

RPA Meeting Minutes 2023
(Notes in order from most recent to oldest)

RPA Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2023 via Zoom

Welcome – Louise opened the meeting at 7:05 pm and welcomed all in attendance.

Approval of RPA minutes of September 26th meeting – Doreen made a motion to approve the minutes of September 26th. Minutes approved.

Updates from Town Hall – Danielle was not present. Neal reported that he did not have any new updates. Jonna asked if the eroded pipe on Town Beach Road, by Clark's Brook had been addressed. Carl had sent pictures of the pipe to Danielle. He asked Carl to send them to him. Neal thought that overall, the beach was maintained better than previous years. They will begin the hiring of boat monitors and life guards in the spring.

Proposed meeting date for 2024- Louise read the proposed dates for 2024. Doreen noted that the first meeting, April 23rd is the 2nd day of Passover. Discussion was held for an alternate date. The meeting dates for 2024 are, 4/30, 5/28, 6/25, 7/23, 8/27, 9/24 and 10/22.

Financial report – Laura reported that Carl has merged the funds as voted on last month. Balances in the book account and the canal fund were added to the RPA money market /savings account. Linda Kay had questions about the dissolution of the canal fund and if there was a way to track the money that was in the fund. Carl responded that the information was in QuickBooks.

The intention is to move \$2,000 from our Savings account to the Dam Fund account, but that account is in a CD so Laura will go to Berkshire Bank to see if this can be done.

The filing of form PC as required by the MA Attorney General's office is completed. The report was done on line which avoided a lot of paper work, mailing, etc. The form was accepted. Carl put the numbers together and Laura did the review.

The interest on our CDs plunged this month. Instead of earning roughly \$180 / month, we are now earning \$4.00 / month. She will meet with Berkshire Bank on this.

We have about \$25K in liquid accounts (checking and money market) and about \$45K in CDs. Our overall assets grew by about \$800 this month, attributable to donations and dues. Changing the authorized signatures at the bank will be done. The changes will be to add Jonna and remove Ken and Carl.

Discussion and action on proposed amendment to RPA Bylaws, Article 4.03 – Ken read the proposed amendment that was stated at the last meeting. The hope is that this amendment will open up more candidates for the position of President by including members of the RPA board, an alternate or ex officio member of the RPA. He made a motion to adopt the amendment to the Bylaws. Motion was passed.

Nominations and Election of President– Doreen asked if there were any nominations or self-nominations for the role of President. There were none. Louise thanked Ken and Carl for their years of service to the RPA. She clarified her role as vice president and what she is able to do in that role. The Board will be supportive of helping to fill the void until a new president is elected. Ken noted that if a candidate for President comes forward before the first scheduled meeting in 2024, per the bylaws, a special meeting can be called. He will share this bylaw with Louise.

Project updates & other developments at the pond:

Detention basins and runoff mitigation at Camp Russell-Holly has spoken with Ron Veillette and Danielle about working on a contract with the Boy's Club for the maintenance of the detention basins. She will provide the ConCom with the original engineering plans and the contract for the maintenance. Holly has identified problems with drainage and run off from the roads in the Camp. The Boy's Club has been unresponsive to her requests to meet. The goal is to have a site visit that would include representatives from the Town, ConCom, RPA and the Boy's Club. Holly plans on discussing this at a BOS meeting and Con Com meeting. Jonna thanked Holly for giving a few members of the RPA a tour and history of the detention basin

Weed management planning update – Jonna relayed that several of the RPA leadership team recently had a Zoom consultation with Jim McGrath, to get his advice on how to move things along with Mass Heritage with regard to dam draw-down permitting for both towns and development of a Natural Heritage-approved weed treatment plan. Jim recommended that we reach out to a pond management consultant that he's used, with excellent success, to help us frame a comprehensive pond management plan, which would include a multi-faceted Natural Heritage-approved weed treatment plan for Richmond Pond. Jonna has reached out to this CEI consultant, Bob Hartzel, and has scheduled a Zoom meeting with him for Wednesday evening, November 1, at 7:00 pm. She has invited Danielle and Tom Potter to attend along with the RPA Board members. Jonna asked if a special meeting would be needed to approve funds for this if we were to move forward with hiring Bob. Carl responded that there is already money allocated for weed management.

Update on Camp Arrow Wood – Matt was not present.

Update on Camp Russell – Cam was not present.

Identification of winter projects: staffing of and designation of a convener for each- Louise identified the projects that will continue over the winter months;

1. Long range plans for weed control- Doreen will take the lead but will have help from Jonna and Linda.
2. Detention basins and run off mitigation at Camp Russell- Holly will take the lead
3. Education connection at Richmond School- Louise has a meeting with Gill (grade 4) to discuss the curriculum and drop off books. She is excited about this project.
4. Consolidation of RPA historical records in preparation of storage- Ken will take the lead and will ask for assistance from Carl, Holly and Doreen.
5. Annual report- Doreen will write the initial draft and Ken offered to review.
6. Control of invasive plants- Miles has reached out to the Division of Ecological Restoration. His winter project is to find out if a survey can be done to identify the plants. Ken has identified Japanese Knotweed at Whitewood and has also reached out to an agency in South County. Louise hopes this can be part of the education on projects with the school

Recent developments around the pond (community association reports):

Richmond Shores- Doreen relayed that the Shores is working on contracting a provider for plowing services.

Branch Farm- Louise reported that the eagles are rebuilding a nest in a different area in Branch Farm. The cottages are closing for the year. There is more erosion on their roads which may be

related to the changes in the road that happened with the rebuilding of the O'Brien's cottage. The road has lost their swales and water is now eroding the road and driveways. Louise will follow up with this.

Whitewood- Jonna reported that Bruce is now an alternate for Whitewood along with managing the website. The roads at Whitewood have also been eroding more. They hired an engineering firm and have a plan to help with their road maintenance.

Linda spoke about the erosion of all the dirt roads around the Pond and wondered if there could be a long range plan that included funding from the RPA to help offset the cost of road maintenance with run off and erosion. The roads are in the water shed. Applying for a grant and matching funds were mentioned.

South Pond Farm-Laure reported there are fewer residents now as we move towards winter. They are working with the Pittsfield ConCom on permitting to remove some trees that are within the buffer zone of the Pond.

Website & Facebook enhancements – No new updates.

Odds & ends:

Winter draw-down: The winter draw-down of the Pond is expected to begin on November 1st.

Richmond Record – Ken reminded us that the changes to the Record are captured in last month's minutes. He shared that past Editor Lauren Broussal was recently awarded this year's Charles & Mary Kusik Citizenship Award, at the Richmond Land Trust's recent Pie-nic, and that was covered in the October issue of Richmond Record.

He also asked for additional volunteer writers for the Richmond Pond Update column in Richmond Record; Kerry Hamilton and Ken are tag-teaming this but having another person would be helpful.

Other announcements: Ken noted the beaver dam at Nordeen Marsh's outflow into the canal at Town Beach Road, that had been breached, substantially reducing the water level of the marsh, has been rebuilt by the beavers.

Book sales – Ken will be selling pond history books and distributing the handout "How to write you Pond's History Book" at Mass Wildlife headquarters in Westborough on 10/30 at the MA Watershed Association's data management workshop and the watershed-related presentations. This event is co-sponsored by LAPA-West, and only 5 minutes from his home.
Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 pm

ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Louise Brogan (vice-president, Branch Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Laura Rosenthal (Treasurer, South Pond Farm), Jonna Gaberman (Assistant Treasurer, Whitewood), Ken Kelly (independent cottages,) Miles Garfinkel (At-Large),

Ex-officio present (non-voting): Alternates present: Cricket Nardacci (Whitewood). Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm),

Guests present: Holly Stover, Dick Stover, Ernie Smith (Conservation Commission) Carl Foote (Branch Farm), Neal Pilson (Selectman), Linda Kay

Directors absent: Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood), Cam Stockton (Camp Russell), Kerry Hamilton (At-Large),

Ex-officio absent: Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator), Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield), Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission),

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood,) Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores), Al Nardacci (independent cottages) Tim Mason (independent cottages).

