of components that was developed at the meeting. It would be helpful to have this in hand to inform the assessment of the feasibility of moving forward with planning for a possible town park, and possible related negotiations with the Girl Scouts.

The Selectmen of Richmond have made clear their desire to purchase the land and Matt has requested that the Girl Scouts enter into direct negotiations with the town. The Girl Scouts are considering but have not yet responded to this overture. Susan noted that the property is no longer available for rental as of September 1. Next steps: the 'ball is in their court.'

Summary of input from 6/16 public forum on Open Space & Recreation - Matt reported a light turn out with good conversation at this first of two public forums. Eammon Coughlin shared the results of the survey answered by around #100 people (that match town demographics) & fielded questions. Over 90% of survey respondents supported the purchase of Camp Marion White. That percentage also supported using a combination of town and land trust support for purchase & renovation. At the public forum, many suggestions were made and recorded, and will further inform the development of the Open Space & Recreation Plan.

Results of fish testing for Mercury contamination - Ken reported that fish testing was done on June 4 by the MA Bureau of Environmental Health, a component of MA Dept. of Public Health, which is the agency that handles the fish testing & analysis and issuance of the freshwater fish consumption advisories. We should be hearing results & recommendations soon.

There is a general state-wide fish consumption advisory, which Ken passed around. Pontoosuc Lake & Stockbridge Bowl have been tested, & both have P-1 and P-3 advisories for Mercury.

- A P-1 advice code means "Children younger than 12 years of age, pregnant women, women of childbearing age who may become pregnant and nursing mothers should not eat any fish from this water body."
- The P-3 advice code is specific, and means "The general public should limit consumption of affected fish species (*specified*) to two meals per month." For these two lakes, it's the largemouth bass that are specified.

Clarification of current MA Boating Law & related recommendations regarding swimmer safety, no-wake zones & possible buoy markers - A general discussion ensued, helped by Susan's map of what a 150' *no wake zone* looks like. The group seeks to explore funding for buoys similar to those used on Stockbridge Bowl but noted that Lanesborough declined to put in buoys.

Next steps: The questions for the Town are: Do they want to mark the *no wake zone*; can individuals put in buoys; how can the buoys be placed for consistency; how can the buoys be funded; should speed limits be set and posted?

- Matt will contact Jim McGrath to do some research on surrounding towns' decisions and will report back on next steps.

Treasurer's report - Carl reported that year-to-date RPA is \$623 under budget, as expected. He will submit an annual report, as required, to the State of MA. He reminded us that next year's budget will be presented for approval at the August meeting.

Review of draft annual solicitation letter - The group thanked Ken for his draft; several changes were suggested. The timing plan is to have the letter mailed so that it will be received at least one week before the annual meeting. Kitty volunteered to work with the same vendors for printing, addressing & mailing.

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources - TABLED

Lake mana
the process o
the plan will s
Stockbr...

is in hand
and

Lake management plan update - Cathy and Kitty reported that they met with Jim McGrath and have started the process of gathering pertinent information in order to develop a draft table of contents. They anticipate that the plan will start with a clear, visually pleasing and impactful executive summary (similar to that of the Stockbridge Bowl Association.)

Noise concerns on the lake - Ken reported that a number of people, including Ken, were disturbed by an overly loud amplified event at the Lakeside Christian Camp on a Sunday morning. As a result of his communication with the camp director, we are advised that there will be a new clause in their rental contract about control of noise levels. The RPA also recommends that staff with decision making authority be on site to ensure compliance, especially when rental groups use camp facilities..

Announcements:

