

**Herring Ponds Watershed Association
June 27, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

In Attendance: Phil Angell, Melissa Ferretti, John Foye, Brian Harrington, Jack Kedian, Ramona Krogman, Jerry Levine, Tom O'Brien, Trish O'Brien, Martha Sheldon, Beth Sobiloff, Don Williams and Geri Williams
Absent: Paul Denoncourt

President Williams opened Monday, June 27th, 2022, Zoom meeting at 7:00 PM

Approval of May 2022 Treasurer's Report:

President Williams requested motion to approve **May 2022 Treasurer's Report**. Motion by Geri Williams.
Second by Ramona Krogman. Unanimously approved.

Approval of 2022 Annual Budget:

Discussion – Brian digests the Annual Budget rules from the Board Handbook: Each year there should be an Operational Fund based on expenses of the past 5 years. This fund requires 2/3 Board vote to spend. The remainder moneys go into an Opportunities Fund. (Brian has called this fund a Mission Fund but will change the name to Opportunities Fund to be in sync with the handbook.). The Opportunities Fund requires a majority vote to draw from including a transfer to the Operational Fund, and other spendings deemed necessary.

It had been discussed in past meetings to start a Land Acquisition Fund. This gives members a fund for tax deductible donations. It was started last year when Don and Geri Williams donated \$2,000.00 for the specific purpose of spending toward acquiring land that benefits the association.

Geri Williams motions that this reserve for land acquisition be added to the Annual Budget as Land Acquisition Fund containing the donated \$2,000.00. Tom O'Brien seconds. Unanimously approved.

Geri Williams motions to accept the budget as amended. Jack Kedian seconds. Unanimously approved.

Approval of May 2022 Meeting Minutes and May 31st Special Meeting

Typo errors in the May 2022 Minutes had been updated prior to this month's meeting thanks to Beth's proofread. Don added a change to location of our old donation being held by Plymouth Youth Association and a name correction to Bill Koehan. Trish made all corrections and emailed final minutes in PDF format to Beth Sobiloff, for website, and VP Phil Angell for recording.

Geri Williams motions June 2022 meeting minutes be accepted as amended. Beth Sobiloff seconds. Unanimously approved. Melissa Ferretti abstains from vote having been absent from May meeting.

May 31st Special Meeting minutes had been amended prior to this June meeting by group email with unanimous approval. Jack Kedian motions to approve meeting minutes as amended. Ramona Krogman Seconds. Unanimously approved. Meeting minutes emailed in PDF format to Beth and Phil.

Committees:

Outreach Committee – In addition to her written committee report, Geri reports she got an email from Brad Holmes that he is interested in doing a program on vegetative buffers, why they are important, how they work, and, how we can improve our buffer plantings. Brad will get back to Geri. If he is willing to do the program, Geri will get in touch with Wildlands Trust to include its members and see if we can host it at their facility, from where we can also offer the live program to members on Zoom.

Newsletter will go out this week. It is ready except for specific dates for picnic and annual meeting.

Phil brought up that he had correspondence with State Rep Bill Keating's administrative assistant. Phil found out that all federal conservation money goes through Rep. Keating before being spent. Keating's assistant expressed an interest in HPWA, wanting to engage with us. Phil suggests Keating as a potential speaker or that he meet with the Board. Geri agrees it would be beneficial for the board to meet with Rep Keating after we get the Water Quality Plan, when we will know better for what we may need funds. Martha requests Phil forward Bill Keating's email to her for including him on our email list.

Herring Count Committee – Ramona reports she is finishing up on excel sheets of herring count this year. That she is working on sending out thank you notes to the volunteer counters and hopefully we'll see some of them at the picnic.

Water Quality Committee – Don reports that the Water Quality Plan's return to us has again been postponed to July.