RPA Meeting Minutes September 26, 2023 via Zoom

Welcome – Ken called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm & announced that this will be his last meeting as president, with officer elections being part of tonight's agenda. He thanked Louise for organizing a great picnic that had very good attendance and for MCing the business meeting. He also thanked Matt for hosting at Camp Arrow Wood and all the volunteers who assisted with the event.

Approval of RPA minutes of July 25th meeting & August 22nd annual meeting – Minutes were approved.

Updates from Town Hall – Danielle was not present. Ken shared that public tours of the new Town Hall/Library were Sunday and today. Those who attended a tour commented on how beautiful the new building is. Ken had spoken with Danielle, and reported that spraying by Berkshire Mosquito Control was conducted the evening of 9/19 in a 1-mile radius around the intersection of Swamp Road & March Hare Road, where mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus had been trapped. Related cautions were shared. The railroad does spray yearly, but does not notify the Town of the date. The Town has purchased many used fire-proof cabinets for storage, & the RPA should be able to use one for storage. The boat launch monitors will be at the boat ramp thru end of September. Danielle does want to be involved in planning for the weed treatment permitting applications.

Financial report – Carl discussed the status of all the bank accounts and suggested some changes. Currently we have 6 accounts at Berkshire Bank:

1. Business checking - this is used for depositing all donations and dues, paying bills.
2. Money market savings for holding funds for major budgeted expenses like the annual picnic and water monitoring.
3. CD for long term plans and to obtain a higher interest rate.
4. History Book Account for tracking sales and expenses. Executive board recently reduced pricing to \$10/book, since sale activities have diminished. Carl made a motion to close this account and transfer the balance into the money market account. The motion was passed. Bruce questioned if the RPA will be ordering more books. The editorial board had decided after the 3rd printing that there would be no further printings. There are still about 130 books unsold.
5. Canal account. This account was established to provide a separate budget to focus on managing the canal. RPA has tried weed pulling which has proven to be very costly and not very effective. Canal maintenance should be part of the overall lake management program. Carl made a motion to close this account and transfer the balance into the money market account. Motion passed.
6. Dam Maintenance CD. This account was established about 12 years ago and is supported by an annual increase of \$2,000 with a current balance of \$24,000. This was established to build a long term investment to assist the dam owner with needed maintenance and repairs to maintain our 217-acre pond. Some of our members had suggested that the new owners could & should manage all costs. Other members suggested keeping and adding to the fund to show our support in maintaining this important asset for Richmond Pond. Carl made a motion to continue this account and the annual \$2,000 donation as currently structured. Motion passed.

Laura reported on the donations received so far this year totaling \$6,244.38, and dues collected \$1,800. Laura reviewed the expenses. There is a total balance from all the accounts at \$67,674.88. She offered to email her detailed report to anyone interested. Filing of the RPA annual fiscal reports to Mass.gov and US.gov is almost completed, well ahead of the November 15th filing deadline.

Carl will continue to work on the relations with Berkshire Bank. He thanked Bruce and Jonna for taking responsibility for the keys to the mailbox and picking up the mail. The P.O. Box in Lenox will continue to be the mailing address for the RPA for the foreseeable future.

Board member status changes– Carl reported that Louise Brogan has been appointed as the RPA voting representative for Branch Farm, the position that Carl had held. No vote was needed for this change in representation. Ken explained that Kerry Hamilton would be moving to an At Large voting position, one that she had previously applied for & been voted into as one of the two At Large representative positions. But she had voluntarily agreed to vacate to an Alternate At Large/non-voting role so Louise could be appointed to an At Large/voting role & serve as our VP. Kerry has re-applied, and her appointment requires a vote. Kerry shared a brief autobiography. A motion was made to appoint Kerry to the At Large position. A vote was taken and she was approved.

Officer Elections – Doreen read the related excerpts from the RPA Bylaws pertinent to the election of officers, paragraphs 4.01 to 4.03. There were no questions.

Related announcements:

Carl shared his 20-year history with the RPA. He is grateful to be leaving his position to a competent replacement. He will continue to be a resource and consultant to RPA board members as needed.

Ken shared his history with the RPA. He was an officer for 10 years, 3 as secretary and 7 as president. He has moved away, but will continue to use his seasonal cottage on the pond. He felt it was time for others to take on the leadership role. He will stay on the board as a voting member for the independent cottages.

Nominations & voting– Doreen conducted the nomination and voting of officers. She advised the new officers that they would assume their roles at the end of the meeting.

Continuing officers:

Vice President – Louise Brogan was nominated by Ken for the position of vice president. There were no other nominations. A vote was taken and Louise was elected to the vice president position.

Secretary – Doreen Donovan was nominated by Ken for the position of secretary. There were no other nominations. A vote was taken and Doreen was elected to the secretary position.

New in roles:

Treasurer – Laura Rosenthal was nominated by Carl for the position of treasurer. There were no other nominations. A vote was taken and Laura was elected to the treasurer position.

Asst. Treasurer – Jonna Gaberman was nominated by Carl for the position of assistant treasurer. Jonna was not present, but had discussed this with Ken and was agreeable to filling this position. There were no other nominations. A vote was taken and Jonna was elected to the assistant treasurer position.

President - Doreen asked for any nominations for the president position. Ken nominated Laura. She declined due to the responsibilities she has with role of treasurer. There were not any other nominations.

Next steps - Since elections concluded with a vacancy in the role of president, Ken introduced a proposed Bylaws amendment, to be discussed & voted on at our October meeting. The proposed amendment is:

Proposed amendment to RPA Bylaws, Article 4.03 - Vacancies, as additional language: "If one of the RPA officer positions remains unfilled, following outreach to all eligible/voting members of the RPA board, an alternate or ex officio member of the RPA board may be elected to fill the position, on an interim basis, and would serve with voting authority."

The purpose of the amendment is to expand the pool of potential candidates for officer positions, if none of the eligible (voting) members of the board is willing to fill one of the officer vacancies. This cannot be acted on today, as our Bylaws do not allow consideration of an amendment to the Bylaws unless the proposed amendment has been shared with board members prior to a board meeting when it can be considered. It will be on the agenda for the October meeting, with the explicit language of the proposal shared in advance.

In the interim, Ken offered to assist our VP, Louise, in handling some matters, for her review, going forward. He is still a voting member of the board, representing independent cottages, just not as an officer.

Also, in the interim, he is encouraging all alternates & ex-officio members of the board to consider potentially serving as president, as they would become eligible to do so, if the proposed Bylaws amendment is adopted next month. He asked that any questions regarding this be held until the end of the meeting.

Project updates & other developments at the pond:

Cyanobacteria test results from samplings this year – Louise reported that since her last report there have been four more tests conducted, and the results for cyanobacteria levels have consistently been low, much lower than the state's threshold. The samples were taken at Louise's dock and at the pond's deep hole.

Weed management planning update – Doreen reported on this. Weed mapping was done in July as one step in preparing to submit the weed treatment permit application. Jim McGrath has been in contact with the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife asking for information on sampling for the bridle shiner. He was told that Natural Heritage would follow up with him. As of this meeting, there has been no response from them.

Update on purple loosestrife & Phragmites (common reed) – Miles reported that he and Holly clipped loosestrife plants & collected their seeds along the road from Bartlett's all the way down Town Beach Rd. They also removed these plants along the pond's shoreline, using kayaks. This will be an ongoing project.

Update on Camp Arrow Wood – Matt was not present. Louise has noted a loud humming coming from the dining hall at the camp. She will reach out to Matt.

Update on Camp Russell – Cam shared that the Boy's Club had a successful camp year and were at full capacity. Louise commented that the camp was much cleaner this year. This was one of Cam's goals for this year.

