

Harvey Lake Watershed Association

Membership Meeting of Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2019

Northwood Town Hall

MINUTES

Present: Bob Charest, Gisele Houston, Jen Boulanger, and Steve Lucey

The Northwood area had a strong summer storm move through right before the meeting, with a warning of a tornado alert for our area. Only four members turned out.

Our association's bylaws, Article IV, Membership Meetings, state: Section 5. Quorum: No formal business may be conducted at membership meetings unless at least 15% of the members are present.

We were unsure if we had a quorum or not. A check with the treasurer after the meeting indicated a count of 29 members for the 2018-2019 season, which would require a quorum of five members. Therefore, the president determined that the meeting attendance did not constitute a quorum and reports are informational only.

President Bob Charest called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Reports:

Bob distributed the minutes of the meeting of Sept. 19, 2018, by email prior to the meeting. No motion was made for acceptance.

Treasurer Gisele Houston presented the treasurer's report for the period of Sept. 19, 2018, to Aug. 20, 2019. Our balance at the beginning of the period was \$2,556.77, and with membership dues of \$440 plus dues from our August mailing of \$300, we ended the period with income of \$3,296.77. Our expenses for the period were \$300 annual dues to N.H. Lakes Association, \$110 for state lab testing fees (one sampling period), and \$94.68 for stamps and photocopies for dues mailing and reports, leaving us with an ending balance of \$2,792.09.

MOTION: Bob Charest moved for acceptance of the treasurer's report, seconded by Jen Boulanger. All in favor.

Bob asked for a motion to reimburse him for postage and printing expenses at Staples for dues mailing and copies of tonight's handouts, in the amount of \$88.95.

MOTION: Jen Boulanger moved for acceptance of paying the postage/printing bill of \$88.95 to Bob Charest, seconded by Steve Lucey. All in favor.

Bob explained that we billed 45 households for membership in mid-August, with the dues checks arriving to Gisele Houston since. She has received 12 dues invoices so far.

New business:

Lake Host Program: Bob reported that we are in the midst of conducting our 15th season with the Lake Host program, which is expected to go through Sept. 2. Jaden Boulanger and Breanna DeMeritt, both residents of the lake, have been serving as Lake Hosts. Jaden, daughter of Jen and Jeff Boulanger, is also assisting with the VLAP water testing. She is conducting her senior portfolio project at Coe Brown Academy on the lake.

- Our association received a \$1,150 grant to provide Lake Hosting, money that comes from a portion of boater registration fees.
- Lake Hosts are employees of the N.H. Lakes Association, which handles payroll and insurances. The coordinator (Bob) does scheduling and administrative functions, and his volunteer time is counted toward the 100 percent match required for our group to participate (we can also count our \$300 N.H. Lakes dues). Jen Boulanger has also been generously donating her time as a Lake Host volunteer on Sunday mornings. Her time also counts toward the match.
- Our program operates from June 29 to Sept. 2, 2019, a period of nine weeks. The ramp is covered Saturdays and Sundays, for up to five hours each day.
- To date, the Lake Hosts have inspected 47 boats through Aug. 11.
- To date, we have greeted boaters who have previously launched in five infested bodies of water: Northwood Lake, Pawtuckaway, Belgrade Stream in Maine, Great Pond in Kingston, and Turkey Pond in Concord. The fact that we are so close to other lakes with Aquatic Invasive Species and the value of

training the next generation of lake stewards has made the program worthwhile, even though we are a low-volume boat launch, according to Bob.

The membership will need to decide if the Lake Host program should operate at Harvey Lake for a 16th season in Summer 2020. Bob advised that to do so would require we again be members of the N.H. Lakes Association (dues of \$300) and that someone would need to serve as coordinator. The application period is in February, and we usually hear by April if we are approved. We will need a vote of the membership at an upcoming meeting.

Central to this decision is the condition of the boat ramp. Bob distributed a photo (attached to these minutes) of the ramp at 11:30 that morning, showing the deep gully carved by the rainfall, which makes it difficult to maneuver a boat trailer over the rocks and crevices. The membership must decide if it wants to approach the town of Northwood (which owns the ramp) to ask for money to repair it. Bob noted our mission as a watershed association is to preserve the water quality of Harvey Lake, and given that objective, the erosion issues fall under our mission. In the past, members have been divided as to whether the boat ramp should be fixed, which some feel could lead to increased boat traffic on the lake as well as increased vehicular traffic on the private, gravel roads.

Water Testing:

Bob distributed a seven-page report on water testing at Harvey Lake. The main takeaway is that our phosphorous readings have remained relatively stable for the past two decades, usually higher at the inlet than at the outlet. Bob interprets this as the lake "using" the phosphorous, considered the limiting nutrient, in the production of algae and plant life, which is why some years we see more bladderwort and pondweed, as well as algae blooms. We are a shallow-bottom lake, more susceptible to stresses caused by runoff and erosion, which combined with our water source, Tucker Brook marsh, will result in high phosphorous readings, much higher than the state median for similar lakes.

