



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

# Town of Southwick

## Lake Management Committee

454 COLEGE HIGHWAY, SOUTHWICK, MA 01077

Telephone (413) 569-0515 Fax (413) 569-0515

Minutes of meeting held May 14th, 2020, 7:00 P.M. via online Zoom videocall, with attendance as follows:

		Voting	Present	Absent
Norm Cheever	Member	Yes	X	
Mike Coombs	Member	Yes	X	
Malcolm DeBay	Member	Yes	X	
Mike DeBay	Member	Yes	X	
Dick Grannells	Chair	Yes	X	
Scotty Graves	Member	Yes	X	
Annie Hanson	Secretary	No	X	
Deborah Herath	Member	Yes	X	
Eric Mueller	Vice-Chair	Yes	X	
Paul Murphy	Member	No	X	
Ken Phillips	Associate	No		X
Rick Wylot	Associate	Yes		X

Guest(s): Doug Moglin, Jerry Patria, Jessica Bishop, Daryl Isaac, Joe Deedy

1. Members reviewed the minutes from of 3/12/2020. **A motion was made by Eric to accept the minutes, and Paul seconded. The vote was unanimous.**
2. 9 beach road (Jenkins)  
Currently at a halt. Con Com and Park and Rec have told Mr. Jenkins that he may not put a dock into the water until legal issues are addressed.
3. Lake level:  
The current lake level is 224.42' MSL (nominal).
4. Canal and Great Brook Dredging:  
Dick has been in contact with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) regarding dredging Great Brook and Canal Brook. NRCS has asked for flood maps showing properties (and values) impacted by 100 and 500-year floods. The last NRCS flood impact data was compiled in 1984 when many of the waterfront buildings were cottages. The 500-year flood level is ~ 5 feet above the current nominal 224.4' MSL. LMC is hoping that NRCS will take on dredging projects for these two streams.
5. 99 Lakeview Street:  
In 2019, it was documented that this property has 2 docks and 4 boats. This year, they have sent in an application for 3 docks and 7 boats. The owner has yet to provide any required boat registration(s) information. According to Paul M, there are no boats currently in the water. Eric mentioned that on social forums, there are people requesting dock space to rent.

6. Office of Fishing & Boating Access (OFBA):

According to the new, temporary rules of Covid-19, there are to be no out-of-state vehicles launching boats into Congamond. There is an issue because 40% of homes on Congamond are in Connecticut. The downfall is that there are no ramps in CT to allow CT residents to launch their boats, and therefore, they must come into Massachusetts to do so. Dick is going to input Doug Cameron, Acting Director of OFBA regarding this issue. Darryl, a guest attending the meeting, has mentioned he has seen a number of CT boats in the water. Dick said that we can only suggest that CT vehicle cannot launch a boat, but LMC/ Ramp Attendants cannot force anyone to comply.

7. Ramp Costs:

Due to increases in the minimum wage, as well as increases in fixed operating costs (porta-pottys, lighting, security, phones, maintenance, etc), the Ramps will need to see an increase in ramp fees to continue to maintain a positive balance in the account. The ramp fee has remained at \$5/boat launch fee for some 25 years. Though LMC would love to maintain the \$5/boat fee, it is going to send the account into a negative balance. All fees collected at the ramps are required to go back into the ramps and Town funds cannot be used to operate the ramps. The OFBA approved an increase in launch fee to \$8/boat. This would allow the ramp to stay afloat when the minimum wage increases to \$15, which is set to happen on the next few years. Kayaks will also be included in the increase. There is some controversy over the cost, though the bookkeeping will be a lot 'simpler' if the \$8 is maintained for all vessels and the cost for two sets of tickets and logs will be avoided. Some have suggested only raising the cost of boats, but Doug of OFBA mentioned, in a previous email, that all other ramps have the same cost across the board. Mike D suggested an increase to \$10, but Doug of OFBA told Dick previously, that doubling would not be a good idea. Jessica Bishop, a guest in tonight's meeting mentioned that the increase for kayaks is 'absurd and seems ridiculous'. Jessica kayaks often at the lake and a \$3 increase each time she launches, may preclude her from using ramp facilities in the future, especially because kayaks don't use the actual ramps to launch. The Board of Selectmen disagreed on having one price across-the-board and have tabled the SB decision on the recommendation made by LMC. LMC still voted on a motion to raise fee across the board for all vessels to \$8. **The motion was made by Scotty to have a uniform \$8/boat launch fee and seconded by Malcolm. The vote was unanimous.** Eric thought that a season pass vs a 2-fee structure might be an option. LMC will talk more on this subject at a future meeting.

8. Ramp Staffing:

It is becoming increasingly more difficult to staff the ramps due to Covid-19. Annie and Dick are working hard to staff the ramp.

9. Alum Treatment:

The alum treatment is officially done and has some great results already. Eric told LMC that all the numbers look great and South Pond has the highest clarity since 1922! The oxygen levels also look great throughout the lake and will continue to improve through June. The lake may see a yellow bloom occur, but this is not significant and the algae is safe at the levels we would see. There has been some talk of dead fish on the lake. Unfortunately, when the Rainbow Trout was stocked, it was observed to have been done harshly and inhumanely. This happened the day before Alum treatments began, which is why many may have thought that the dead fish were related to the treatment. Autopsies were done on some of the dead fish and the deaths were related to stress. This is known because there was no food in the digestive tract, a clear sign of stress. Due to Covid-

19, there were a lot of breeder fish that were sent to the lake, rather than the typical fish. The hatcheries thought they would get shut down due to the virus. This resulted in the tanks that transported and dumped the fish to be very crowded.

10. Buoy Installation:

LMC would like to give a big thank you to Rick W and his crew for installing buoys into the lake!

11. North Ramp Boarding Docks:

The docks at North Ramp will be put in this Saturday, May 16.

12. Public Comment:

Darryl mentioned to Jessica Bishop that he belongs to Congamond Heights Association on White street. For \$45, she can become a member and launch her kayak. Dick also mentioned that one can park and launch canoes and kayaks for free at the Old Town Beach.

13. Ludorf Property on White Street:

Scotty G said that it seems like the Town does not care if Ludorf gets the property. Dick noted that the Town's position is that if he happened to get the property from Congamond Heights Association, the acquisition cannot interfere with the Town's use and infrastructure.

14. **A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Scotty, and Norm seconded. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Annalia Hanson - Secretary

Cc (11): BOH, Con Com, DPW, Fin Com, Historical Com, J. Middleton (email), Park & Rec, Planning Board, SPD Chief/Harbormaster, K. Stinehart, Town Clerk, File (1)

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