- **Boat ramp & town beach improvements** - Matt reported on two of the items being considered for the town beach – they include specifications for an ADA-compliant walkway, and consideration of different toilet options. Various governmental organizations are involved, including the Pittsfield Conservation Commission and Natural Heritage. A group conference call is scheduled.
- **Richmond 250th Anniversary** event reviews, especially the pontoon boat rides - The activity was deemed a success with great publicity in the *Berkshire Eagle*.
- The annual **Chili/Chowder Festival**, a fund-raiser for the Boys & Girls Club of the Berkshires, will be held July 25 at Camp Russell. Pontoon boat rides are provided as part of the event. RPA offered to provide guides for the Camp Russell boats during this event, from 4 pm to 7 pm, and Tina indicated that this would be a welcome program enhancement.
- **Town of Richmond Annual Report** – Matt will give consideration to our request to add a Richmond Pond Association report to the town report, though he shared that most such “non-town” groups may no longer include their reports, as they are not formally a component of the town administration.
- **Richmond Shores leadership** – Matt Melillo reported that while no new leadership has been designated, the Richmond Shores Association does have an annual meeting scheduled in late July.
- **Light disturbance concerns** – In response to the agenda item - any update items from camps or associations - Tina reported on the strobe light system very recently installed & activated along the Camp Russell shoreline to scare away the geese. Initial results are positive – the geese no longer hang out on their shore. She also shared that the lights face toward the slope, not the lake, so they should not be visible to anyone around the lake.

Next meeting – the annual meeting - Tuesday, July 28, 5:30 pm, 2015 – Richmond Town Hall

Richmond Pond Association

Annual Meeting - Minutes – July 28, 2015

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

Directors Absent: John Hultman (Camp Marion White)

Alternates Present: Mary Miller (South Pond); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); Judith Powers (South Pond); Tina Wixsom (Camp Russell); 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); Deborah Mansfield (Camp Marion White); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); John O'Brien (Branch Farm)

Guests attending: Branch Farm: Pat O'Brien; Richmond Shores: Ellyn Brown; Teesie Melillo; Shirley Seligman; Chris Thomson; Karl Volkman; Mary Lou & Kris Wechter; South Pond Farm: Jessica Baumgartner; Mary & Buzz Melle; Ellen & Marvin Ochs; Norma Strassler; Whitewood: Leon Nesis; Alan Schneit; Others: John Keenum; Dudley Levinson; Rick & Priscilla Petricca; Rick Wixsom

The 2015 annual public meeting of the Richmond Pond Association attracted 35 people, many of them first-timers.

Review of Activities - Carl Foote (RPA treasurer), Ken Kelly (RPA president), Matt Kerwood (Richmond Town Administrator) & Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield Open Space & Natural Resource Program Manager) took turns reviewing last year's & this year's pond-related activities, including weed treatments, boat ramp monitoring, testing of tributaries & beaches, fish testing for Mercury (still awaiting results), boating & swimming safety strategies, future work on a pond management plan & the association's budget & sources of funding. Displayed at the meeting were the new depth chart of the pond (55 feet at its deepest), the concept plan for town beach improvements, a map of the Camp Marion White property, & summary information about the work of the town's Camp Marion White working group. The Richmond Pond Association's annual fund-raising letter had been mailed out about week before this meeting, & most of those present had already received their letters.

Collaboration - Jim McGrath emphasized how staff from the city of Pittsfield & the town of Richmond, & volunteers from the Richmond Pond Association & LAPA-West (the Lakes and Ponds Association of Western MA) work very collaboratively to preserve & enhance the quality of Richmond Pond & other area lakes.

Camp Marion White - The "hot topic" of the evening was concern over the future of the Girl Scouts' Camp Marion White property that the Girl Scouts have decided to sell. The Town of Richmond Select Board has authorized Matt Kerwood to engage in direct negotiations with the Girl Scouts to seek to purchase the property for conversion into a town park. He reported that the related working group that he formed in late fall had already met nine times. The working group has developed a vision statement, a

mission statement & a list of suggested activities for a town park at Camp Marion White. These were shared & a handout provided a take-away with the detail. If the negotiations are successful, approval by the Board of Selectmen & by town voters at a special town meeting would also be required

Town Beach - Swimming at the town beach remains “at your own risk,” as there have still been no qualified applicants for the lifeguard position.

Concerns raised - Attendees expressed concerns about the weed-choked inlet canal. They also expressed dismay that the water lilies have not recovered as projected from last year’s systemic treatment for the Eurasian milfoil. RPA will follow up with the town on both concerns. Attendees were encouraged to sign up as subscribers to the Richmond Pond Association website, www.richmondpondassociation.org, to receive monthly meeting minutes & pond-related alerts & updates by email.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, **August 25**, 5:30 pm, Richmond Town Hall. The agenda will include nomination & election of officers.