Recent developments around the pond (community association reports):

Richmond Shores - Doreen relayed that last month unlocked cars were gone through in the middle of the night. The State Police were called. She also commented on the numerous signs the Town has installed along Swamp Rd. and Boy's Club Road notifying truck drivers that this in

not a road to Interprint. To her knowledge, at least 2 more trucks have come down into the Shores since the signs were placed. The Town is working with Interprint to resolve this problem. Branch Farm - Carl was happy to report that the eagles are building a new nest in a different area in Branch Farm. He also helped remove a tree that had blocked their road.

Whitewood - Bruce relayed that Whitewood is quieter, as the summer residents have left. The docks will be coming out soon.

South Pond Farm - Laura was concerned about the mailboxes at South Pond being opened. A check was stolen and edited, which resulted in loss of money to the check sender. There is a new homeowner, and there is another unit on the market.

Website & Facebook enhancements – Bruce has added the Zoom meeting details to the RPA website. He has added new posts and links for subscription and contact information. He asked anyone who has pictures to post, to send them to him.

Carl and his daughter Heidi have been working on contributing more posts to the RPA Facebook page to help increase engagement.

Identification of possible winter projects – Ken asked that we think about winter projects and this will be added to next month's agenda.

Odds & ends:

Status of Richmond Record – Kerry updated us on the status of the Richmond Record. The Record has a new editor, Kimberly Rawson, who replaces Lauren Broussal. Ann Larkin will continue as publisher and the editorial board will consist of chair Ann Larkin, John Mason, Regis Donovan, Ruth Bass and Kerry Hamilton. Sally Set has been named advertising manager, Lisa Martin will continue as treasurer, and Kim Bradway continues as graphics designer.

All staff, except for the new editor and the graphics designer, are volunteers, and a number of residents have signed up to write stories as well. Ken and Kerry will share writing responsibilities for the Richmond Pond Update column. She asked for others to volunteer to write.

Advertising rates have been raised as of October 1, or when advertisers' present agreements run out. The Record is seeking new advertisers. The RPA has a contract rate, so our advertising rates will not increase until next year. Kerry is presently serving as the RPA liaison with the Record for ad placement. We run two ads, our generic fundraising ad and the book ad, now showing the new book price of \$10 and continued availability at Bartlett's.

Also, for the first time since the paper was founded, subscription rates have gone up, from \$21 to \$30 a year, or \$55 for two years. The Record is seeking new subscribers. To keep the publication on an even keel financially, the board is also seeking donations of \$250 from individuals who would like to co-sponsor an issue. Donations should be sent to Richmond Record, P.O. Box 214, Richmond, MA 01254. The paper will be published 11 times a year, doing a combination issue in January-February.

Final RPA meeting of calendar 2023 - Tuesday, October 24, 7:00 pm, by Zoom. The agenda will include meeting dates for 2024, decisions on winter projects & staffing thereof, & consideration of the proposed Bylaws amendment.

Proposed Bylaws amendment – There were no questions concerning the proposed amendment.

Other announcements:

Holly asked how to contact the Conservation Commission, as currently there is not a Conservation Agent. Ernie Smith advised all to call Town Hall and said that he and Tom Potter are in on Thursdays.

Ken congratulated the elected officers. Carl and Ken were thanked for all their years of service to the RPA. Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 pm

ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Ken Kelly (president, independent cottages), Louise Brogan (vice-president, At-Large), Carl Foote (treasurer, Branch Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Miles Garfinkel (At-Large), Laura Rosenthal (asst. treasurer, South Pond Farm) Cam Stockton (Camp Russell)

Ex-officio present (non-voting): None

Alternates present: Kerry Hamilton (At-Large), Tim Mason (independent cottages), Cricket Nardacci (Whitewood), Bruce Wintman (Website Manager)

Guests present: Whitewood), Holly & Dick Stover, Richard & Susan Krushniac, Ernie Smith (Conservation Commission)

Directors absent: Jonna Gaberman (Whitewood), Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood)

Ex-officio absent: Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator), Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield), Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores), Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood,) Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

RPA Annual Meeting Minutes August 22, 2023 in Person at Camp Arrow Wood

Welcome – On a beautiful summer evening after the attendees enjoyed a taco dinner catered by KJ Nosh and ice cream from Sweet Pea's (4:30 to 6:30 pm), Louise welcomed them all to the annual meeting. She thanked Matt for Camp Arrow Wood hosting the picnic. Louise then introduced the board members.

Summary of Year 2023 at the Pond

Town Beach & Boat Launch– Danielle was not present but Louise did speak with her. She reports that the beach will be open thru Labor Day weekend. The Town did not hire any beach monitors but the beach has been cleaner this year. They are working on a solution for replacing the handicap access and also working with the Pittsfield Con Com regarding drainage issues in the beach parking lot.

The Town hopes to move into the new Town Hall around the 1st of October. They will be closed for a week during this transition.

Financials -This was Carl's last annual meeting as treasurer; Laura will be assuming the position. The financial book closed the end of June. Laura relayed that 1,000 fund raising letters were sent out and that donations are coming in. There will be a detailed report at the September meeting. Expenses are below budget as the RPA has not spent money on weed management but has continued with tributary testing and cyanobacteria testing.

Kitty questioned why the RPA still has a dam maintenance fund and why Mill Town does not take full financial responsibility for the dam. This will be discussed at the September meeting.

Weed management of pond – Doreen reported that the Pond was not treated again this year partly due to not receiving the needed information from Natural Heritage to questions regarding herbicide treatment. The goal is to have new permitting for 2024 which will include weed harvesting. Linda Kay and Doreen have been working with Jim McGrath on the steps that need to be done before the permit can be applied for. One step was done which was the weed mapping of the Pond. The City of Pittsfield paid for this. The next step is to have information on the bridge shiner. We need to know the methodology that NHESP wants so that this can move forward. Kitty suggested driving to Natural Heritage's office to get the answers to the questions that we have.

Waters (testing of beaches, tributaries, cyanobacteria) – Jonna reported that she and Carl conducted tributary testing in May and July at the inlets at Clarks Brook, Tracy Brook, Whitewood Brook and the canal. There were higher numbers of E. coli in July at the canal. This test was done after a heavy rainfall. The nutrient runoff is enhancing weed growth from the nitrogen and phosphates entering the Pond. Jonna has been looking for trends but as of yet has not identified any. Her hope is to work with the Town of Richmond and the City of Pittsfield for help with decreasing the nutrients entering the Pond. Carl relayed that each beach around the pond contracts for required weekly e-Coli testing. Any test result exceeding safe swimming levels is to be reported to Board of Health, but RPA has not learned of any related beach closings this season. LAPA has continued to test for cyanobacteria which have been below the state threshold.

RPA website & Facebook page – Bruce Whitman is managing the RPA website. He has updated the calendar and added live links. He asked if anyone had suggestions for the website to contact him and also to send pictures. There were questions on how to get on the email list.

Invasive Species Update - Miles and Holly have been working on removing purple loosestrife from around the Pond and Boy's Club Road. This is a long range project to slow down the spread of this invasive plant. Miles discussed the proper way of removing and disposal of the plant. There was interest from attendees to help with this project. A request was made to have a picture of the plant and directions for removal and disposal placed on the RPA website.

Camp Arrow Wood 2023 Report – Matt reported that the camp doubled their enrollment from last year. They are renovating more cabins so that they can increase their capacity. The sports fields are completed. He praised the camp staff and the campers for a great year. They were able to give \$140,000 in scholarships to 14 campers, 7 of which were from the Pittsfield area.

Camp Russell Summer 2023 Report – Cam was not present; no update given.

The book – A History of Richmond Pond– Carl reported that 750 books were published and 600 have been sold. Bartlett's has been the number one selling venue. The books will continue to be sold at Bartlett's The Bookstore in Lenox and the Shaker Mill Books in West Stockbridge.

