

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairperson Rich Dionne

Members Present: Richard Dionne, Leslie Bowen, Mike Lamoureux, Joe Pedro, and Ron Lapierre

Members Absent: Roberta Lacey

Guests: Brian Levesque – Douglas MA resident

- 1) **Approval of prior meeting's Minutes:** Motion was made to accept the October Minutes
(Motion made by Mike Lamoureux; seconded by Ron Lapierre – passed unanimously)

- 2) **Wallum Lake Dam/Canoe Launch:** Rich gave an update on events regarding the dam since the last meeting (see Addendum A). Joe reported the water is being dropped for the winter and the level is currently at 584.9. At this time water levels begin to be dropped on November 1st until the winter water level target of 583.5 is reached. Water levels will begin to increase on March 15th until the current summer level of 585.4 is reached. The summer and winter levels will be indicated on the placard, which the town's DPW will install once it is ready. The water level at the dam itself was discussed, as well as the issue of the dam clogging up. The suggestion made to dredge the bottom at the dam so that the bottom would be below the base of the dam opening, creating a buffer for debris. The commission discussed having input from RI DEM, regarding the water levels being set at levels that would not have a negative impact upon lakeside septic systems.

MA resident Brian Levesque requested that DEM set the high water level that could not be exceeded, and that it be maintained at least 2 inches below that, until a spillway could be installed. He also requested a 3 person committee be created to oversee the maintenance of the dam and water levels. He stated that Susan Robidoux of RI Department of Health at Zambarano noted a low level of 578.0 or higher is acceptable for the water treatment plant, and that the level of the invert pipe from the lake is at 575.1. Upon Mr. Levesque asking who to contact if an issue arises with the dam, the Chairman replied "the Town Manager, or in an emergency, the Burrillville Police Department." Mr. Levesque stated the following concerns:

- 1 – How often the dam is monitored
- 2 – How often the dam is cleaned
- 3 – The need for a multi-person neutral monitoring team/committee
- 4 - Desire for more consistent and definitive numbers regarding the water levels

The committee made note of Mr. Levesque's concerns, and discussed the potential for a public hearing to be held regarding the dam.

- 3) **Nipmuc Trail:** Motion was made to reimburse Richard Dionne the amount of \$86 for an ad in the Bargain Buyer, informing the public that hunting is underway on the property during the months of November and December, so the trails are closed to hiking.

(Motion made by Joe Pedro; Seconded by Mike Lamoureux – passed unanimously)

The Hunting – No Hiking signs are up. Rich will call Jim at DPW if we need the parking area plowed. Ron recommended reflectors to mark the parking area to aid in plowing.

Ron shared maps that he and Roberta made of the trail system, totaling about 2.75 miles. The plant Information from Martha Thuman will need to be put into a trifold format for brochures. The hike Was held with 4 town officials/employees, along with commission members Mike, Joe, and Rich. The commission discussed having a spring walk, led by Martha Thuman, and extend an invitation to The science teachers in the Burrillville school system.

- 4) **Gateway Sign:** Rich located the company where we purchased the solar lights (Solar Illuminations in Ft. Myers, Fl. Ron contacted them and was advised that we needed a new battery and cable, but that the panel and the light should be fine. Ron acquired the necessary parts.
A motion was made to reimburse Ron \$82.98 for the new battery and cable
(Motion made by Joe Pedro; Seconded by Mike Lamoureux – passed unanimously)
Rich ordered the wreaths through Dan Esposito from the Boy Scouts, and the garland from Paul Wright. Decorating will take place the weekend after Thanksgiving.
- 5) **Conservation Map Opportunities Workshop:** Bill Eccleston gave an informative overview of the mapping tools available to the conservation commission. It was recommended that we have another workshop and invite Amanda Freitas of RI DEM, who is involved with the RI Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) for 2025, to advise the commission on what information is beneficial for designating parcels within the WAP and what role the commission can play in the plan.
- 6) **Other:** Rich has not made contact with the town's consultant regarding the recreation opportunities in the town.
- 7) **Adjournment:** 9:02 PM
(Motion made by Joe Pedro; Seconded by Ron Lapierre – passed unanimously)

Richard Dionne, Chairperson

WALLUM LAKE DAM UPDATE FROM CHAIRMAN RICHARD DIONNE

- Approximately two weeks ago the lake level was not going down – opening the gate did not result in any additional flow. Joe P called me, I called Jeff M. and he sent a backhoe up to the dam. We met, Joe, Jeff, and myself, and opened the gate wide open with no immediate results. Then all of a sudden the blockage released and flow increased dramatically with the water eventually flowing over Wallum Lake Rd. Gate was closed to a manageable level.
- Today (Nov. 16th) the same issue occurred with the same result. I cleaned leaves and stones from the drainage ditch on the side of South Shore Rd. Water is now dropping to achieve the 583.5 Winter level as specified in the MOA.
- I spoke with Douglas State Forest (DSF) officials and asked them if the current winter level of 583.5 was good for them, as we had residents of South Shore Rd express interest in maintaining it at a level lower than the present accepted level and we have a Winter with low amount of snot and a dry Spring, the residents will be claiming that we lowered it too much. DSF agreed and suggested that we keep it at the present Winter level and address this at a later date if necessary.
- I received a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Summer levels at 585.4 and Winter level at 583.5. In addition, signature of the Burrillville Conservation Commission (BCC) was added to the new MOA, and that we (BCC) would need to discuss this addition.
- A new placard designating levels on the dam is in the process of being completed. I met with Farrell Signs today and this should be completed by the end of the week at which point I will transfer the sign to DPW for proper installation. At the suggestion of a lake resident, I spoke with Jeff M. about having the surveyors install the sign. Jeff said that as long as we have the proper datum and benchmark on the dam that the Town can install the placard.
- Jeff M. met with Jen Meir at the dam and asked her if the present level was satisfactory for her and her reply was “yes.” The level at the time was approximately 585.1 When Jeff measured down from the top of the dam it measured approximately 585.4.
- We replaced the lock at the dam with keys being held by Joe P., myself, and 2 keys dropped off at DPW, with 1 additional key to be given to the Burrillville Police Department.
- No additional information from the engineers have been received.