



# Town of Southwick

## Lake Management Committee

454 COLEGE HIGHWAY, SOUTHWICK, MA 01077  
Telephone (413) 569-0515 Fax (413) 569-0515

Minutes of meeting held March 24, 2022 7:00 P.M. via online Zoom video call, 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	
Karen Shute	Secretary	No	X	
Deborah Herath	Member	Yes	x	
Eric Mueller	Vice-Chair	Yes	X	
Paul Murphy	Member	YES	x	
Ken Phillips	Associate	No		X
Rick Wylot	Associate	No		X

Guest(s): J. Patria, Jason Giguere, Doug Moglin, Diane Gale, Ann Griskus, Mike Doherty, Michelle Pratt, Sabrina Pooler

- 1. Deb Herath made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Norm seconded and all were in favor.**
2. Public Comments - There were no public comments.
3. Con Com Update – Some of the LPP forms submitted to Con Com were incomplete. Norm & Jerry Patria volunteered to help Jean who is currently overwhelmed with Con Com work.
4. Michelle Pratt – CRC President spoke of lake safety issues especially with the number of boats on the lake and little room to safely water ski and/or tube on hot, busy weekends. She also commented about the difficulty of navigating to and through the tunnel between Middle and North Ponds due to the narrow channel and adjacent Tri-PBJ Marina docks and moored boats.
5. Diane Gale had a question if the marina was built on Suffield, Ct side. Chapter 91 license would have to be issued. Massachusetts controls the water.
6. Mike DeBay did research on safe numbers of boats on lakes and found a consistent 8 to 10 acres per power boat as recommended for safe boating in many studies. Power boating useable area is calculated by reducing the total waterbody acres by the acres attributed to shallow areas, marked navigation lanes, marinas, public and private swimming areas, public launches, etc., the where speed is reduced to HEADWAY SPEED & NO WAKE. The minimum recommended area is 5 useable acres per power boat and the 58 boats capacity in the two State Boat Ramps equates to 2 acres per boat for Congamond's 300 useable acres of its total 460 acres. In addition, there were some 600 power boats moored on Congamond in 2021, which equates to nearly 2 power boats per acre without taking into account those launching at the State Ramps.
7. 141 Congamond Road (dba Crabby Joe's) – The Planning Board says the only issues with having the proposed 40 space marina are basically obtaining Town approval for having the additional parking spaces PB requires for the marina on the Town ROW and obtaining a Chapter 91 License. Members raised overall concern with having any additional marina capacity on the already overcrowded

Congamond. Mike Doherty, Planning Board Chair, asked why so many docks are permitted under the Local Permitting Program (LPP). Eric explained that Congamond is a Commonwealth Great Pond and not a Southwick-owned body of water. While 40% of the waterfront is in Connecticut, all of the water is in Massachusetts and hence is open to all residents on an equal basis. Per MassDEP, all docks, swim floats, moorings and buoys are required to have either a local permit or a Chapter 91 License and all commercial facilities must go the Chapter 91 License route for those items. LMC members noted that on a hot summer Saturday or Sunday there are 250 plus boats on the lake. Mike Doherty went on to say that one dock will service the water-based restaurant patrons and one dock (20 berths) will be for rentals and both will require a Chapter 91 License. It was also noted that all docks are required to be removed from the water by December 1<sup>st</sup> annually. There was nothing on the RLA plan indicating where the docks would be stored out of the water for the winter. Members were also very concerned when Mr. Doherty stated that the Planning Board is a "land use" board, not a "water use" board and that they don't get involved with the water aspects. Unfortunately, the proposed marina impacts both the water and land use and are very much tied to none another. Members feel that accordingly the PB should not be making any decisions on a Special Permit without having all of the water issues being duly addressed. Michelle Pratt expressed CRC membership concerns about enforcement of the stated 95 occupants building capacity and any associated problems with any resultant illegal parking on the adjacent narrow roads. Michelle also said that she is very concerned about the proposed location of the transient dock on the northern end of the Crabby Joe's land which is adjacent to the South Pond navigation lanes and the interlake culvert connecting South and Middle Ponds. Members expressed dismay about the Planning Board allowing the 2/28/22 revised plan to be presented by the proponent's consultant (RLA Associates) without having been sent to other cognizant Town boards, committees and departments for comment prior to the PB's 3/15 meeting. The 10' "fingers" on the docks as shown on the revised plan will not allow for proper, safe and secure tie-up of the typical 19' – 25' power boats boating on Congamond. Further, the 150' long docks shown on that revised plan will still interfere with navigation. LMC members also vehemently disagreed with the PB's marina parking calculation of 1 vehicle for every two dock rental spaces as LMC's 30 years of managing the two boat ramps says otherwise. LMC sees the majority of pleasure boaters coming with two vehicles as most boats on Congamond have 6 to 10-plus passengers plus coolers, ski and tubing equipment on board which won't fit into one vehicle. Members are hopeful that the Planning Board will vote at their 3/29 meeting to "Reconsider" their 3/15 vote that approved the Special Permit that fails to address these critical issues. Members thanked Mike Doherty for attending and participating in the LMC Zoom meeting.

8. SPD Boathouse – In order to complete the paperwork to permit the boathouse on the State land, Doug Cameron requested a plan sheet showing the actual location and footprint size of the boathouse, access walkway and buoy storage within a fenced area. Sgt. Fisk offered to create the requested plan.
9. The plan is to install the North Ramp docks on Saturday 4/2 starting at 8:00 AM. Mike D., Norm, Paul and Dick volunteered to assist. Michelle Pratt is seeking CRC volunteers and DPW plans to provide the loader and two workers to assist.
10. Buoys – Rick Wylot told Dick that he will be available to set the buoys this season. Michelle Pratt asked about the Buoy light. Dick explained that LMC worked out a design with SPD and the Sheriffs. The sheriffs plan to fabricate the buoy lights mounts using old diving tanks for the cylindrical parts and welding plates to them. The plan is to put two "test" lights in the center of the sandbar channel and then expand them to other buoys in the sandbar channel as funding permits. CRC has funding to purchase two buoy lights and is looking at their funding availability as the lights cost \$400+ each.

11. 91 Chestnut Circle – LMC and Con Com received input regarding a dock added to private land adjacent to the private canal off Chestnut Circle. The dock also has boats tied to it that are blocking access to canal-front homes with boats. Dick forwarded the input to Con Com.
12. The Select Board approved the LMC's proposed Ramp Attendant pay rate of \$15 per hour at their 3/21/22 meeting.
13. Dick reminded all of the need to be sworn in at the Clerk's Office.
14. **Mike DeBay made a motion to adjourn, Paul second the motion and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Karen Shute – Secretary

cc (15): Ag Com, BOH, Con Com, DPW, Fin Com, Historical Com, J. Middleton (email), Park & Rec, Planning Board, SPD Chief/Harbormaster, K. Scott, Select Board, K. Stinehart, Town Clerk, File (1)

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