

Crystal Pond Association Annual Meeting Minutes August 2, 2025

1. Rick Bray (President) - Call to order – 10:05AM
 - a. Total of 37 Attendees
2. Welcome Statement
3. Secretary's Report
 - a. James Winkler (Secretary) presents minutes general overview from August 2024 annual meeting. Copies were also available to attendees.
 - i. Motion made for approval with second. No further discussion and then vote with unanimous approval
4. Crystal Pond Association – Mission Statement
 - a. What we do: CPA strives to maintain water quality and the dam; which involves test, inform, inspect, maintain
 - i. We own the dam – we do NOT own the lake
 - ii. We pay for insurance for dam, and associated maintenance
 - b. what we don't do – police boating; property use; no legal authority
5. Election of Board Members
 - a. The CPA Board consists of nine CPA members with three 3yr terms expiring annually
 - b. Michelle Bibeault – completed 3yr term, not seeking re-election
 - c. Jonathan Bowen – has moved from Crystal Pond, and no longer eligible to be a board member.
 - d. Andy Groher (Vice President) – completed 3yr term, seeking re-election
 - i. Rick B nominates, Bruce 2nd, unanimous approval by CPA Members
 - e. Mike Charette (Officer) – has completed 3yr term, seeking re-election
 - i. Rick B nominates, Bruce 2nd, unanimous approval
 - f. The two open Board positions from Michelle and Jonathan departures were not filled. No attendees volunteered for these positions nor did any attendees know of other CPA members wishing to be considered. CPA Board will continue to seek volunteers to fill these voids.
 - i. Open board positions –Three-year term (Michelle's spot)
 - ii. Open board positions – Two-year term (Jonathan's spot)
6. Treasurer's Report (7/30/25) presented by Deb Oftedal (Treasurer)
 - a. Checking – \$10,345.38
 - b. Savings – \$8,965.05
 - c. CD – \$10,679.66
 - i. 3.98% interest - Due 10/24/2025
 - d. Total – \$29,990.09

- i. As of 8/1/2025 – 57 members paid,
 - ii. At the meeting on 8/2/2025 – 7 members additional (64 total)
 - iii. The total (\$29990.09) includes \$1,076.29 of personal and corporate donations
- e. Financial forecast
 - i. Forecast data, provided as handouts at meeting - see **Attachment A**
 - ii. As presented in the spreadsheet handouts – the costs for year 2025 will be higher due to the 7-year dam inspection requirement (to CT DEEP), and maintenance of the sluice gate/trash rack
 - iii. The consensus of the board is that, at present, there is no need to consider changing the amount of the annual membership dues

7. Water Quality Update

- a. 2024 Testing Program results –
 - i. Northeast Aquatic Research (NEAR) *2024 Annual Aquatic Plant and Water Quality Report* on website - see **Attachment B**
 - ii. Included analysis of long-term data set for trends
 - iii. The Connecticut Federation of Lakes (CFL) \$1k grant had partially funded this additional analysis
- b. 2025 Testing Program
 - i. The 2025 sampling and analysis program is similar to the 2024 program, with weekly in-situ monitoring at buoy by volunteers for: water clarity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen (DO)
 - ii. Additionally, monthly sampling is complete by volunteers at buoy and delivered to NEAR for laboratory analysis of nutrients. Phosphorus and nitrogen are collected at multiple discrete depths, and ammonia-nitrogen is collected at the pond bottom. Phytoplankton and zooplankton samples are collected for enumeration
 - iii. Inlet sampling will be conducted throughout the season at representative inlets
 - iv. An annual aquatic plant assessment will be completed (fall 2025) with an emphasis on invasive species
 - v. The data collected culminates in an annual report with recommendations for remediation as appropriate
- c. Discussion of 2025 Water Quality
 - i. Recent higher water temperatures and a reduction in water clarity – there is approximately a 20-degree difference between surface water and bottom of pond
 - ii. Currently the nutrient level higher is than preferred
 - iii. Inlet testing has not yet been completed in 2025
 - iv. Presence of invasive mudmat at 2 locations in vicinity of Walker Lane; could have been introduced by birds or boats

- v. The water quality has benefitted from flushing all last season and this season, have been at or above dam spillway full all year
 - 1. Flushing = regular precipitation, resulting in a continual flow over the dam spillway
- vi. Algae blooms are present, however, there have been no reports of harmful algae blooms (cyanobacteria or blue/green algae) but remain vigilant;
 - 1. Northeast District of Health performs weekly testing of indicator bacteria at Crystal Pond Park (CPP) beach from Memorial to Labor Day. CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) and CFL are good sources of information
 - 2. We have improved information sharing and communication with CPP board so that notifications to CPA board regarding these analytical results are shared quickly.
- vii. Education is key, it is important for all members to take action to help maintain and improve the quality of the pond
 - 1. General best practices include: boat and trailer cleaning to reduce transport potential; this is critical as many invasives are present in the region including some aggressive nuisance species such as hydrilla and milfoil; once in a waterbody, the ability to contain is limited and can be extremely expensive; if you do have transient boats accessing, please make sure proper protocols are followed
- viii. CPA sent mailers and have posted some signs around the lake with best management practices to reduce the introduction of hydrilla and/or other invasives
 - 1. Transmission is not solely via motorized boats; invasives can attach themselves to kayaks, canoes, paddles, stand-ups, etc.
 - 2. Request to all CPA members and owners of property on Crystal Pond: please continue to educate visitors, renters, neighbors, etc.
- d. Stormwater runoff best management practices:
 - i. Weather trends have increased intensity of storm events exacerbating our runoff problems. Any erodible slopes, gravel drives, launches try to grade to promote sheet flow and deflect flow to vegetated areas; use native plantings and rain gardens to capture and filter.
- e. Wastewater management: pump it, inspect it, repair it!
 - i. Encouraging use of portable toilets to supplement for events
 - ii. Older septic systems are a significant contributor, CPA Board provides comment regarding education and CFL reference documents available on this topic
- f. The use of fertilizers can be detrimental to water quality; if it makes plants grow in your yard it makes aquatic plants flourish
- g. Boating; clean, drain, dry; minimize wake (erosion) in shallow areas and along shoreline; maintain motors