He also asked that members think about asking selectmen to make our beach part of the N.H. Beach Inspection Program. We asked once before, in 2007, but there was no money then in the town budget. Steve Lucey suggested asking again, offering to pay the \$150 or so that it will cost for the e. coli readings.

Bob explained that presently we do e. coli readings at the beach/ramp as part of our monthly testing in June, July and August. The results are reported back to us two weeks after the test. These results have been high on occasion (last July's was especially high) and families do swim there. If we are part of the state beach inspection program, our results would be analyzed within a day or so, and if high, the state will issue an advisory. We would not have to wait two weeks to find out our results. Also, if high, a state inspector will return to retest the beach and continue to do so until the readings drop to acceptable levels. Currently, we do not do this.

For these reasons, Bob recommends that we ask selectmen to include our beach in the state beach inspection program, and he advises that it is best to do this soon, while they are still creating a budget for next year.

Bob will draft a letter to present at the next membership meeting of the watershed association.

Liability Insurance: As part of our efforts to move our meetings around to different locations, Bob contacted the Northwood Congregational Church to ask if we could hold a membership meeting in their function hall. The pastor graciously agreed and referred Bob to Peggy Kofer, who schedules the hall. We were emailed a hall rental form and agreement, which included a paragraph:

"I/We represent that our Organization has general liability insurance with coverage limits of \$_____ each occurrence in effect as of the date of the Activity. I/We agree to name the Church as an additional insured on our general liability insurance policy and shall provide proof of such additional insurance coverage to the Church prior to the date of the Activity."

Since the watershed association has no liability insurance, Bob cancelled the date and thanked Peggy for her time.

This brought up the issue: Does our association need liability insurance? Bob said members of our association do risky things, such as hang off the side of a boat to collect water samples, walk along rocky areas at the inlet and outlet, drive volunteers to the sampling location, etc. If one of us gets hurt, are we covered by our homeowner's or vehicle insurance? (The Lake Hosts are employees of the N.H. Lakes Association, which carries general liability and worker's comp insurance, so their protection is covered under those policies.)

Bob has contacted the director of the state VLAP program, the N.H. Lakes Association, the Northwood Lake Watershed Association president, and an online insurance broker, but so far, no answers. New Hampshire's Good Samaritan Law is specific to aid rendered in an emergency, so that law would not be applicable to us. He will continue checking and get back to the members at an upcoming meeting.

Kelsey Brook Dam: Bob reported on the status of the dam since our last meeting. Bob wrote a letter to selectmen as directed by our membership last September, asking for a policy on raising and lowering the level of the lake in regard to the stoplog, and/or a contact person for the town who will serve as a guardian of the dam. Our letter was read at the Selectmen's meeting on Oct. 9, 2018, and according to their minutes was referred to the road agent and that someone from the town would "reach out to the DES Dam Bureau."

The state dam inspector, Jonathan Findon-Henry, contacted Bob on Oct. 15, 2018, and invited him along on an inspection. Jonathan asked where we might access the dam, with Bob following up with a nearby landowner to secure access. That landowner denied access. Thus, the inspector delayed his visit, and the temporary town administrator was enlisted to determine if there were another access point. In the meantime, the area behind the dam was becoming flooded by beaver activity, and the town was again enlisted to secure a trapper who removed three beavers from the location.

The state dam inspector made an impromptu inspection of the dam on July 8, 2019, and discovered that someone had been using sandbags to plug up a leak on the left side. The inspector suggested this might be a wetlands violation, and he referred the matter to David Price at the state Wetlands Bureau. The two set a date for Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2019, at 9 a.m. to visit the site to determine the next course of action.

The town and members of our association are invited along on this visit. Bob will remind people as the date gets closer.

Bob reminded members that our watershed association's mission as stated in our bylaws is "water quality," and the dam does not come under that mission statement. In one of the emails from a DES staff person, our association was referred to as the "operator" of the dam. Bob stated that this is not the case. The town of Northwood is the owner and operator.

Annual Meeting: According to our bylaws, we elect officers and directors every two years, and our annual meeting should be set soon to elect officers for the coming two years.

The offices up for election and the incumbents include:

President: Bob Charest

Vice President: David Kerkhoff

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Gisele Houston

Lake Host Coordinator: Bob Charest

Weed Watcher Captain: David Kerkhoff

Water Quality Coordinator: Jennifer Boulanger

Three At-Large Directors: Russ Lubik, Jamie Walker and Mike Lord

Any member is eligible to hold an office. Bob indicated he has been the president for more than 12 years, and in the interest of continuing a vibrant association, he would like to pass this duty on to someone else.

Several open dates for Northwood Town Hall were suggested to the members, and the date of our annual meeting was set for Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2019, at 6:30 p.m. in Northwood Town Hall.

Any Other Business: Bob reported that the Planning Board has been considering a preliminary proposal to build a miniature golf course on a 1.8-acre parcel at the corner of Route 4 and Harmony Road, which sits on the shore of our inlet. He was informed by Planning Assistant Linda Smith today that the proposal is still under consideration and is on the agenda for the next Planning Board meeting on Aug. 22.

Adjournment: Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Charest

President



Harvey Lake Boat Ramp, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2019, 11:30 a.m. during a summer storm.