Richmond Pond Association
Draft Minutes – August 25, 2015

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Kitty Levitan, vice president (Whitewood); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Matt Kerwood (Richmond Town Administrator)

Directors Absent: John Hultman (Camp Marion White); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Frank Ostrander (Camp Russell)

Alternates Present: Susan Benner (Whitewood); Al Nardacci (independent cottages); Tina Wixsom (Camp Russell); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Deborah Mansfield (Camp Marion White); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); Jack O'Brien (Branch Farm); John O'Brien (Branch Farm); Judith Powers (South Pond)

Guests attending: Kerry Hamilton; Linda Kay, Alan & Fran Schneit; Karl Volkman; Rick Wixsom

RPA Business:

Approved 6/23/15 minutes, with one correction – In the Announcements segment, under Light Disturbance Concerns, add – Note – She subsequently learned, and shared, that they face both ways.

Approved the 7/28/15 minutes, with one correction - South Pond Farm alternate Mary Miller was present.

Evaluation of annual meeting & recommendations for next year's meeting – There were 35 attendees, with a good number of first-timers. Organizers were thanked & congratulated. Suggestions were made to again hold the meeting in conjunction with RPA's July 2016 meeting, explore hosting the meeting at one of the pond's camps, & invite Project Native to educate about vegetative buffers.

Nomination & election of officers for 2015-2016 – Officers were approved by vote of the Board: President – Ken Kelly, Vice President – Tina Wixsom, Treasurer – Carl Foote, & Secretary – Cathy Deely. (In order to be eligible for an officer position, Tina exchanged RPA roles with Frank Ostrander – Frank becomes an Alternate to the RPA & Tina assumes the RPA Director role for Camp Russell.)

Richmond Shores Association leadership changes – It was reported that Stevan Patterson had asked to step down as an Alternate. A new RPA alternate, year-round resident Karl Volkman, was introduced. The Richmond Shores Association has not yet held their officer elections.

Future bylaws change to drop Girl Scouts from RPA board of directors – Ken reported that soon the RPA should consider an amendment to the RPA bylaws to drop the Girl Scouts from the RPA board of directors. They've not attended at all this calendar year, & their intent to divest has been public knowledge since late fall 2014. Dropping the Girl Scouts would ease the quorum requirement from 5 out of 8 groups, to 4 out of 7 groups. Ken will contact the Girl Scouts to solicit their input.

Treasurer's report – Carl reported that contributions to date this fiscal year are \$4,810, more than was received last year by this time. Donations may have been helped by mailing to 200+ Pittsfield residents with homes near Richmond Pond. There is \$10,280 in savings, \$10,406 in CD's, \$837 in the checking account, and \$8,710 in the dam maintenance fund. In response to a question, Carl indicated that the annual mailing cost was about \$1,130, though that figure includes some cost for renewal of website software. The extra cost of the mailing to 200 Pittsfield nearby residents was about \$75.

Priority Active Projects:

Weeds – They were the main topic at the August meeting. Concerns about the weed-choked and muddy inlet canal & possible treatment of proliferating native weeds there & elsewhere were expressed. Matt Kerwood reviewed his communications with weed treatment vendor, Aquatic Control Tech, which included their assessment of the type of weeds now choking the canal, based on photos provided by Ken Kelly & Linda Kay. In their assessment, the weeds are native weeds, specifically Coontail (*Ceratophyllum*) and Bladderwort (*Utricularia*). Their speculation is that the elimination of most of the invasive weeds last year & the weed treatment on 6/30/15 have given the native plants a boost, as they now don't have to compete with the invasive weeds.

Matt explained that the town's existing permits/order of conditions only allow treatment of the invasive weeds. So there's nothing that can be done about the native weeds without applying for additional permits, the timing of which would likely preclude any action this season. However, treatment of areas choked with native weeds could be studied as a possible component of the pond management plan going forward. Those present agreed that this should be actively researched. Susan suggested that we also explore the MA Weed Watchers Program as a related strategy. Ken suggested that a management plan for the invasive purple loosestrife should also be incorporated, as the loosestrife has expanded around the pond and has just gone to seed, so that's been a missed opportunity this summer.