Don also discusses that we got some alerts of suspicious looking pond films at the Lewis cove and the Solomini area. We sent Lewis Cove video to Hillary Snook. He said he couldn't determine cyanobacteria presence from the video. Geri looked at a sample from the Lewis cove. She did see a small amount of anabaena. The Lewis and Solomini coves cleared up quickly, like before 2020 when the scum had dissipated by the time Kim Tower came to test them. Don and Geri collected samples from Jack's cove, usually an early cyanobacteria observation point, Lewis Cove, Solomini cove, and the deep hole. For testing the samples, Geri used a protocol suggested by Kim Tower that they are using on the Cape, collecting samples with a toe net that gathers more concentration giving a better reading than collecting samples with just a tube. Geri collected using the toe net, froze the samples overnight, thawed them and took the readings with a fluorometer. Readings in the three coves, were under 200, but higher in the deep hole, over 600. Geri is puzzled by the higher deep hole reading. It may be because she was able to drop the toe net a full 3 meters so probably collecting more material, unlike the cove collections at a sideways collection because of shallow water.

Don and Geri will continue to monitor the pond for a cyanobacteria outbreak. Though Kim is on vacation, she gave Geri bottles to collect samples to send to Environtech, if necessary. They are hoping this year's bloom will be more like 2018 and 2019 with early signs of scum but disappearing quickly. They don't see a reason to panic, yet.

Ramona mentions that on the Great Herring Pond Facebook group, there has been a lot of chatter about the cyanobacteria blooms. One resident commented that town hall was of no use when she called, that she has emailed HPWA for some answers on the bloom. It is suggested someone from the Board address people's concerns on the Facebook group, educate them on what cyanobacteria is and what they can do to prevent it, lead them to town for health issues, and lead them to the HPWA site for how we are working with the town to solve the problem but that the town is the official monitor of the situation; and, let them know Kim Tower is on vacation to address the town's non-response to this particular resident's concerns. It is decided that it is beneficial to continue to share all of HPWA's Facebook group posts onto the Great Herring Pond Facebook group page.

Nominating Committee – Brian is working on additional candidates but no volunteers as of yet. Martha will get together a list together of members who have shown commitment to us for years for the Board to look over. Don notes that Alison Goodwin may be a good candidate for next year when she retires. Alison is an attorney and has shown knowledge of water quality.

Membership Committee – In addition to her written committee report, Martha reported that this year's annual appeal is going well, and to date HPWA has received \$5,500 in dues, on par with last year's returns. She worked with Powder Horn Press to develop the mailing proofs, and Powder Horn mailed about 400 appeal letters first class to residents. The enclosed brochure works well as a prompt for returning dues checks. A gentle reminder to non-responders to this first appeal will go out in July and another towards the end of the year. She also reported that a new member of the committee will be taking over a project to reach out to new residents via mail (this used to be done in person). She added that the policy of thanking all our members seems to be working, and thanked Don and Marilyn Atterbury for their efforts to send the thank you notes. She believes all our consistencies keep members alive with us and loyal to HPWA.

Safety Committee – Tom to contact Plymouth Harbor Master, Chad Hunter, about safety patrol on the pond as they provided last year after meeting with Tom and Don.

Meetings Attended

SEMPBA – Don attended a meeting hosted by Gloriana Davenport and Frank Mann from SEMBPA about their forming a collaboration called One Water, composed of local pond groups. Brian Mayton is putting together a web site, onewater.livingobservatory.org, to allow Plymouth ponds, to share data: projects, photos, plans, etc. While we are already so busy with our own efforts, we probably can't join them now but will maintain affiliation with them and their initiative.

Old Business

Boat Rides – Don found an insurance policy through Safeco that should satisfy the coverage of board members volunteering to give rides to members. For \$256 a year, the policy covers people on your boat that are not family members. It covers liability some current boat and home insurance does not. Member Boat Ride initiative is ready to sail. Beth will start scheduling rides with our member friends, starting with a ride together with the Board.

