

**Town of Sharon Lake Management Committee**  
**Minutes of 1/10/2022**  
**Meeting Held via Zoom**

Present: Colin Barbera, Acting Chair, Debbie Tatro, Stanley Rosen, Ken Hyman, Laura Henze Russell

Absent: David Blaszkowsky

Other Attendees: Gary Bluestein, Josh Philibert, Ian Cooke, Sean McCanty, Meghan Slocombe, Leslie Koval (joining for item 5)

Colin Barbera called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Here is the agenda:

1. Call to order, approval to record and post
2. Adoption of minutes for December 13, 2021
3. Short Report: Progress on review of Proposal Warrant Article
4. Updates: New Conservation Administrator, phone meetings with SOLitude, and with Water and Wetlands LLC and ESS Group
5. Discussion: Ian Cooke, NepRWA's Executive Director, and Sean McCanty, River Restoration Director, on potential to add more test sites to its CMWN program, and other background
6. For Information: Blue Hills Weather data on cumulative rainfall patterns 2012-2022 (Ken Hyman), building a collaborative Lake Massapoag website (Debbie Tatro)
7. Other Business: ideas for potential CPC funding
8. Next meeting date

**Call to order**

Colin welcomed Josh Philibert, new Conservation Administrator, and Ian Cooke, Sean McCanty and Meghan Slocombe from NepRWA.

**Roll Call and Approval of minutes**

After roll call, Colin moved for approval of the minutes from the December 13, 2021 meeting. Laura seconded, and the motion passed: Colin yes, Laura yes, Ken yes, Stan yes, Debbie yes. Laura also asked for permission to record and post the meeting; moved and seconded, and the motion passed: Colin yes, Laura yes, Ken yes, Stan yes, Debbie yes.

**Progress on the Proposed Warrant Article**

Colin noted that Laura and Debbie attended the Conservation Commission meeting on January 6, 2022 to present the proposed warrant article. Per communication for Fred Turkington, the budget request was removed from the Article; that should proceed separately through the Finance Committee. Laura reported that at ConCom, Peg Arguimbau suggested the Rationale be removed from the text, as that is typically inserted by FinCom. She said initial review looked good, and that members would take a closer look and vote on it January 20th. After that date, it should be reviewed by the Planning Board, Select Board, and Finance Committee.

## **Update on Phone Meetings with Water and Wetland/ESS Group, and SOLitude**

Colin reported on phone meetings with SOLitude and Water and Wetland/ESS Group. Debbie and Colin met with both last week. Both groups are saying the best thing to do for 2022 for the health of the lake itself, use 2022 to collect data. How healthy the lake is, and how to treat if it needs to be treated. We need to choose type of data, frequency and locations; everything costs money. Water and Wetland/ESS Group gave two buckets; a \$5,000 bucket and a \$10,000 bucket. SOLitude said they would want to test for 10 measures, the cost for each test at a site is \$485 each time. Sediment sampling, required for alum treatments, costs \$3,200, done at the same time. Just got the figures in, will work to compare and contrast them.

We do have funding for weed mitigation, \$17,700 from the Finance Committee which can be used in 2022. Three steps: Invasive weed mitigation; data collection, and education via signage and the website.

## **Discussion on Lake Testing by NepRWA**

Ian Cooke, Executive Director, introduced the Neponset River Watershed Association, its efforts to protect the watershed, and its work with cities and towns on a number of projects to advance water quality and water monitoring. He introduced Sean McCanty, River Restoration Director, who gave background on its Community Water Monitoring Network (CWMN), which monitors and tests 41 sites for E. coli, phosphorus, dissolved oxygen and pH; it runs more extensive tests at certain sites. Laura screen shared NepRWA's July/Aug 2021 Water Quality report from CWMN, <https://www.neponset.org/happenings/july-august-2021-water-quality-report-cwmn/>.

Meghan noted that the E.coli and Phosphorus data for the two sites in Sharon are MPB037 for Massapoag Brook and MPB088 for Beaver Brook; in July Massapoag Brook's E. coli level was above the limit for safe swimming, while Beaver Brook was unsafe for recreation. Both sites were above the Total Phosphorus standard level for ponds, and near the standard level limit for flowing into a lake or pond.

Committee members asked numerous questions about the watershed, lake and stream testing, sources of phosphorus runoff, Massachusetts' turf fertilizer law that bans phosphorus except for new lawns and lawn repair, herbicidal vs. mechanical vs. phosphate reduction strategies, etc. NepRWA staff was most helpful.

Ken asked what it would take to nominate a couple of additional testing sites. Ian said it is hypothetically possible, they have talked about potential to move some sites around. Finding volunteers for the manpower is important, both site testing and driving all the samples to Deer Island. They would need to negotiate with MWRA to take on additional sites. In addition to long term monitoring, what testing do we want this year for a more intensive survey to help inform the management strategy? CWMN is well adapted to slow but steady data collection. We should consider a more comprehensive evaluation of the whole lake, check all the inflows, etc. Ian said if we put some ideas they can

review and let us know what it would potentially cost. He mentioned there are some grant programs that can help support testing: 604B grant program, which requires a match. Not a fast turnaround, applications due in spring, grants awarded in early winter. It could help set up for the next year.

### **Other Business and Information**

Community Preservation Commission Proposal: Laura reported that Gary had been encouraging LMSC to put in a placeholder, focusing on educational materials and maybe remediation of swim area weeds. But any remediation has to be permitted. Perhaps we could update the posters. She asked the CPC chair and he said perhaps a lake study would qualify. Does the committee endorse us putting in a proposal for updating educational materials and for a lake study? Laura asked for approval in concept of submitting a two-part proposal to CPC and recommend to ConCom to include funding for robust monitoring of a range of water quality measures this season, and the educational component. Laura moved, Stan seconded. Colin yes, Laura yes, Ken yes, Stan yes, Debbie yes.

Rainfall data: Ken discussed a spreadsheet of Blue Hills Rainfall data for the past 10 years, showing that yearly total average rainfall in the past five years was nearly 12 inches higher in the previous five years, so it may be a trend. A second sheet showed monthly/seasonal variation over the past five years; there is variation with typically lower rainfall in the summer but an exception last year with about 11.5 inches in July alone. The goal is to help inform how the lake level may recover following a lowering to treat invasive weeds. The spreadsheet will be posted on the LMSC webpage.

Website plans: Debbie discussed plans for a Lake Massapoag website that would contain information about the lake and links to data on water quality; recreational uses and links to the Recreation Department and camps and MYC; threats such as E. coli, cyanobacteria, weeds and rainfall/heat; how to protect the lake via septic maintenance, law fertilization, outdoor washing and pet waste; and contacts. Ken noted the importance of linking to official town website postings so the information is up to date. Laura moved and Colin seconded that Debbie and Ken move forward with developing plans and reaching out to ConCom and the town for approval, and the motion passed: Colin yes, Laura yes, Ken yes, Stan yes, Debbie yes.

### **Set Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be February 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. Colin said for now we will continue to meet monthly, and he will try to keep the meetings to an hour and a half.

### **Adjourn**

It was moved and seconded we adjourn at 9:21 pm, all agreed.