Q&A – There were no questions at the end of the meeting.

ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Ken Kelly (president, independent cottages), Louise Brogan (vice president, At-Large), Carl Foote (treasurer, Branch Farm) Laura Rosenthal (assistant treasurer, South Pond Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Jonna Gaberman (Whitewood), Miles Garfinkel (At-Large), Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood)

Ex-officio present (non-voting): Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Website Manager - Bruce Wintman

Alternates present: Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Ron Veillette (Richmond Conservation Commission), Kerry Hamilton (At-Large)

Guests present: Too many to list.

Directors absent: Cam Stockton (Camp Russell)

Ex-officio absent: Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield), Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores), Tim Mason (independent cottages), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood), Al Nardacci (independent cottages), Cricket Nardacci (Whitewood)

RPA Meeting Minutes July 25, 2023 via Zoom

Welcome – Ken opened the meeting mentioning the amount of rain we have had and seeing floating docks under water. He introduced a new additional alternate for Whitewood – Cricket Nardacci. One additional agenda item was added, the updating of the water testing protocol & clarification of pond management roles, which will follow Updates from Town Hall, as it includes Town officials as well as RPA folks.

Approval of RPA minutes of June 27, 2023 meeting – Minutes were approved.

Updates from Town Hall – Status of Town Beach & boat launch - beach monitor, research on replacement of disabled access ramp at town beach, floating dock, boulder in Town Beach Road- Danielle was not present but Neal reported that the Town has hired two extra boat ramp monitors with a plan to assign them to the beach, for the monitor to be available for any issues. Neal has gone to the beach every weekend and notes that the beach area has been clean. The beach erosion has made it difficult to keep the handicap access ramp in place. They are looking at alternative sites for the ramp that will allow access to the water. As of this meeting, the new float was not in the water. Ken noted that the protruding boulder on Beach Rd. has been removed. Ken also questioned Neal about the care of the Porta-Potties. He noted that they were filthy. Neal knows that they are serviced on Fridays. He will have Danielle follow up with the company.

Neal also responded to an email Ken had sent to the Town asking if an herbicide had been used in Nordeen Marsh. Ken had noted dead vegetation. The Town had not done a treatment. Ken acknowledged that, after subsequent observation, he did not feel that herbicide had been used.

Updating the working draft of Beach & Tributary Testing Protocol (adding cyanobacteria details). – Ken has received material from Jim McGrath regarding testing protocols. He would like to meet with the key players from Pittsfield and Richmond to discuss and clarify the roles in beach closing decisions, posting of notices, related communications, & other pond management roles. Included in this discussion would be BOH, Jim McGrath, Selectmen and the RPA. He would like a meeting of the parties soon, likely at Town Hall.

Carl has been in contact with Valerie Bird, who is on the Richmond BOH, after tributary testing showed high E.coli levels at the inlet to the canal and at the outlet of Clark brook. He asked what their procedure is regarding beach testing and notification of high E.coli levels. She responded that she receives the beach test results every Friday and reviews them. If one exceeds 235, she will post that beach as closed, notify the state and have it re-tested the next day. Holly noted that BCC is offering a course on water quality testing.

Financial report– Laura reported we have \$64,001 in all accounts as of 7/23/23. The Book Account has a balance of \$6,583, which is the same balance as last month. The Dam Maintenance Account has a balance of \$24,454. The increase in the Dam Maintenance Fund is due to a higher rate of interest on the CD that we recently moved the money into.

We expect our annual donation request letters to go out soon. Mailing lists are now in process. Carl and Laura are doing the transitioning as planned. We will prepare the annual report to the state and send invoices for RPA annual dues.

Project updates & other developments at the pond:

Submission of renewal of annual drawdown permit & future plans for dam repairs - Camp Arrow Wood has reapplied for the permit to perform the yearly 2-foot drawdown of the Pond. Jon relayed that a letter was sent to the abutters and the time for comments ends on August 7th. There is no immediate plan for any repairs to the dam. The dam is inspected every six months; the phase 2 inspection will be in December 2023. Jon described the dam as being in poor condition. Jonna asked Jon to clarify what poor condition means. The dam has been in a slow state of decline but notes that there have not been any big changes over the past 3 years. The spillway is in good shape. The dam repair is part of a long range plan. They will continue to monitor for any trees that may impact the integrity of the dam.

Update on Camp Arrow Wood — Jon reports that their camp year is going well. They are in the 2nd week of the 2nd session and there have not been any issues. They will have another session the 2nd week in August for 10 days. Louise is teaching sailing at the Camp and describes her interactions with the campers as very positive.

Update on Camp Russell – Cam was not present at this meeting. Holly has not had a response to the email she sent to Cam asking to meet for a site visit to discuss the areas at the Camp that are impacting the Pond. If she does not get a response, she will go to the BOD of the Boy & Girls Club. Tom would like to be kept updated with the progress of the work that needs to be done and is agreeable to meeting with Holly and the Boys & Girls Club staff.

Annual meeting & all-town picnic plans at Camp Arrow Wood on Tuesday, August 22 – Louise confirmed that the annual meeting and all town picnic will be August 22nd at Camp Arrow Wood from 4:30-7:30. The event will be held in the barn. Tacos and ice cream will be served. She asked for volunteers for the day and had several people volunteer. Louise would like to offer pontoon boat rides around the Pond and will check with Matt to ask if boats are able to moor at their dock.

Weed management planning update – Doreen reported that Solitude is scheduled to perform the weed mapping this month. As of this meeting there is no report. The City of Pittsfield is paying for this service.

Status of addressing invasive purple loosestrife & Phragmites (common reed) – Miles reported that the purple loose strife has not flowered so it is challenging to know all of the locations. He did remove some plants on Beach Road and Richmond Shores beach. He plans to kayak around the Pond and cut and bag any flowers he does find. Cutting will help to weaken the plant over time. Tom will follow up with Jim McGrath regarding Pittsfield's procedure on phragmites removal. Holly will follow up with Richmond ConCom regarding their policy for hand-pulling weeds.

Cyanobacteria test results from samplings thus far– Louise shared the report from Shannon.

Sampling was done on June 29th and July 6th. On July 6th one sample was taken at the surface at Louise's dock and one sample at 35 feet in 54.2 feet of water. The cell counts are nowhere near the state's threshold of 70,000 cells/mL. The pond at this sampling time is okay and safe.

A comparison from last year at this time - a bloom was present at 30 feet and is not present this year. The surface cell count is slightly higher than it was last year at the same time.

On June 29, 2023, one sample was taken at Louise's dock and one sample at 30 feet in 54.6 feet of water. The temperature and dissolved oxygen levels were collected from 1 to 52 feet. This was the first sampling where a profile from the surface to the bottom was fully completed as the YSI meter bought by LAPA-West is long enough to reach the bottom of Richmond Pond. The oxygen levels are steady for the first 20 feet then decrease at 25 feet. The secchi depth was 10 feet. The temperature last year was almost the same as this year.

Recent developments around the pond (community association reports):

Richmond Shores – Doreen discussed the recent situation on the Shores that involved a semi-trailer coming into the Shores trying to get to Interprint. The truck took down electrical wires which caused an electrical surge into a resident's home causing damage. Luckily they were home. The trucker was following GPS directions and overlooking the 2 no outlet signs. The RSCA Board has been in contact with Interprint in the past as this is not the first semi to make its way into the Shores. They have contacted Garmin which was the GPS this trucker was using to have them change their directions with the next software update.

Neal added that the Town is purchasing 2 more signs to be placed on Swamp Rd. that say this road does not lead to Interprint. Doreen asked if it would be helpful to have solar lights on the sign to draw the driver's attention to them.

Branch Farm – Carl reported that it looks like the eagles are building a new nest in his neighbor's yard.

Whitewood – Jonna will send an email to Whitewood residents asking for volunteers for the picnic.