Annual Picnic – The annual picnic is scheduled for August 6th, with a rain date of August 7th, from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Jack will chair the committee this year, with Jerry Levine helping. Phil has picnic supplies in his garage from last year. He will be away after the 5th of August. Jack will work out a time with Phil, before the 5th, to retrieve the picnic supplies from Phil. Ramona will help with set-up on the day of the picnic and her husband will be glad to be grill chef. There is a budget line in our Annual Budget for food for the picnic. Usually we offer burgers, hotdogs, rolls, waters and sodas.

Annual Meeting – The annual meeting is scheduled for August 22nd. We have reserved the SEMPBA meeting room for the event. Their meeting room has WIFI for us to offer remote attendance at the meeting. For entertainment, Martha and Brian will give an educational bird program about local birds. To update members on what the association is doing, we will have brief Committee Reports. Then the membership will vote on the Board of Directors, followed by food and socializing. The food is budgeted from the same line item, picnic and event food, of the Annual Budget as the picnic.

New Business

Committee Help – Does anyone need help? No takers.

Clear-Cutting – Clear cutting has fired up. To our knowledge the State doesn't empower local conservation Commissions to enforce their by-laws. The State can't levy fines or take anyone to court. Conservation Commission is a town entity that enforces their own by-laws. HPWA is scheduled to present our case at the July 12th 7:00 p.m. Zoom Plymouth Conservation Commission Meeting. Don has prepared a Power Point presentation he has sent out to interested and knowledgeable allies for their comments and changes. Several Board members and outside HPWA affiliates are attending the meeting in our support, including Bill Abbot. Jim Smith will speak at the meeting about the clear-cutting situation at Little Herring Pond. The employees of the Plymouth Conservation Commission are well educated on the environment and well versed in their by-laws. They are people selected because of their knowledge and expertise. The Commission has the authority to direct Ricard Vacca to take action against violators; issuing citations, summoning into court, etc. These actions can make it inconvenient for violators – homeowners, developers, landscapers. Our hope is to convince the Conversation Commission to take action against clear-cutting violators.

Ramona points out there is Ma Association of Conservation Commission that explains resident rights and local Conservation Commission's legal authority. She will get in contact with them.

Grants – Jack revisits our grant application goals. He points out that since we are a 501C3 organization we are eligible to apply for grants. A good source for available grants is grant.com. Don points out that Kim Tower will also help us out with what is available to us once we identify our needs after we have received the Water Quality Plan. Teri Pekol has volunteered to write grants for us. Melissa has been through the grant application process with other organizations. She informs us that we have to apply for a DUNS# through Duns and Bradstreet. We need the DUNS# to get SAM registration that is necessary for grant application on grants.gov. She volunteers to help us through this process now so we are ready to apply for grants once we identify remedy goals for our Ponds' health.

Postcard – When Geri spoke with Lee Pulis, he suggested a postcard to residents would be effective in educating residents about the negative effects of run-off and how to prevent it. Geri brings up the idea to the Board that we could work on a post card to send to waterfront residents of both ponds. Martha points out that it would be very tedious to identify waterfront residents and their addresses but could send the postcard to all of our contacts, the list we use for other mailings. Discussion includes that it is a good idea if it is purely educational, not written as an enforcement piece. It shouldn't target waterfront residents only but our entire watershed association. The postcard would serve as direct education in addition to our site and newsletter. Another thought for spreading run-off education is contacting Old Colony Newspaper asking them to print an educational article from us. Beth will contact them to see if they are willing. The Board will revisit both ideas at the next meeting.

Getting Members Involved – Don requests everyone on the Board to make a list of tasks we would like to accomplish. We could then match members to specific tasks they may be interested. This would get members more involved. We will discuss at the next meeting.

Schedule of upcoming BOD Meetings, HPWA Picnic, and Annual Meeting:

BOD Meeting - July 18th
Picnic – August 6th (rain date – August 7th)
Annual Meeting – August 22nd
BOD Meeting - September 19th

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**President Don Williams asks for motion to adjourn meeting.
Motion by Ramona Krogman
Second by Martha Sheldon
Unanimously approved
Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM**