

**Witches Woods Tax District
Board of Directors Minutes
Aug 7th, 2024 7:00 pm**

Members met in person at the home of Bill and Susan Breslau

Members Present: Mike Moran, Phyllis Bonneau, Ray Bonneau, Bill Breslau, John Barber (via Zoom), Shari McCarthy, Dan Cammuso, Anna Barrasso. Also present residents Jim Hutten and Tony Paradiso

President Mike Moran opened the meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve board minutes from last month.

Mike welcomed **Jim Hutten** to the meeting and gave him the floor. Jim came to the meeting as a former member of the board to bring forward some important information to the newer board members. In the time since Jim has been a member of the board many members have changed in addition to contractors that are employed by the district. In Jim's role on the board, our previous landscaper had been instructed that the earthen dam on Crooked Trail was only to be mowed using a hand string trimmer. In the past few weeks Jim observed our new landscaper Labbe Lawn Care using a tractor and bushwacker to trim the earthen dam. In 2015 the dam inspector / engineer strongly advised us against this, instead recommending that no heavy machinery be used as the ruts caused by the machine machinery weaken the earthen dam and could also damage the toe drains which were installed by The District in 2016 at a cost just shy of \$40,000.

The Board discusses the information brought forward by Jim. Dan agrees to talk with Labby Lawn Care. In the future there is a concern that this may increase the cost previously quoted by Labby Lawn Care. Dan and the board will take this under advisement.

Jim Hutten also brought forward information to the board as our advisor on insurance matters. Our current insurance carrier for greater than 20 years with no Witches Woods losses has decided to not renew The District. Jim is currently working with Archambeault Insurance and they have brought forward only one policy to this date. The CGL policy which previously cost us \$9,000 is now being quoted at \$15,000. The board discusses options including the potential reasoning behind such a decision, what Bungee may have for coverage, as well as the process if for some reason we were not to be able to secure coverage. Jim fielded a question about our ability to secure pool insurance which Jim informed the board does not exist for this category.

Mike entertains a motion to accept the quoted insurance policy if it is indeed the only one offered as our current policy will expire before the next proposed board meeting in September. The motion is seconded and following discussion is voted on, all are in favor. The Board thanked Jim for all his time in these matters. Jim left the meeting.

Mike welcomed Tony **Paradiso** to the board meeting and gave a brief introduction as to why Tony was here. Tony has expressed an interest in donating his time to the board in the recently vacated Treasurer position, following the resignation of Steven Liebowitz. Board members take a moment to introduce themselves and their current roles on the board. Mike asks Tony to introduce himself and tell the board a little about himself and his background. Mike briefly explains general policies and procedures of the board as well as the vision of the District including our role as a municipality, the

importance of certain laws such as the Freedom of Information Act to this board and the kind of insurance we carry as a group.

Mike entertains a motion that Tony Paradisio fill the vacated role of Treasurer on the Board. There is a second, the motion is voted on and all are in favor, Welcome Tony. Bill explains that Steve Lebowitz is more than willing to answer any questions Tony may have in the handing over of the treasurer books and accounting information. Following the printed draft of this meeting Tony and John in his role as vice president will meet with the bank to clear signature cards.

Reports of Committee Chairs:

Lake, Dam and Beaches - Dan Cammuso

- Dan reports that he fixed the lock at the boat launch
- Secondary to testing By [Solitude Lake management](#) and homeowner concern Nautique herbicide treatment was applied in July
- Dan states that he did speak with Jim about Labbe and the dam and will follow up with Labbe. He thanks Jim for bringing all the information to the board today.
- Late July [Microbac](#) tests came back with excess E coli. Homeowners were informed during an email blast, signs were hung up around the district and the lake's beaches were closed briefly. Microbac retested on August 1st and the E Coli numbers in all tested areas were reported below the limit. Beaches were reopened. The board discusses the slight increase in numbers from previous years attributing it to weather and rain, agreeing that the timing of the testing is very important. Testing conducted immediately following a heavy rain is likely to show increased E coli as it is washed in from the land.
- Dan has a few outstanding bills to be paid Mike asks that they be sent to Steve until our signature cards are cleared at the bank.

