

Lake Massapoag Advisory Committee

Meeting of October 31, 2023

Minutes of Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Laura Henze Russell, Chair, Debbie Tatro, Vice Chair, Colin Barbera, Dan Lewenberg, Gary Bluestein, Eman Lasheen.

Guests: Josh Philibert, Town Conservation Administrator, Nancy Fyler of NepRWA, Annie Yie of NepRWA

Laura welcomed the attendees and guests.

Votes

- Motion to approve the minutes from the October 3rd meeting. Dan moved, Laura seconded. Yes Votes: Colin, Debbie, Gary, Dan, Eman, and Laura.
- Motion to approve the contracts with NepRWA and TRC group that include sediment sampling, feasibility study, and shoreline testing, moved by Gary, Dan seconded. Yes Votes: Colin, Debbie, Gary, Dan, Eman and Laura.
- Motion to allocate up to \$9600 for grant management administrative services, moved by Gary, Laura seconded. Yes Votes: Colin, Debbie, Gary, Eman, Dan and Laura.

Discussion

Administrative Services

The attendees discussed hiring part-time help for grant administration. Monthly and quarterly reporting, preparing invoices for reimbursement, help with future requester solicitations and bids, updating our spreadsheets and note-taking.

Budget Committee

The attendees also discussed setting up a budget committee for the upcoming budget season. The budget would cover operating costs and a placeholder amount for additional services like mitigation and treatment. Last year's budget committee had three people: Dan, Stan and Laura. The budget is due on November 29th. Dan and Laura will serve on the budget committee.

Fanwort at South Cove

Gary mentioned that Fanwort was creeping outward and required quick action. He mentioned that it was coming back in the month since DASH was completed September 25-29, and seems to be spreading even after hand pulling and DASH. He shared a weed map and video Ken and he prepared on a survey of the South Cove October 26. Josh mentioned paddling in Foxboro recently and reported that the town used fluridone treatment in 2021 as a solution, which seemed to work in reducing fanwort, but could be problematic for us because of rare plants (i.e. bladderwort, toothcup).

Educational Campaign, Newsletter & Communications Committee

The committee discussed increasing our visibility and enhancing communication. Laura mentioned that we have a budget within our grant money to start a newsletter that would come out with the water conservation newsletter. Nancy mentioned she can set it up but would need input and content from the committee. Nancy proposed an educational campaign that aims to promote behavioral change through increasing visibility and reciprocity among neighbors. Her proposed Slogan 'Love our lake' because it's simple and positive. It still conveys the message about lake conservation without being technical (leading with fertilizer use etc.). It could be used on stickers, lawn signs, websites, and pledges, and in the newsletter. The committee also discussed the possibility of involving different groups and organizations, such as the Sharon Garden Club and Friends of Conservation, not just individuals/homeowners. Nancy advised we consult with Kevin Weber or Eric Cooper about putting signs on municipal buildings. The communications committee will include Laura, Ken, & Eman.

Sharon High School Field/Wetland Pipe Runoff

The committee discussed the effects of runoff from the new high school fields into the lake. Laura mentioned that this area has high phosphorus readings. The committee suggested that Josh would follow up on engaging Kevin Weber in tailoring the use of fertilizers to minimize environmental impact.

Community Beach Status

The committee discussed recommendations to Sharon Recreation about the status of community center beach, which was closed to swimming all season last year due to 8 positive E coli tests. This year it tested positive 4 times - not 8, potentially due to less usage or different weather. The information we have is inconclusive, we don't know if its sediment, coming from Sucker Brook, sources feeding the lagoon, or other. Debbie mentioned that Suzy Peck believes it's not caused by septic systems but potentially, animal waste at Sucker Brook. Our efforts at source testing were confounded this year as samples we took to send to Jonah Labs were not high enough.

Dash & Alum Treatment Update

The committee discussed various reports, including the alum monitoring report, the botanist report, and DASH report. They also talked about the need for revisions, concerns about the toothcup habitat, and effectiveness of DASH, hand pulling, and herbicide application. Debbie shared information about a company called Clean Flo that uses specific technology to clear up problems in lakes by digesting muck. The committee discussed the possibility of implementing this technology in South Cove, which is about 20 acres in size, if we can secure approval for its use in MA by DEP and DFW/NHESP/MESA.

Cyanobacteria

The committee discussed the need to continue to address the presence of cyanobacteria in the lake. Rain and warm water temperatures may have allowed for prolonged fall bloom. This is the third year of frequent localized blooms late August – late October (2021, 2022 and 2023).

Closing

Next meeting is set for November 28th.

Motion to adjourn. Gary moved. Laura seconded. Yes Vote: Dan, Colin, Debbie, Gary, Eman, and Laura.