Speculation was shared by residents that a contributing factor to the unusually persistent turbidity in the canal may be the high concentration of dead-leaf matter from last year's milfoil treatment. Canal residents asked for support for its removal by hired divers or rakers, perhaps with a cost-sharing approach; Matt will reach out to explore possible related services. Matt will also ask Aquatic Control Tech to spot-treat any remaining milfoil concentrations when they shortly do their post-treatment assessment & identify for us the native weeds that are proliferating. Carl will sample the water chemistry in the canal. Discussion will be ongoing between the Town, RPA and residents about collaboration of effort and funding, as well as looking into what more the contractor and the State can do.

Camp Marion White – Matt Kerwood shared the good news that the Town of Richmond Selectmen and the Girl Scouts have reached an agreement in principle for the purchase of the Camp Marion White property. He indicated that there are still many steps ahead until final approval which includes a special town meeting. The Camp Marion Working Group, of which RPA is a participant, will continue to work with Matt as this matter continues to move forward.

Results of fish testing by DEP for Mercury contamination – Ken reported that DEP expects full testing results to be available in September.

Lakeside Christian Camp lights remediation – Tabled

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Lake management plan enhancement – There will be several meetings in the fall with Kitty, Jim & Cathy researching, reviewing & outlining applicable materials. Plan development should include management plans for invasive weeds & invasive purple loosestrife, whether & how management of native weeds should occur, the RPA's role in supporting Richmond's Open Space & Recreation Plan, & potentially its role with the Camp Marion White property.

Open Space & Recreation Plan development – The second public forum will be at 7 pm, 9/17, in Town Hall. The draft plan will be posted for review on the town website starting 8/26. RPA would play several roles in plan implementation (see Section 9, 7-Year Action Plan). All are encouraged to review the plan & attend the 9/17 public forum.

Progress toward public boat ramp & town beach improvements – Matt reported that the parties involved are looking toward spring 2016 implementation.

Boating & swimmer safety - Results of research on other lakes' use of buoy markers for no-wake zones & next steps; other boating & swimmer safety strategies - Tabled

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – Tabled

Announcements:

- **Town beach will close after Labor Day weekend** – The access gate will remain closed off-season. Strategies for recruiting lifeguards for next year were also discussed.
- **Occasional booming sounds from InterPrint plant** – Ken reported that he had contacted Bill Hines at InterPrint & learned that behind their building they have a 20 foot, open top container into which they put scrap rolls of paper. When it is empty and they drop the rolls in (which is the only way to do it) they make a pretty big booming sound. The sound is lessened when the bottom of the container is loaded. It is very infrequent and only during daytime hours. Bill asked Ken to convey their apologies to all.
- **Theft of kayaks at Richmond Shores** – Ken reported that 2 kayaks had been stolen in July from under a deck.
- **Boating safety reminder** – State Law - Anyone aboard a canoe or kayak from September 15 to May 15 must wear a PFD (life jacket).
- **Early Canada goose hunting season** starts Tuesday, 9/8 & runs until 9/25, with a daily bag limit of 7, according to the Mass Wildlife Migratory Bird Regulations for the 2015-2016 season. Goose hunting resumes for the Berkshire zone with the duck season 10/12-11/28, daily goose bag limit of 3, and reopens for geese 12/7-12/15, daily goose bag limit of 3, and for ducks 12/7-12/26. Details at www.mass.gov/dfw/migratory-bird-hunting

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

- Camp Russell was commended for their Summer Brain Gain program (see 8/25/15 *Berkshire Eagle* article)

Next meeting – Tuesday, September 29, 2015 (Note new date, as the originally planned 9/22 meeting coincides with Yom Kippur.)

**Richmond Pond Association
Draft Minutes – September 29, 2015**

Directors Present: Ken Kelly, president (independent cottages); Carl Foote, treasurer (Branch Farm); Tina Wixsom, vice president (Camp Russell); Cathy Deely, secretary (South Pond); Matt Kerwood (Richmond Town Administrator); Kitty Levitan (Whitewood); John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores)

Directors Absent: John Hultman (Camp Marion White); Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield)

Alternates Present: Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); 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); Deborah Mansfield (Camp Marion White); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); 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)

Guests attending: Teesie Melillo

RPA Business:

Approved 8/25/15 minutes.

Bylaws change to drop Girl Scouts from RPA board of directors:

Ken reported that he recently spoke with Suzanne Snyder, & he received a follow-up letter asking to be removed from the board of the RPA. They've not attended any meetings this calendar year, & their intent to divest has been public knowledge since their board voted in late fall 2014 to divest. Dropping the Girl Scouts would ease the RPA's quorum requirement from 5 out of 8 groups, to 4 out of 7 groups.

The following motion was made & seconded: "Amend the Bylaws, paragraph 2.02.01 by deleting paragraph (a) Girl Scouts of Central & Western Mass. (Camp Marion White), and change related references in this paragraph and elsewhere from 8 directors to 7 directors."

Ken reviewed the advance notice requirement outlined in the Bylaws, Article 6, for amendments, and Bylaws Paragraph 3.05, Notice to Directors of Regular and Special Meetings. Discussion followed about whether advance notice requirements had been met. It was agreed that this action had been contemplated by the Girl Scouts & the RPA for over a year, that sufficient notice had been provided, & the motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report:

There is currently \$11,781 in savings, \$10,407 in CD's, \$717 in the checking account, and \$8,711 in the dam maintenance fund, for a total of \$31,615. Annual dues for 2015-16 have been received from all entities except Camp Marion White, Richmond Shores Association, Lakeside Christian Camp, & South Pond Farm Association.

Carl reported that contributions to date this fiscal year have been \$5,475. He shared a pie chart depicting sources of these contributions: \$1,950 from South Pond Farm residents, \$1,820 from Richmond residents, \$550 from Whitewood residents, \$300 from Richmond Shores residents, \$225 from Branch Farm residents, \$85 from Pittsfield residents, & \$545 from others.

He also reported that the annual required financial reports for our fiscal year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 have been prepared & will shortly be filed. These are the Federal Short Form 990-EZ and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Form PC, with Schedules A-1 & A-2. Total revenue for the fiscal year was \$12,476 (\$10,230 in contributions, \$2,160 in annual dues and \$86 in interest). Total expenses were \$6,868 (the largest items were \$3,750 for the bathymetry study, \$1,370 for printing of educational materials, \$720 for tributary lab testing, \$406 in mailing costs, and \$277 for website software renewal). Net assets at the end of the fiscal year were \$26,575; of this, \$8,711 is held in the dam maintenance fund.

Priority Active Projects:

Weeds:

Matt reported that he has received no response yet from his repeated overtures to the weed treatment vendor, Aquatic Control Tech, other than that the weeds in the canal all appear to be native weeds. They have not responded regarding the results of their post-treatment assessment of invasive weeds, whether additional spot-treatment was done, their assessment & identification of the prolific native weeds, and the status of the canal. Once their report comes in, a larger discussion can take place about weed control in the canal.

A motion was made by Kitty Levitan & passed unanimously: "The Richmond Pond Association will fund a service to pick up the dead floating weeds now at a cost up to \$1,000 to be paid by the Richmond Pond Association."

Matt Melillo will contact Paul Brown, the newly elected president of the Richmond Shores Association board, to appoint someone who will spearhead this project with RPA. Cathy will contact the Stockbridge Bowl Association to see if they might recommend someone to clean up the dead weeds in the canal now. Bob Race (president of the Onota Lake Association) will be contacted for a recommendation as well.

Barry Kellogg asked whether there was an independent entity that could review Aquatic Control Tech's report, as they are the only vendor in MA. Matt suggested BCC or a state entity. More discussion is expected on this at the next meeting and as a winter project.

Testing of the canal's water chemistry for E.coli & Phosphorus:

Carl reported on the results of his August testing of the canal's water. The MA state threshold for E.coli is 235 coliforms/100 ml for swimming beaches. While there is no MA state threshold for Phosphorus, Carl found that in Colorado, for pond health, tributaries that empty into a lake or pond should not test above 0.05 mg/L at the point where the tributary enters the pond.

- Results at the Town Beach Road beaver dam were: E.coli 866, Phosphorus .016
- Results at a midpoint between the roads were: E.coli 260, Phosphorus .021
- Results at Bridge Street were: E.coli 260, Phosphorus .023

The E.coli readings above 235 in the canal are not healthy, so no one should swim in it. But the level of Phosphates is in the acceptable range.