South Pond Farm – Laura is seeing a full community. There was a picnic that was well attended by their residents. They do hear the camp sounds, but there have been no complaints.

Website enhancements – Bruce has done the monthly updates. He asked that we send more pictures for the website and any news from around the Pond.

Projects still needing volunteers – A volunteer is still need to manage our Facebook page.

Odds & ends:

Status of Richmond Record – Ken reported that the Richmond Record has an uncertain future. There will not be an August issue, but they are hoping to have an update on the status of the paper in the fall. Ken read part of the article in the July edition explaining their situation.

Other announcements - There were no other announcements. The meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.
ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Ken Kelly (president, independent cottages), Louise Brogan (vice-president, At-Large), Carl Foote (treasurer, Branch Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Jonna Gaberman (Whitewood), Miles Garfinkel (At-Large), Laura Rosenthal (Asst. Treasurer, South Pond Farm)

Ex-officio present (non-voting): Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Alternates present: Kerry Hamilton (At-Large), Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores), Tim Mason (independent cottages), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood), Cricket Nardacci (Whitewood)

Guests present: Neal Pilson (Town Selectman), Bruce Wintman (Whitewood), Holly Stover, Dick Stover, Jon Adleman (Richmond Shores)

Directors absent: Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood), Cam Stockton (Camp Russell)

Ex-officio absent: Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator), Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

RPA Meeting Minutes June 27, 2023 via Zoom

Welcome – Ken opened the meeting, commenting on all the rain that we have been having and noting that campers are back at Camp Arrow Wood.

Approval of RPA minutes of May 23, 2023– Minutes were approved.

Any corrections to updated “public” RPA contact list: Bruce Wintman, RPA website manager, has been added to the public RPA contact list, though not a “board member,” so folks can contact him with website suggestions. Louise will email to Doreen her updated contact information.

Emergency pond contact list - Ken distributed the emergency contact list a week ago to its limited distribution – just to the 5 RPA officers, 2 camp directors, 4 community association presidents, & Richmond town administrator. This list is to facilitate emergency communication, especially after-hours & off-season, about the pond as needed. It is not intended to bypass dialing 911 in any true emergency, but as an additional resource that could be helpful in certain situations. It has been used to alert those who could quickly alert their community association residents about a matter of concern (lost child or dog, pattern of vandalism to cottages, lost or found boats that have come off their moorings or have sunk, imminent or actual flooding resulting from a dam failure or extreme storm, late night pond-disturbing noise from a specific or approximate location (a camp, a residence, town beach). A corrected list with the Whitewood president’s updated contact information will be distributed by Doreen.

Updates from Town Hall - Danielle was unable to participate in tonight’s meeting, but Ken shared her updates. The remediation of the detention basin at Camp Russell has been completed. (But Holly Stover noted that the water runoff ditch which runs from the dining hall to that detention basin needs maintenance; she would like to meet with Cam & the Camp’s maintenance person to discuss.) The Town did not work on the detention basin by Branch Farm, as it was functioning. (Holly disagreed with this & stressed that the basin needs to be cleaned & maintained.)

Status of Town Beach & boat launch: The ropes and floats are in place at the Town Beach. The hope is to have the dock in next week. All the boat monitor positions have been filled but there have not been any applicants for lifeguarding. Danielle will ask the selectman at the next BOS meeting to approve the hiring of another monitor to help with the care and upkeep of the beach. Neal Pilson plans on visiting the beach over the 4th of July holiday to survey for any damage or litter.

Storage of RPA documents in new Town Hall: Neal shared that there is space to store the RPA files at the new Town Hall, but they need to know details of the space needed. He asked us to make sure that the files to be stored are essential and necessary. Ken and Carl know that there are duplicates and will work on selecting only necessary files to be stored.

Financial report – Carl reported that we have \$63,756 in all accounts as of 6/24/23. The pond history book account has a balance of \$6,583 and the dam maintenance account has a balance of \$24,361. Carl and Laura are working on the treasurer transition plan, as Laura will take the lead on handling the accounts and Carl will become the coach. Our next steps are to close out the fiscal year on June 30th, file the annual report with the state, prepare for the annual fund solicitation and send invoices for the RPA dues. RPA previously approved the next year’s budget, which includes the current dues structure of \$400 per association and \$40 per

independent dwelling. Also, we approved adding \$2,000 to both the dam maintenance and canal maintenance accounts. Carl also asked for us to think about changing the address for the RPA. It is currently a PO Box in Lenox, which was convenient for him and Ken. With changes coming with new board members, it may be practical to have a more convenient mailing address.

Project updates & other developments at the pond:

Updates on Camp Arrow Wood – Matt and Jon were not present. Ken had communicated with Matt and was told Camp opened its first session June 24th. They have decided not to do a July 4th fireworks show at the pond. There was not time to get a vendor and the permits. Some changes the pond communities are likely to notice while the camp season is underway are the use of its PA system & increased lighting.

Updates on Camp Russell - Cam shared that the first camp session starts July 3rd. They are at maximum capacity until the last week of August when there are a few openings. He reminded us that the public are not allowed to walk or jog through the camp during camp sessions. The Chili & Chowder Fest, an annual fund-raiser for the Camp, is July 14, 6-10 pm, and is \$30 per ticket.

Weed management planning update & permitting initiatives; potentials for 2023 – Linda and Doreen have had meetings with Jim McGrath, Tom Potter, Danielle and Rob Van Der Kar for assistance with the permitting process for weed treatment & harvesting. They reported that Solitude will do the weed mapping and vegetation survey in July. Jim McGrath agreed for the City of Pittsfield to pay for this service. Solitude is still waiting for more information from Natural Heritage regarding allowable herbicide concentrations. Solitude's Dominic had discussed using Sonar as an alternative herbicide but knows that this is much more expensive. He will give us an estimate. Linda had reached out to Dominic for an update, but as of this meeting, she had not heard back.

The Town of Richmond should hold the permit. Before the NOI can be submitted there are steps to take such as the weed mapping and a pre-determination from Natural Heritage. The bridge shiners are what we are working around.

They had discussed the possibility of a deeper draw down of the pond with Jim and Rob. But based on their experience with DEP, they are confident that this is not a possibility for weed management.

Related pond health strategies (encouraging buffer plantings, discouraging lawn fertilizers/weed killers, etc.) – Jonna discussed the importance of decreasing the nutrients entering the Pond and the effect they have on weed growth. She would like to ask Danielle to send out information to the Town residents about what they can do to help decrease the nutrients entering the watershed around the Pond.

Plans for addressing invasive purple loosestrife & Phragmites (common reed) – Miles and Holly plan on walking the shoreline from the RSCA community beach to the boat ramp to pull the purple loosestrife on Friday. Holly asked that a communication be sent out to the Shores residents notifying them of this project, as they may be walking on private property. Doreen will send out an email. Holly had not heard back from Shep Evans regarding her question about whether a permit is needed to hand-pull the weeds along the shore. Ernie will follow up with Shep.

Cyanobacteria testing – Louise reported that the first testing had to be canceled. The next Richmond Pond test is this Thursday. Ken reported that Pontoosuc Lake tested positive for toxic pond scum last year. Many ponds, including Richmond Pond, experienced pond scum late this

spring, before testing could be done. There are both toxic & non-toxic types of pond scum; the former is especially dangerous for dogs.

Learnings from June 22 Conference on Protection of Lakes & Watersheds of Western MA (sponsored by LAPA-West & Lake Onota Preservation Association) – There were 30+ attendees (from Lake Onota, Pontoosuc Lake, Richmond Pond & a couple other ponds); Carl, Ken & Laura attended for RPA. Carl shared that Lake Onota uses Solitude Lake Management, like us, & has tracked their weed control efforts from 2001 to present; they did a 6-foot drawdown in 2017. In 2019, the milfoil came back & exploded in 2020. In 2021, they switched from Diquat to ProcellaCOR – a systemic treatment for milfoil – it was very successful, & in 2022 native weeds made a strong comeback. Should RPA try this? The question to be asked is, what is its impact on bridle shiners?

