

**September 14, 2020 Witches Woods Tax District**

**Board of Directors Minutes**

**Due to the State of Connecticut social distancing recommendations for Corona virus 19, the Board held a Zoom virtual meeting which was recorded.**

Members Present: Mike Moran, Tom Pandolfi, Sandy Pandolfi, Phyllis Bonneau, Ray Bonneau, Maggie Houlihan, Bill Breslau, John Barber and Glen Humes.

Guests: Gail Nolan and Niel Miele, homeowners

**A Motion was Made, Seconded and Approved to Accept Last Month's Minutes. The vote was unanimous.**

Reports of Committee Chairs:

Lake, Dam and Beaches – John Barber:

- Lake Inspection by Solitude Lake Management.  
Our contract calls for two surveys:

An early season survey in June and a late season survey in July or August. Early Season Inspection Objectives (per our contract): If there is any growth of nuisance/undesired plants found in the lake it is treated and controlled through the application of contact aquatic herbicides. If needed, treatments are usually conducted in late July with Nautique (chelated copper). Chelated copper works as well or better than copper sulfate. Chelated copper is effective on both filamentous and planktonic algae in a wide range of fresh water

applications. ... When applied, it stays active (suspended in the water column) longer, rather than immediately sinking to the bottom.

Late Season Inspection Objectives (per our contract): A final plant survey will be performed to help guide future nuisance plant management and potential herbicide treatment needs in the lake for the following year.

June 29th Inspection Results:

“Upon our inspection, the pond looked great. There were very little weeds or algae present. There was a low density of bladderwort, naiad, and a few pondweed species found through the littoral zone. All plants are native to the area, and were at densities below nuisance levels or levels of concern. At this moment, I do not think treatment is needed. If anything changes as the season progresses, we'd be happy to come back to take a look or perform a treatment.”

August 7th Inspection Results:

The lake still remains in good shape. There is a bit of Naiad and tape grass, but nothing of concern. I do not think treatment will be needed this year. I'll make sure you don't get billed for that.

I received an email from Solitude Lake Management saying the information that they sent me about an evaluation on August 7<sup>th</sup> did not count as the Late Season Survey. I have since contacted Solitude and they confirmed we will not be charged for whatever was done on August 7<sup>th</sup> and that the Late Season Survey will happen in early October. I informed them that we would draw down the lake in late October. As I mentioned, the intention of the Late Season Survey is to help guide future nuisance plant management and potential herbicide treatment needs in the lake for the following year.

I mentioned to Solitude that there was concern about significant underwater grass growth on the cove and they said they would pay particular attention to that area during their survey.

- Niel Meili expressed a concern about the weeds in the cove being so high that it may become impassable without getting bogged down in the weeds. John will contact Solitude to determine exactly which areas are tested and ensure that next year they specifically test the cove. Niel also asked what precautions homeowners should take in an effort to discourage weed growth. Refer to Witches Woods Tax District website [www.lake.com](http://www.lake.com), Rules and Ordinances, Section F. Health and Environment.
- Karl Acimovic, our engineer, conducted a preliminary dam inspection on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. He suggested that we remove the cattails that have grown up at the dam. A team of volunteers is planned to meet Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at the spillway to remove the cattails and possibly the lily pads that are also growing nearby.
- John has been monitoring the seepage that Karl noticed on his Preliminary inspection and has not seen any excess seepage.
- John continues to wait to hear back from the Town of Woodstock Inlands Wetlands regarding their letter to the DEEP asking them to provide any information available pertaining to the complaint against the homeowner of 119 Crooked Trail Extension over the use of unknown amounts of copper sulfate on her waterfront property. When John gets more information, he will pass it along to the Board.

#### Building, Zoning & Appeals – Ray Bonneau

- Permit # 20-171-8 was issued to Fred and Randi Churma of 25 Crooked Trail Road to replace a Sliding door.
- Gail and Niel Meili asked the Board for guidelines to add a gazebo or screen house by the water's edge.

#### Safety, Rules, and Regulations – Bill Breslau

- The Board has received complaints of speeding on Crooked Trail,

Crooked Trail Extension and Indian Spring Road. Those speeding appear to be non residents but service delivery trucks and traffic from Bungee Lake. The Board agreed to add several additional speed bumps and Tom will order the signage.