Carl also reported that the canal water chemistry readings graphed for the past 14 years suggest that the E.coli and Phosphate levels have remained pretty consistent during this testing period. He suggested that the canal's murky conditions this year are likely due to the lack of rain and reduced water flow.

Concern was also raised about the water feeding into the lake near the boat launch – it (Clark Brook) was stagnant due to lack of rain. Matt Melillo reported that when that water was studied a long time ago, it was determined that it originated at the original Shaker dam, past Richmond Road, where a trucking company & a horse farm were located.

As a more comprehensive lake management plan is developed, it was again agreed that study of whether or not to try to treat native weeds would be part of the plan development process.

Camp Marion White:

Matt Kerwood provided a very encouraging progress report. The Town of Richmond Selectmen and the Girl Scouts continue active negotiations on a purchase & sale agreement for the purchase of all 50 acres of the Camp Marion White property. The purchase will be contingent upon approval by a 2/3 vote of town voters at a Special Town Meeting, hopefully in late October, and a majority of those voting subsequently on a regular ballot. There are many issues and related timelines yet to be resolved. He shared that there are several private developers seriously interested as well. A concerted education effort about the benefits of the project will soon be needed, & there will also be an open forum where the project will be outlined, followed by solicitation of suggestions & questions.

The Camp Marion Working Group, which has already met nine times, will continue to work with Matt on a variety of issues near term to develop strategies for success, and would continue to assist in the long term if this town park project obtains all the necessary approvals.

Kitty Levitan's motion was made and approved unanimously that, "The Richmond Pond Association supports the efforts of the Town of Richmond to acquire Camp Marion White for future use as a public-access town park."

Possible financial support by RPA for one or more future project(s) at Camp Marion White was mentioned.

Results of fish testing by DEP for Mercury contamination:

Ken reported that DEP has informed him that because of staffing constraints resulting from the recent early retirements of many DEP staff, some of the fish captured have still not been tested by their lab. The panfish that have already been tested had very low-level Mercury concentrations, well below anything that would trigger a fish consumption advisory, but the bass have not yet been tested. When complete results are received, they will be posted, along with any resulting fish consumption advisories, on the RPA website, summarized in the *Richmond Record* and *Town e-News*, and shared in other ways, including posting on the boat launch kiosk.

Lakeside Christian Camp lights remediation:

John provided an update on measures taken to date by Lakeside Christian Camp to adjust their lighting in order to reduce the glare out onto the lake. They will also change out the bright light fixture on the dining hall. The RPA appreciated that the Camp had bent over backwards to find solutions and considers the matter closed.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Lake management plan enhancement:

Cathy reported on progress to date by the project group (Kitty, Jim McGrath & Cathy). A draft of the plan outline developed by Kitty & Cathy is being reviewed by Jim McGrath, & a draft will be sent to the board prior to the next meeting. Matt provided the project group with archived materials to review.

Open Space & Recreation Plan development:

Matt reported that the second public forum was held on 9/17, ending the comment period on the plan; about 25-30 attended the session. After incorporating ideas & concerns raised, & October meetings for approval by the Board of Selectmen & the Planning Board, the plan will be submitted to the state for review.

Boating & swimmer safety:

Susan Benner will be asked to head up this project of information gathering on best practices & next steps, with a proposal to be presented to the RPA board in April, so that any changes can be implemented before Memorial Day 2016.

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – Tabled

Boat ramp project – Matt reported that there had been no movement on the project.

Beach Improvement project:

Matt reported that the process is moving ahead with a consultant working on bid documents to go out this fall, with the goal of awarding & finishing the project by the time the beach opens on Father's Day weekend.

Announcements:

- **Boating safety reminder** – State Law - Anyone aboard a canoe or kayak from September 15 to May 15 must wear a PFD (life jacket).
- **Lake draw-down** is scheduled to begin November 1. Boat owners needing removal access to the boat launch ramp should remove their boats by that date, as lake water levels can drop rather quickly, rendering the boat ramp inaccessible. Matt reported that the order of conditions for the annual draw-down will soon be expiring, so he will file a new notice of intent.