Ten lakes are participating in the LAPA-West managed cyanobacteria testing program, including Richmond Pond. High phosphate levels in tributaries feed weed & algae growth in our ponds; it's important to educate landowners to reduce their use. Vegetative buffers also help, & keep geese off of lawns.

Details were shared about the state-wide boat ramp monitoring program to keep zebra mussels out of our ponds. Jim McGrath also shared plans for a boat-washing station at Onota Lake (2024) for use by all 3 Pittsfield ponds.

The Department of Fish & Wildlife encourages all to keep our lakes clean and enable us to enjoy being outdoors. The fees for fishing licenses go to support the lake management programs.

Update on educational initiatives with Richmond Consolidated School students – Louise reported that she is working with a teacher at Richmond School, on planning programs for the fall. The lessons will include learning about plant life around the Pond, which will include a field trip; funds may be needed to pay for a field trip bus. They are grateful for the pond history books donated by RPA to help with their studies.

Annual Picnic/Annual meeting – Louise is waiting to hear from Camp Arrow Wood about an August date for the picnic. She asked if there would be flexibility with the day of the week, possibly even considering a Saturday, or into September. Sentiments expressed by attendees were that these options were OK to consider. If Camp Arrow Wood is unable to accommodate, she will reach out to Cam at the Boy's Club.

Recent developments around the pond (community association reports) –

Richmond Shores – Doreen said the roads have been graded by the Town and that Eversource will be removing dead trees near the power lines.

Branch Farm – The renovation of a cottage is progressing.

Whitewood – Jonna reported that their roads have been graded also.

South Pond Farm – No report

Website enhancements – Bruce Wintman has assumed management of the RPA website, & has already made some changes, including updating the swimming & boating safety page, archiving some items and adding live links. He asked that if anyone has pictures, comments or links that they would like to add, please send them to him.

Projects still are needing volunteers – A volunteer is still needed to manage the RPA Facebook page. Since there has not been a volunteer to serve as editor for *The Richmond Record*, & its remaining funds are limited, Ken was sorry to report that the July issue may be its last.

Decision on format for July 25 RPA meeting – Doreen made a motion to hold the July meeting via Zoom, which was approved.

Odds & ends:

Open water swimming safety – Ken is seeing deep-water swimmers in the Pond, unaccompanied by a boat or wearing a swimming bubble. He worries for their safety. Bruce will add a link to the RPA website about how to order swim bubbles.

Results of & plans for Pond history book marketing events – Ken has developed & shared his “how to” outline with other pond associations on how to write, fund, publish, & market a history book about their own lake community. He also set up a table & sold 4 books at the recent LAPA-West symposium.

Other announcements:

Officer Elections - The election of RPA officers is planned for the September meeting. Ken asked for all to consider being part of RPA’s leadership team, as this will be needed for the coming year.

Town Beach Road - Miles noted a big boulder protruding from the road and worried that this could damage a car. Ken will ask Danielle if this could be removed by the Town. Miles also noted that an aluminum boat appeared to have been abandoned at the town beach area; Holly has seen that the Town removed that boat.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Ken Kelly (president, independent cottages), Louise Brogan (vice-president, At-Large), Carl Foote (treasurer, Branch Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Jonna Gaberman (Whitewood), Miles Garfinkel (At-Large), Cam Stockton (Camp Russell)

Ex-officio present (non-voting): none present

Alternates present: Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores)

Guests present: Linda Kay (Richmond Shores), Neal Pilson (Town Selectman), Bruce Wintman (Whitewood), Ernie Smith (Conservation Commission), Holly Stover, Dick Stover

Directors absent: Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood), Laura Rosenthal (Asst. Treasurer, South Pond Farm)

Ex-officio absent: Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield), Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission), Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Kerry Hamilton (At-Large), Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Tim Mason (independent cottages), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood), Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

RPA Meeting Minutes May 23, 2023 via Zoom

Welcome – Ken opened the meeting by mentioning that there is a simultaneous Zoom meeting (6:30 pm start) presenting the draft Richmond/W. Stockbridge Resilient Storm Water Action and Implementation Plan. Several RPA board members are attending that, including Danielle Fillio & Jonna Gaberman. VP Louise Brogan was traveling, so couldn't attend either.

Approval of RPA minutes of April 25 meeting – Doreen made a motion for approval of the RPA minutes of April 25, 2023. Minutes were approved.

Updated RPA contacts lists– Ken reported that the previously updated and circulated RPA board member contacts list mirrors what currently is on the RPA website. A second more private Pond Emergency Contact List, which had not been updated in recent years, has also been updated with cell numbers, and will only be shared with camp directors, community association presidents, town administrator, and the RPA officers. Its intent is to facilitate emergency communication, especially on weekends, after-hours, and off-season as needed.

Updates from Town Hall – Danielle was unable to attend tonight's meeting. She & Ken had met by phone to discuss recent updates. Ken shared pond-related budget approvals at the May 17th Annual Town Meeting: town beach (incl. lifeguards) \$18,000; weed treatment \$5,000; boat ramp monitors \$5,000 (plus the \$6,000 provided by the state); and \$3,500 beaver control (town-wide). Remediation of Camp Russell detention basins is targeted for early June. Installation of the kayak dock will be delayed given town facilities dept. staff shortages, and road grader and other maintenance equipment breakdowns; spring road grading is wrapping up. There have still been no applications for lifeguards. Danielle asks for help in encouraging applications. If there is also no "summer helper" hired, this will impact the Town beach. Ken and Danielle also discussed the need to update the 5-year lake management plan, written in 2016 for the years 2013-2017, with comments about 2018 and 2019 plans; it's on the RPA website. Incorporation of cyanobacteria testing and weed treatment efforts going forward are needed. This should be a collaborative project between RPA, the Town of Richmond and City of Pittsfield which would include Conservations Commissions and Boards of Health. Ken thought it would be worthwhile to ask what models other lakes are using. Neal updated attendees on the status of Perrys Peak Road and BNRC's adjacent conserved property; mediation is continuing.

Financial report – Carl reported that as of 5/23 we have \$64,359 in all accounts. The annual Directors and Officers Insurance bill was paid on 5/15. The fiscal 2022 report has been accepted by the state. Carl and Laura continue working on transitioning the treasurer's responsibilities.

Project updates & other developments at the pond:

Camp season plans for Camp Arrow Wood – Matt reported that Camp Arrow Wood enrollment has doubled from last year. They are getting ready for their 6-week camp season. Their staff is arriving this week. The sports fields work is just about complete. Matt was exploring the idea of the Camp hosting a professionally managed fireworks display on July 4th, perhaps from a barge on the pond. He asked for feedback on this. There were questions about the noise and its impact on the wildlife and also families with dogs. Tom Potter commented on the toxic chemicals that are in fireworks and would discourage fireworks going into the water. He recommended looking

at the DEP's website to learn more about this. Might fireworks in their camp's fields be an option? Linda suggested Bousquet as an alternate site. Camp staff will study the options. Camp season plans for Camp Russell - Cam was not present so there is no update. Ken will follow up with him.

Goose management – Laura reached out to last year's participants with the contact information for Wild Goose Chase. She has not heard back from anyone. This will be a gap year as no one volunteered to manage the program. Nylon or fishing line barriers on docks & shorelines were suggested. Ken observed at least 6 goose families on his kayak circuit of pond (3 in canal). He counted 37 geese one evening, with many others likely nesting in the marshes with parents unable to fly yet.

Canal weed-pulling update – Doreen received a quote from Laurie of Aquatic Roots to hand-pull weeds from the bridge to the Pond. The cost quoted was \$10,000. This cost is a 100% increase from the past two years. The effectiveness of the weed pulling was reviewed and concern was expressed about the expense and the minimal impact for the money, compared to other treatment options. It was felt that this money would be of better use toward the weed management program of the Pond, which would include the canal.