Building, Zoning & Appeals - Anna Barrasso

MARSHALL DAVID C + KAREN L	73 CROOKED TRAIL EXT	24-61M	Mechanical	6/12/ 2024	Final	set 2 above ground 120 gallon propane tanks on side of house with a run of approx. 18 feet of 1 inch black iron from tanks to new standby generator. Generator is on a separate permit from a separate contractor.
MARSHALL DAVID C + KAREN L	73 CROOKED TRAIL EXT	24-49E	Electric	6/12/ 2024	Final	Supply and wire an 18KW Generac generator with a 100 amp service entrance rated automatic transfer switch
MAURI FRANKLIN C	21 INDIAN SPRING RD	24-151B	Building	6/26/ 2024	Approved	Replace seven windows - no structural changes

JOLIE FRANCIS P + LUCY M	78 INDIAN SPRING RD	23-62	COA	7/02/2024	Final	Construction of new single family home with attached 2 car garage, covered front porch and rear deck Subs will pull separate permits
ALLAN DONALD + MARILYN	102 INDIAN SPRING RD	24-170B	Building	7/10/2024	Approved	strip & re-roof 47SQ asphalt shingles. remove 2 existing skylights & replace with 2 M06 Fixed Skylight w/flashing kits
MILLER WENDY S & HANEN SONDRRA	130 INDIAN SPRING RD	24-188B	Building	7/22/2024	Approved	Hot Tub on back patio - run on electric power
MILLER WENDY S & HANEN SONDRRA	130 INDIAN SPRING RD	24-69E	Electrical	7/22/2024	Approved	Hot Tub on back patio - run on electric power
BRESLAU WILLIAM E + SUSAN R	23 CROOKED TRAIL EXT	24-13ZP	Zoning	7/24/2024	Approved	Extend the existing deck 6'x18' on the lake side

Safety, Rules, and Regulations - Bill Breslau

- Discussion regarding the request of a homeowner who does not own waterfront property to place a swim float near one of the beaches. The board will follow up with this homeowner with clarification.
- Old business still following up on an old dog report with NECCOG and the State Police.

Roads – Ray Bonneau

- Ray begins a discussion as to the time frame for road grading
- The board discusses the 2014 road grading report and its emphasis regarding crowns and pitches on the roads in certain areas. One weak area that seems to be remaining is an area on Crooked Trail.
- At the current time the roads appear to be in good shape and it may be more fiscally responsible to hold the money in anticipation of a Spring Road grading in case we have a terrible winter.
- Ray has requested that John Albrecht deliver two separate piles of Road material for him to use to fill any winter potholes.
- John Albrecht will also fix the pipe on crooked Trail extension including dredging the area owned by the Windham Land Trust. This is the area that had a quick fix done with the help of Woodstock DPW.

Communications - Phyllis Bonneau

- Phyllis sent out email blasts regarding the E coli levels and the subsequent reopening of the beaches
- Phyllis will set up Tony with a Witches Woods Lake District email on the website and she collected contact information from Tony to be shared with the other board members

Treasurer - Steve Leibowitz

- Treasurer Steve Leibowitz tendered his resignation July 27, effective immediately with the provision that he would continue to sign checks until a replacement was appointed. Thank you Steve for your service.
- Not present, emailed a report to Shari which was shared and read by Mike. The first round of taxes appear to be in our account. All accounts look good.

New Business – Mike Moran

- Mike brings forward a concern from Steven Leibowitz regarding the current swimming rules. the current rule as written states:
 - *'During the hours when motor boats are allowed to go faster than 5 mph no swimming shall be allowed beyond 50 feet from the shoreline unless the swimmer is accompanied by a spotter boat or wearing or towing a highly visible safety device'*
- The Board further discusses this writing in our [posted rules](#);
 - *'Maximum horsepower for boats is 75 horsepower. Maximum speed on the lake for all boats is 25 mph. The Cove is a no wake zone with a maximum speed of 5 mph. In addition, no person shall operate a powerboat in excess of 5 MPH between the hours of one half before sunset and 9 am the following morning in the case of weekdays, or 10 am on the following day in the case of Saturdays, Sundays or Holidays. Motorized boats operating simultaneously at more than 5 mph shall proceed in a counterclockwise direction around the lake. No more than 3 motor boats shall be operated in excess of 5 mph at the same time.'*
- It is the opinion of the current board that the rules as written are clear and reasonable. The board will publish these specific rules and hours as a reminder to all residents. Bill recommends additionally posting examples of what a high visibility float is as a way of educating our residents and securing safety for all.

John Barber updates the Board saying while he is working on the tree issues brought forth by homeowners at the annual meeting, he has yet to make any progress with Eversource.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for September 4th, 2024 @ 6:30 PM.

The Board would like to remind homeowners that they are welcome to attend this and any Monthly Board Meeting to observe the proceedings. Should they wish to bring something to the Board for review, they are asked to submit a notice prior to the meeting so it may be added to the agenda for an allotted time.

A Motion was Made, Seconded and Approved to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.