- The Board agreed to move the “No Turn Around” sign on Crooked Trail to before the beach area.

***A Motion was Made, Seconded and Approved to add additional speed bumps on Indian Spring Road, Crooked Trail and Crooked Trail Extension. The vote was unanimous.***

#### Roads – Tom Pandolfi:

- John Albrecht completed re-grading all our roads, and Truex cleaned all 22 of our catch basins. All hay bales will be removed from our catch basins. The board asks residents to ensure the catch basin grates are free of debris so the run off water will flow into the basins.

#### Communications – Phyllis Bonneau:

- Phyllis addressed concerns of inconsistent communications to homeowners. She reiterated that Witches Woods Lake news will not appear on the Next Door App. All official communications will be posted on our website WWLAKE.com, our Facebook page *Witches Woods Lake* and E-mail notifications from her to homeowners.
- We will notify homeowners of the November leaf pick which will be the week of November 15th. We are moving the date earlier in an effort to complete the pickup before snow and ice cause a delay. A reminder that leaves (only) must be brought to the roadside. No leaves should be raked into any culverts or drainage areas. Phyllis will communicate this via E-mail's, Facebook, Notice posted on our bulletin boards and on our website.

- The Board has established the routine for the annual drawdown consistent with the homeowners' vote at the 2016 Annual Meeting. The valve will be opened the last weekend of October each year (10/25 this year) to lower the lake level until we have a hard frost to kill lake weeds (typically until mid-late November). Then the lake level will be raised to approximately two feet lower than the normal level for the winter and will be maintained until ice is off the lake in spring.  
Water level may vary some during the winter as precipitation, temperatures and Lake Bungee spill volume can vary. After ice-out, the valve will be closed and the lake allowed to reach it's full level. Homeowners scheduling lakefront work during the drawdown are encouraged to communicate with the board if they have questions.
- Phyllis, Tom and Sandy will work on developing a new homeowner informational page.

Treasurer- Maggie Houlihan:

The financial status of the District continues to be excellent with the following recent activity:

- (10) bill payments to:
  - ✓ Eversource (street lighting)
  - ✓ (2) payments to Full Myle Grounds (mowing/trimming services and August snow plowing payment)
  - ✓ Sarah Torcellini (website renewal and annual maintenance fees)
  - ✓ (2) payments to Microbac Laboratories (E-coli testing/water sampling)
  - ✓ Truax Corporation (catch basins)
  - ✓ Quality Data Service (Quality software used by the Tax Collector)
  - ✓ Software4Nonprofits/Cooperstock Software (Accounts software used by the Treasurer)
  - ✓ Archambault Insurance Associates (General Liability Insurance)

- (4) deposits into Operating Checking (tax collection)
- (1) transfer from Operating Checking into Reserve Checking (end of year surplus)
- (1) Maintenance Service Charge on Operating Checking (a first time fee that will be investigated)
- The Reserve Fund CD earned \$30 in interest

I also have responded to:

- a Freedom of Information request from SmartProcure for checks issued from 1/30/20 to 8/23/20 on August 23, 2020.
- a tax collection and outstanding debt request from Attorney Douglas W. Gillette serving as Bond Counsel to the Town of Woodstock – tax collection and debt of the District has to be aggregated with those of the Town for purposes of determining compliance with the Town’s statutory debt limit (the town is going to issue bonds for bridge repairs).

#### New Business - Mike Moran:

- Ray Bonneau met with Eli Spink from Eastford who will work with the Bungay Fire Department on the installation of the two dry hydrants. Eli is waiting to hear back from Dave Elliott of the Bungay Fire Department on how to proceed.
- Mike and Maggie and Bill led a discussion of the proposed re-evaluation of the properties owned by the Witches Woods Tax District Municipality which may be subject to a new tax allowed by the State of Connecticut. Mike and Bill will set up a meeting with the Town Tax Assessor to gather information on how to provide the information they are seeking and possibility of applying for an Open Space Zoning Variance. This would value Witches Woods Tax District owned properties as to its Use Value rather than Market Value.

**A Motion was Made, Seconded and Approved to file an Application to the Town of Woodstock to place Witches Woods Tax district owned properties in "open space" under Public Act 490.**

- **The Board discussed the topic of yard signage in the District.**

**The Next Board Meeting will be held on October 5, 2020 @ 6:30PM.**

*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.**