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

- **Richmond Shores Association** has a new president, year-round resident Paul Brown.
- Matt Kerwood advised the group that **DEP “listening sessions”** had recently been announced regarding DEP regulations that are no longer necessary and redundant. He will be working on a

hing
recommendation for exemption from the Wetlands Protection Act that eases up the regular process of getting approvals for weed treatments & draw-downs previously approved.

Next meeting – Tuesday, October 27, 2015 (This is our last scheduled meeting date for the fall.)

**Richmond Pond Association
Draft Minutes – October 27, 2015**

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

Directors Absent: John Mead (Lakeside Christian Camp); Matt Melillo (Richmond Shores); Tina Wixsom, vice president (Camp Russell)

Alternates Present: Susan Benner (Whitewood); Louise Brogan (Branch Farm)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell); Christopher Jacoby (Camp Russell); Jesse Kellam (Lakeside Christian Camp); Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores); Mary Miller (South Pond); Jim Mooney (Camp Russell); 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); Herb Zweig (Richmond Shores)

RPA Business:

Approved 9/29/15 minutes.

Treasurer's report - Carl reported that there is currently a total of \$32,513.75 in all accounts, \$8,710.58 of which is in the dam maintenance fund. Annual dues for 2015-16 have been received from all entities except Richmond Shores Association & South Pond Farm Association. Contributions to date this fiscal year have been \$6,080, up from about \$5,000 at this time in 2014. He also reported that the annual required financial reports for our fiscal year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 have been filed & a certification of solicitation (valid through November 15, 2016) has been received from the Attorney General's office. The board mentioned that it is interested in soliciting pond area businesses in 2016.

Proposed meeting dates for 2016 – Cathy received approval from the Town of Richmond to maintain RPA's regular schedule of 4th Tuesday of the month at Town Hall: April 26; May 24; June 28; July 26; August 23; September 27; and October 25. A vote was taken & these dates were approved for 2016.

Active – Priority Projects:

Results of post-treatment assessment of invasive weeds, assessment of native weeds – Matt K. reported that the promised report still has not been received from the weed treatment vendor, Aquatic Control Tech, other than that the weeds remaining in the canal all appear to be native weeds. They have not responded regarding the results of their post-treatment assessment of invasive weeds, whether additional spot-treatment was done, their assessment & identification of the prolific native weeds, and the status of the canal. This report is needed before further study of weed management strategies can proceed. *Matt suggested that he arrange for a face to face meeting with ACT, the Town of Richmond and RPA during the winter; the board agreed & asked that he schedule such a meeting.*

Status of canal dead weeds remediation – Ken reported that he'd contacted Paul Brown, newly elected president of Richmond Shores, & informed him that the RPA had approved funding of up to \$1,000 for

a service to pick up & dispose of the dead weeds in the canal. Ken also told him that the RPA had identified an individual who might be interested in removing the weeds. Paul was asked to designate a lead person from Richmond Shores to manage this project. Paul indicated that he'd reach out to two people who live on the canal to designate one of them to serve in this capacity. He has not yet gotten back to Ken to inform him of their designee.

Camp Marion White – Matt K. reported that the Girl Scouts & the Town have both signed the purchase & sales agreement for a price of \$1.375 million. Matt outlined next steps, both relating to publicity & preparations for the upcoming public forum, special town meeting & ballot votes. Louise reported that 14 people attended the 1st tour.

Matt sent a related communication to *Town e-News* subscribers on October 23, copies of which were distributed to all present. Copies of the tour dates flier were also shared.

Related RPA Education, Outreach & Support Activities -

- Website information, e-newsletters to RPA website subscribers
- Whitewood Association has emailed all their members & has polled them regarding their support via a Survey Monkey questionnaire.
- Branch Farm president is surveying their members.
- Even though they are in Pittsfield, South Pond Farm is surveying their members, as they are abutters to the property.
- Richmond Shores Association president indicated he'd try to get a sense of the group, though there is no email list of members.
- Ken will follow up with Camp Russell/Boys & Girls Club and Lakeside Christian Camp.
- Letters to the Editor – *Richmond Record & Berkshire Eagle*

Roles for RPA board members & alternates -

- Attend a tour; attend 11/5 public forum; reach out to friends & relatives to educate them & encourage their engagement; attend & encourage others to attend 11/18 special town meeting; plan to vote & encourage others to vote in 11/21 ballot vote.