Other weed management efforts – Doreen and Linda reported that there has not been any movement thus far. Solitude did follow up with Natural Heritage but has not heard back regarding the use of other herbicides. Tom Potter volunteered to work with them on the permitting process, starting with the NOI. Given timing considerations, permits would be for 2024 and beyond. No weed treatments are expected this summer.

Plans for addressing invasive purple loosestrife & Phragmites (common reed) – Miles reported that he and Holly walked from the Shores to Camp Arrow Wood's boundary and identified potential sites. They will evaluate again and make a plan to remove the purple loosestrife, which blooms in late summer. They hope that students from Richmond School will help with this project. They have not addressed the common reed yet.

Initial tributary testing results – Carl relayed that he and Jonna conducted testing of all 4 tributaries and the outflow at the dam on Monday, May 15th. Carl reported that E.coli and nitrate levels are well within acceptable levels. Phosphorus levels are highest at Tracy Brook. Jonna is researching what the upper levels should be. Whitewood had the highest nitrate levels, though still within the acceptable level. Looking at the bigger picture for weed management should include mitigating phosphorous runoff into the Pond. Jonna and Bruce attended the simultaneous storm water management plan ZOOM meeting for the Towns of Richmond and West Stockbridge. Jonna reported that the number one goal is to mitigate flooding and its impact on gravel roads. She voiced concern about the higher phosphorous numbers related to agriculture, geese and beavers. There is a grant for agricultural runoff. Alison Dixon from the HVA has experience with this. Tom works with Alison and will help to connect her to Jonna. Jonna will also follow up with Danielle. Linda voiced the need for educational program that address the actions that will help decrease phosphorous run off.

Cyanobacteria testing schedule - Ken reported that testing will begin June 15th. This will be coordinated by LAPA-West. Richmond Pond's testing is paid for by RPA and will be done every other week on Thursday evenings. The measurement is done at the pond's "deep hole". Cyanobacteria is present in deep levels of the Pond. Ken will ask Jim McGrath for the City of Pittsfield's protocol, especially what to do if test results reach concerning levels. The Boards of Health would need to be involved. Ken volunteered to create a draft summary document that would address all the pond's "testing" efforts - beach, tributary & cyanobacteria testing.

Update on educational initiatives with Richmond Consolidated School students – Louise was not able to attend, but had indicated that there was nothing new to report. A pond history book will be donated to the school library.

Recent developments around the pond (community association reports) – Richmond Shores – Doreen relayed that the fencing at the Shores community beach is up and the dock is in the water. They are waiting for the Town to grade the roads. Linda expressed concerns about the increase in Air-B&B renters. She feels the character of the Shores is changing due to frequent short-term renters. Kerry informed her that the Town does have a by-law regarding short-term rentals and the selectmen would be the best people to hear her concerns. Ken suggested that the RSCA board might ask the Town to provide a list of homes that have registered to operate short term rentals. Linda will follow up with the Town. Branch Farm - Carl has not seen the eagles in the nest by his cottage, though the eagles are still fishing at the pond. Whitewood – Jonna has no updates to report. South Pond Farm - Laura is seeing the 2nd homeowners returning. No other developments.

Projects still needing volunteers - Richmond Record (articles/photos/editor) - Ken will continue to write the article for the Richmond Record for a few more months. He asked for a volunteer to take this over. The Record is also looking for an editor. There are no volunteers to manage the RPA Facebook page. Linda suggested a Richmond School student, as they may be more tech-savvy. Ken shared that Bruce Wintman, of Whitewood, had volunteered & has assumed responsibility for management & enhancement of the RPA website, effective immediately. Recommended changes should be addressed to Bruce; his contact info will be on the website.

Decision on format for June 27 RPA meeting - Doreen acknowledged that the mask mandate has been lifted and it may be safer to meet in person, though most attendees seem to prefer the Zoom format. The new Town Hall will have a bigger meeting space, but this will not be available until the end of the year. The June meeting will be held by Zoom.

Odds & ends:

LAPA-West's spring lake & pond management symposium (by Zoom) – Ken - Cyanobacteria management will be the focus. This will be via Zoom, likely as a summer meeting, but no date is yet scheduled for this meeting. Ken will also make a short presentation about developing your own pond's history book.

Pond history book sales update – Kerry reported that 163 books remain, some of which are out with our sale vendors. She reports that the sales are in the “trickle phase,” which is to be expected.

Other announcements – Ken & others have noticed a new “guest” on the pond - a mute swan. Miles has picked up the trash & garbage on the fishing trail. Ken informed the meeting that, as reported in the Berkshire Eagle, Bartlett's apple trees were affected by a recent frost, causing them to lose 75% of their apple crop. He encouraged people to support their store. RPA brochure has been updated & printed – for the boat launch kiosk and Bartlett's, & pond functions (picnic/book events). Doreen will distribute. RPA summer annual meeting/picnic was mentioned. The tentative dates were 7/25 or 8/22. Camp Arrow Wood is likely not be available at either time. Further discussion was tabled until Louise returns from her trip. Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm

ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Ken Kelly (president, independent cottages), Carl Foote (treasurer, Branch Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Laura Rosenthal (Asst. Treasurer, South Pond Farm), Jonna Gaberman (Whitewood), Miles Garfinkel (At-Large), Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood)

Ex-officio present (non-voting): Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Alternates present: Kerry Hamilton (At-Large), Tim Mason (independent cottages)

Guests present: Linda Edelstein, Linda Kay (Richmond Shores), Neal Pilson (Town Selectman), Bruce Wintman (Whitewood)

Directors absent: Louise Brogan (vice-president, At-Large), Cam Stockton (Camp Russell)

Ex-officio absent: Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator), Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores), Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood), Al Nardacci (independent cottages)

RPA Meeting Minutes April 25, 2023 via Zoom

Welcome – Ken opened the meeting by asking for a moment of silence in remembrance of Pat O’Brien, a recently deceased long-time cottage resident of Branch Farm. The material distributed before the meeting included the agenda, minutes from October 25th 2022, the 2022 annual report and the RPA board member contact list.

Approval of RPA minutes of October 25th meeting – Doreen asked for a motion to approve the October 25th meeting minutes. Minutes approved.

Approval of RPA Annual Report 2022- Doreen asked for a motion to approve the RPA’s 2022 annual report; it is posted on the RPA website & will be included in the Town of Richmond annual report. Report approved.

Updates to the RPA’s contact list - Ken asked for the list to be reviewed and if there are any updates to let Doreen know. He is also in the process of updating the emergency contact list.

Updates from Town Hall – Danielle reported that the Baby Town Meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 1st at 6:00 pm, and the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for 7:30 pm, Saturday, May 17th. The Town has hired 4 boat launch pond monitors and is extending the duration of their employment to start 2 weeks before Memorial Day and continue until 2 weeks after Labor Day. The kayak launch dock at the boat launch is scheduled to be put in. She is still advertising for lifeguards, but has no applicants yet. The town beach floating dock that was destroyed by vandals last summer is being rebuilt, with plans for it to be in the water this season.

Danielle has emailed Joe McGovern, the director of the Boys & Girls Club of the Berkshires, to coordinate a date to begin the remediation of the detention basins at Camp Russell. She has not heard back from him. She would like to have this project completed before camp starts; otherwise, it will again be delayed until after the camp season ends. Ken will also reach out to Joe to try to expedite the project.

Neal reported that the Town Hall/Library construction is on schedule with the goal to be finished by the end of the year. Good weather this winter has helped to move the project along. They have been waiting for the generator to arrive.

Danielle reported that the Town of Richmond’s administrative hours have changed. The Town Hall will be open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 8am to 4pm and Thursday from 8am to 6pm. They will be closed on Fridays. They will re-evaluate this in September.

Financial report– Carl presented the budget for the coming fiscal year. A motion was made to approve the budget. The budget was approved.

