

# **RICHMOND POND ASSOCIATION**

## **ANNUAL REPORT - 2024**

The RPA met monthly using the Zoom format from April through October. The RPA's annual meeting was held July 23<sup>rd</sup>, in person, and was hosted at Camp Russell. The attendees enjoyed a meal of tacos and ice cream and heard reports on initiatives of the past year.

The weed management permitting continues to be challenging, resulting in the Pond not being treated again this year. Jonna Gaberman and Bruce Wintman have been working with the Town and City of Pittsfield on the permitting process. The new permit will include herbicide treatment, weed harvesting, and the annual lake 2 foot drawdown. Weed mapping of the pond will be done prior to any treatment.

RPA officer elections were held in the fall. Re-elected were Louise Brogan as vice president, Laura Rosenthal as treasurer, Jonna Gaberman as the assistant treasurer and Doreen Donovan as secretary. The elections concluded with a continued vacancy for the role of president. We are always looking to grow our association and encourage anyone who is interested in joining the RPA to contact one of the board members. The contact information is on the RPA website.

### Ongoing:

- All beaches were tested weekly by their contracted agencies, for E.coli. The Richmond Shores Civic Association beach did test positive once in August for E.coli after a heavy rain storm. The beach was closed and re-tested the next day. The results were back below the recommendation for safe swimming levels.
- Cyanobacteria testing was done bi-weekly by the Lakes & Ponds Association of Western MA, paid for by the RPA. Ken Kelly coordinated the schedule and the volunteers. The levels for cyanobacteria have been below the state threshold. Ongoing monitoring is again planned for 2025.
- The Town funded and managed the public boat ramp monitors. They were able to staff the boat ramp from 6am-6pm, 7 days a week. The beach opened without a lifeguard and the gate was locked at 6 pm. The Town is working on a solution to replace the deteriorated handicap access mat into the swim area.
- Louise Brogan worked with Richmond School's 4<sup>th</sup> grade class and their teacher Gill Romano on an educational initiative of Richmond Pond. The RPA donated 27 books of "A History of Richmond Pond" to use as study books. After learning about the history, they took a field trip to Richmond Pond which was sponsored by the RPA. This will be an annual event for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class and each previous 4<sup>th</sup> grade class will continue to be included. The students created many different projects to demonstrate their learning.
- Ken Kelly created a file management system for all of the RPA's records. The RPA files had been stored at different locations, now folders have been created and will be stored for public access in Richmond Town Hall's Room 133.
- Alison Dixon from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission met with the RPA and the Town regarding grant opportunities. She is hoping to submit a strong proposal for the Clean Water Act section 319 funding. Her goal would be to have an entire Richmond Pond watershed project. Some projects could include, Lake Street in Whitewood, a conceptual design for the Town beach and possibly even the culvert on the Town Beach road due to the concern with sediment runoff into the Pond. Berkshire Regional

Planning Commission would support Richmond Pond and other partners in preparing and administering the grant proposal.

- The RPA website and Facebook page were regularly updated. Bruce Wintman is managing the RPA website. He has updated the calendar and added live links. Pond updates were submitted monthly to *Richmond Record*. Ken Kelly developed a brochure, “A Self-guided Boat Tour of Richmond Pond.” The brochures are available at the boat ramp along with a QR code that is linked to the printed tour on the RPA website.
- The annual “*Developments at Richmond Pond*” funding solicitation newsletter was distributed by mail in July. Your contributions allow us to continue our mission of keeping Richmond Pond healthy and available for all to enjoy.
- *The Gem of Richmond - A History of Richmond Pond*, is for sale at Bartlett’s. There will be no further publications of the book. Ken Kelly has shared his experience with publishing the book with other lake organizations to encourage similar efforts.
- With Zebra Mussels newly discovered in both of Pittsfield’s lakes, the RPA will be looking into additional ways that we can protect Richmond Pond from these destructive species.

*Respectfully submitted,*

**Louise Brogan**, Vice President

**Laura Rosenthal**, Treasurer

**Jonna Gaberman**, Assistant Treasurer

**Doreen Donovan**, Secretary