Results of fish testing by DEP for Mercury contamination – Ken reported that all samples of Richmond Pond fish taken by DEP this summer tested well below the MA Department of Public Health fish consumption advisory "trigger level" for Mercury in fish, which is 0.5 mg/kg. Fish tested included rock bass, yellow perch, pumpkinseed, brown bullhead and largemouth bass (12" to 15"). No trout were tested, but most trout are stocked, so their Mercury levels are known to be very low. So the summer 2015 testing resulted in no generic or species-specific fish consumption advisories for Richmond Pond. It is a relief to know that generally the fish in Richmond Pond are safe to eat.

There is a state-wide special caution, however, for pregnant women and children. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health's *Fish Consumption Advisory for Marine and Fresh Water Bodies* starts by stating that, "Fish is good for you and your family." However, they have issued generic safe eating guidelines for pregnant women, women who may become pregnant, nursing mothers, and children under 12 years old, which state in part, "Do not eat freshwater fish caught in streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds

in Massachusetts. Safe to eat are fish that are stocked in streams, rivers, lakes and ponds in Massachusetts." The complete *Guide to Eating Fish Safely in Massachusetts* is available at: www.mass.gov/dph/fishadvisories. *Summary results of the fish testing will soon be posted at the boat launch ramp & on the Richmond Pond Association website, & may be included in the Town e-News. It was also agreed that Jim would order Department of Public Health signs for Ken to post at the boat launch kiosk.*

Ken also cautioned that it is known that the predator fish (bass and pickerel) bio-accumulate Mercury as they grow larger, so the the Mercury levels in the much larger bass and pickerel could exceed the trigger level for Mercury. Therefore, it may be wise not to eat the trophy size bass and pickerel.

Ongoing, Long-term Projects – updates:

Lake management plan (including weed management) – Jim McG. reviewed the sections envisioned for the plan. The schedule is that Jim will finalize the outline & forward it to the RPA board members for comment by Dec. 15, with feedback due Jan. 1. On Feb 1, 2nd draft of plan will be sent to the board with comments due back by March 1. C/ J/K will fine-tune plan & send it to the board by mid-April for their review prior to discussion at the April 26 RPA meeting. Cathy is the lead (& Jim McG. & Kitty)

Weed management plan (as a component of lake management plan) – Kitty asked for a meeting with the vendor & RPA. Jim & Matt agreed to organize the meeting to get better information & outline roles & responsibilities, so related plan updating can go forward regarding both invasive & native weeds.

Boating & swimmer safety - Research to be conducted over the winter on other lakes' consideration of & use of buoy markers for no-wake zones & other boating & swimmer safety strategies, with a report & recommendations including projected costs, approvals needed, who would execute it, & whether to implement or not, to be prepared for presentation & action at April 2016 meeting – Susan B. is the lead (& Matt K. & Jim McG.)

Watershed mapping to pinpoint possible pollution sources – To be researched & conducted over the winter, with report & recommendations to be shared at April meeting - Jim McG. is lead (& Matt & Holly)

Progress toward public boat ramp improvements – Matt reported that this appears to have fallen off the state's radar screen, at least for now.

Progress toward town beach improvements – Matt reported that this project is moving along smartly, with bid opening December 5th and completion to be on or before June 10th.

Announcements:

- Drawdown is to begin November 1.
- Open Space & Recreation Plan approval process update – Matt K. reported that the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board & the Conservation Commission have approved the plan, & it will be submitted to the state for review.

- Matt/Town of Richmond will make their views known to DEP on asking for an exemption from the Wetlands Protection Act that eases up the regular process of getting approvals for weed treatments & draw-downs previously approved.
- RPA Bylaws have been updated on the website.
- Ken has drafted an updated brochure & requested feedback on it by Monday so it can be edited, printed & shared at the November 5th Public Forum on Camp Marion White.

Next meeting – April 26, 2016.

Attachments – *The Future of Camp Marion White*, published in *Richmond e-News*, 10/23/15