- h. Active sampling volunteer group includes existing board members Jonathan and Andy H, Elizabeth and Carriel who work in concert with our limnologist NEAR
 - i. Currently a dynamic situation with some changeover in volunteer group expected. Intent is to recruit/find volunteers for training to ensure continuity and consistency in our WQ Program
 - ii. The continuation of data collection is paramount, it is essential for understanding trends and shaping appropriate mitigation measures. It also improves our chance for future grant money.
 - 1. Alex Howe, James Winkler have volunteered to become active in the group performing the sampling and testing.
- i. There was mention from a swimmer (Wabaquasset) of something “green and globby” that resulted in reported sting or bite.
 - i. Others thought it could be jellyfish or filamentous algae with numerous attendees noting the presence of jellyfish in the Pond

8. Dam Committee Update

- a. Inspection and Maintenance Summary
 - i. Currently status quo; weekly inspections with regular mowing and spillway cleaning
 - ii. Same (historical) seepage locations and rates are monitored regularly; pond elevation of about 3.5” above spillway full is when seepage rates tend to visually increase but remain low to moderate.
- b. Sluice Gate Replacement – Status Update
 - i. In 2024, CPA Members approved the plan to replace aging timbers given it is a critical moving component with lack of redundancy
 - ii. CTDEEP GP16 Permit prepared and approved last year (Karl Acimovic- consulting engineer providing support) but approval occurred too late in 2024 for work to be performed during last season’s drawdown. Our permit approval allows for the work to be done within a 3-year window, and the goal is for the work to be performed when we drawdown the pond at the end of October
 - iii. At this years fall drawdown, which is Oct 31 matching recent years; the goal is to replace sluice gate timbers in kind; reuse the rack and pinion; replace the trash rack; using a blocking bladder within the outlet pipe to limit the pond drawdown to approximately 30”
- c. 2025 Regulatory Dam Safety Inspection per State Statutes
 - i. Moderate Hazard (BB) 7-year cycle between regulatory inspections and our last formal inspection was in 2018 so we will be performing an inspection this year;
 - ii. No Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in place for Crystal Pond, however, it is not warranted nor required given our “moderate” hazard rating, and limited downstream inundation harm expected if a dam failure was to occur.
- d. CPA sent Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Dam Inspection to the last two consulting engineering firms we have used for similar work (Fuss & O’Neill and Karl Acimovic) with proposals received and to be evaluated and award made at next Board meeting
 - i. It was noted that ideally the inspection will be performed after the vegetation on the backside of the dam is trimmed back to improve visibility. CPA has

requested assistance from the town of Eastford DPW for such trimming as has been a typical annual request in recent years.

9. 2025 Winter Pond Drawdown

- a. The penstock gate will be opened on October 31 to lower the pond for the winter season. This date matches the practice of recent years. The initial target drop will be 30" below the spillway elevation with this depth deemed appropriate for the sluice gate replacement work. Actual drawdown may vary during the sluice gate work depending on the actual performance of the gate swap out. Once the gate replacement is complete, the water level will be allowed to fill to a -24" target level for the balance of the winter season. The -24" target elevation would match the target drawdown elevation from 2024.

10. Proposed Changes in CPA Bylaws

- a. Andy G. presents overview of proposed changes including:
 - i. Annual dues shall be paid at or before the date of the Annual Meeting
 - ii. Formal inclusion of Water Quality Committee and Dam Committee
 - iii. Other grammatical and contextual edits included, provided to members at the meeting for review
- b. Discussion of the CPA bylaws by members
 - i. Napa Howe requests clarification on voting rights, and how board members are elected
 - ii. A member requested - under the "President section" – Officers, to change the word "he" to President
 - iii. Attempts made to resolve the language during the meeting were not successful. As a result, Richard Norman – Motions to table the vote.
- c. Vote on changes or table
 - i. Nord Christensen suggests some additional review time while advancing through remaining items.
 - ii. The proposed changes in CPA bylaws was tabled with the CPA Board to further refine potential changes for future consideration.

11. Other Committees

- a. Looking to increase traction with engagement, membership, etc. – however, CPA board needs additional support. Previously, Board members volunteered as point of contact for new committees established in 2024
 - i. Fundraising - James
 - ii. Engagement - Deb
 - iii. Grants - Andy
- b. Proposed changes in bylaws would give board ability to create new committees as needed
- c. With decrease in CPA board headcount, current officers are not necessarily looking to add responsibilities

12. New Business

- a. Carroll Norris (Tom French) – requests CPA consider announcement in advance of the July 4th boat parade requesting water balloons not be thrown in the pond as a water quality concern. Request was noted although CPA does not have formal announcements nor is a formal sponsor of the boat parade.
- b. An attendee questioned whether the pond was known to have catfish present. Multiple attendees responded that catfish have long been present in the pond.
- c. Janet Atwood – noted the presence of a carp (goldfish) in the lake near the church camp. A discussion noted this was likely a pet introduced into the pond. It was noted that all should try to educate lake users of the potential harm from the introduction of new species into the pond.

13. Adjournment – Bev Lindemann – motions to adjourn, all voted in favor 11:30 adjournment