Carl and Laura have been meeting to bring Laura up to speed on the RPA accounting process. They have been to Berkshire Bank to add Laura to all the bank accounts. Two CDs were renewed on March 1st for 6 months at a 4.65% rate. This is much better than the 0.1% our CD money had been earning!

The annual fiscal report was filed to the state of Massachusetts last October which was due on November 15th. In the past it is reviewed by the state, then made available on the Mass.gov/charities website. Carl recently checked the status and has found that the state is still

processing the paper filing. He has since found that the state now has an online system for filing, the preferred method. Carl has re-filed online and that is in the final stages waiting for Ken's electronic signature.

Carl and Laura are discussing changing the fiscal year now ending on June 30th to the calendar year ending December 31st. The treasurer would then close the books after Dec. 31st and then file the reports to the federal and the state. This amended timing will help with planning and budgeting for the next year's projects, and would allow real contracts to be signed with vendors earlier in the spring to get on their work schedules. Carl recommended that the process of changing the fiscal year should be coached by an attorney to make sure it is done correctly. Ken asked Danielle if this would be an issue with the Town if the fiscal year did change. She did not think there would be any issues.

RPA participation in the Awarding Committee for the Anita Chapman Scholarship Fund - Jan Hartford, manager of the scholarship fund, proposed the RPA to be one of the 5 civic associations on the awarding committee. The Anita Chapman Scholarship Fund awards scholarships each year to Richmond students. As a committee, they manage the funds. The actual selections are done by a separate Awarding Committee made up of representatives from 5 community organizations. In the past, the Community Health Association has been a member of this committee, but now needs to be replaced as it is no longer an entity. Jan was asking if the Pond Association would like to take its place.

The commitment is one person (can be any board member) who can attend one meeting and help select the recipients of the scholarships. This year she expects there will be 14 scholarships to award. Applications are read and rated. The committee will determine the amounts to be awarded so the Awarding Committee does not have to worry about that. The committee will meet during the day on May 8th at Jan's house.

A motion was made for the RPA to be a sponsoring organization for the scholarship fund. The motion was approved. Jonna volunteered to represent the RPA on the Awarding Committee.

Project updates and other developments at the Pond

Goose management plan assessment results & possible plan development for 2023 – Laura reported that the survey she sent out to the 2022 participants resulted in mixed responses. With her transition to the assistant treasurer role, Laura had asked for a volunteer to fill the role as the liaison for goose management. There were no volunteers. This will result in a gap year. Dick Stover asked if Laura could give the vendor contact information to the communities that were still interested in goose management. She will do this.

Weed Management – Doreen and Linda reported that there has been little progress regarding a weed management program for 2023. Solitude has reached out to Natural Heritage with suggestions of alternate herbicides for the management of curly-leaf pond weed and Eurasian water milfoil and asking for the threshold of each. There has been no response from Solitude or Natural Heritage as of this meeting. Jim McGrath has been involved with the conversations with

Solitude and Natural Heritage. Linda felt that having a contract with Solitude to help with permitting and weed mapping would be helpful. Tom Potter will reach out to the Pittsfield Conservation Commission to discuss weed management.

Doreen will contact Laurie Rock to explore scheduling a weed pulling session for the canal. The area would be from the bridge to the Pond. Linda relayed that she has been told that the City of Pittsfield does not need a permit for hand pulling of weeds and this may be a possible treatment for the Pittsfield side of the Pond. Holly Stover will follow up with Pittsfield ConCom to see if this is their policy.

Beach, tributary and cyanobacteria testing update; updating of protocol – Carl and Jonna will be doing the tributary testing and will schedule a time to begin the testing. LAPA-West coordinates the cyanobacteria testing; Ken will follow up with them for the start date. Louise has volunteered the use of her boat; Ken's will serve as backup boat. Ken is still working on updating the working draft of the water testing protocol. E.coli testing is expected to be done weekly by contracted vendors at all of the camp, community & town beaches.

Camp seasons for Camp Russell and Camp Arrow Wood - While Cam and Matt were not present for this meeting, Ken reported that Camp Russell's camp season is July 3rd thru August 24th. Camp Arrow Wood's season is June 24th through August 13th.

Community Association Reports - Ken asked for an update from each of the community associations about any news that may be of interest to the RPA. Doreen reported that the Richmond Shores roads are the biggest issue, and that she had sent an email to the Shores residents asking them to do the water run-off survey from the Town. Carl reported that the gate to Branch Farm opens on May 1st. Branch Farm properties are owned by long-term families. One of their cottages is being replaced. Jonna reported that the presidents of the Whitewood Association and Richmond Shores Association have met to discuss a plan to ask the Town for more financial assistance with their roads. She also reported that a new family has moved into the Benner's former home. Laura reported that there are no major changes at South Pond; there has been no turnover in owners and maintenance is being done to all the buildings.

Educational initiatives with Richmond Consolidated School students - Louise has been in contact with the 4th grade teacher, who is excited to work with the RPA and have her students learn more about the Pond. The hope is to make this a hands-on learning opportunity. Tom has worked on a program with the 5th grade in his position with the Housatonic Valley Association. He suggested that HVA may be a resource for her, along with Mass Audubon. Ken would like to donate a History of Richmond Pond book to the school library, & potentially to each student in an entire classroom of students, if they're studying the Pond. Louise will discuss this at her next meeting with them.

Pond history book sales to date & marketing plan going forward – Carl shared that of the 750 books purchased, there are only 150 remaining. The book remains for sale at Bartlett's, Balderdash, Shaker Mill Books, & The Bookstore in Lenox.

Updating the RPA website- Ken & Bruce Wintman have been in communication about this project. They will meet soon to discuss the editing process & transitioning the website's management to Bruce.

Projects still needing volunteers- Ken will write the Richmond Pond Update article for the *Richmond Record* through the summer but after that he asked for a volunteer to take over. He reported that the editor of the *Richmond Record* is stepping down after the summer, so her position will also need to be filled. Holly and Miles will meet to make a plan for removing the invasive purple loosestrife around the Pond. A volunteer is still needed to manage the Facebook page.

Decision on format for May 23rd RPA meeting - Doreen recommended that continuing to meet by Zoom worked best for most of the participants. It was approved that the next meeting will be held by Zoom.

Odds & ends:

LAPA-West's lake & pond management symposium: There is no date yet set for the spring symposium, but it will be held via Zoom. The meeting will focus on cyanobacteria management. Ken will also present a brief session on the process the RPA used to write, publish & market the History of Richmond Pond book, encouraging others to do likewise.

Trout stocking - The pond has already been stocked twice this year with trout.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

ATTENDEE LIST:

Directors present (voting): Ken Kelly (president, independent cottages), Louise Brogan (vice-president, At-Large), Carl Foote (treasurer, Branch Farm), Doreen Donovan (secretary, Richmond Shores), Laura Rosenthal (assistant treasurer, South Pond Farm), Jonna Gaberman (Whitewood), Miles Garfinkel (At-Large)

Ex-officio present (non-voting): Danielle Fillio (Richmond Town Administrator), Tom Potter (Richmond Conservation Commission)

Alternates present: Gordon Dinsmore (South Pond Farm)

Guests present: Jan Hartford (Anita Chapman Scholarship Fund), Linda Kay (Richmond Shores), Holly Stover, Dick Stover, Faye Lessner, Neal Pilson (Town Selectman)

Directors absent: Matt Linick (Camp Arrow Wood), Cam Stockton (Camp Russell)

Ex-officio absent: Jim McGrath (City of Pittsfield)

Alternates Absent: Kais Abderrahim (Camp Russell), Brian Grebeldinger (Richmond Shores), Kerry Hamilton (At-Large), Barry Kellogg (Richmond Shores), Kitty Levitan (Whitewood), Tim Mason (independent cottages), Joe McGovern (Camp Russell), Jon Millburg (Camp Arrow Wood), Al Nardacci (independent cottages)