

**Ball Pond Advisory Committee**  
**Virtual Meeting September 7, 2021**  
**7 PM**  
**Minutes**

**Members in Attendance:**

Julian Laemmerhirt (Chair)  
Mark Spellmann  
Monica Santos  
George Buck  
Elissa Johnson  
Jim Mellett (Absent)  
Pete Viola (Absent)

**Meeting Called to Order:**

Mr. Laemmerhirt called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM

**Approval of Minutes from August 3, 2021:**

**MOTION**

*Mr. Spellmann made a motion to accept the Minutes of August 3, 2021.*

*Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.*

**Vote: 5-0-0 (motion passed)**

**Public Comment:**

State Representative Patrick Callahan addressed the committee. He is on the Environmental committee and was on the Candlewood Lake Authority for 10 years. He is concerned that out-of-state visitors are not paying for stickers, nor is DEEP enforcing the out-of-state stickers for use at parks. He wants BPAC to contact him with issues regarding invasives. He suggested that if BPAC is interested in introducing legislation, they contact him before Christmas for the next legislative session. Mr. Spellmann asked if the salt on roads legislation can be pursued.

Charles Pavarini, 162 Ball Pond Rd, expressed concern over two issues:

- 1- The outflow of Ball Pond has an incredible amount of vegetation in the creek and invasive cattails. Maintenance should include the clearing of the creek. Ball Pond's outflow leads to other ponds. He spoke with Jane Didona, a local landscape architect who said cattails are so invasive they take over. It creates a swamp. BPAC cannot allow Ball Pond to do that. It is pristine.
- 2- The grate needs to be mitigated of invasives. It holds back water in Ball Pond. The grate no longer serves a purpose because carp are too large to fit through the grate. The grate should be removed, then put back if the pond is restocked with carp.

Mr. Buck, committee member, responded the grate is there by DEEP order. It is part of the rules everyone must follow. The rules do not allow for removal because carp are large. He also stated that BPAC has been clearing the grate. It is his priority, and he will clear it in the fall.

Mary Yulo, 11 Arrow Meadow Rd, thanked the committee for doing water sampling. She questioned what is involved with the AER contract. What will they be testing and how will the information be disseminated?

Maureen Dangelo, 59 Ball Pond Rd East, commented on the vegetation being overgrown. She said it was the most she had ever seen. The flow is not what it was. She is not sure if fallen trees are contributing to the lack of flow.

Both Mary and Maureen stated they are committed to helping disseminate information.

Mr. Laemmerhirt, committee member and Chair, responded that he and Mr. Spellmann looked at the grate and believe the water is flowing as fast as the pipe will allow. The pipe would need to be replaced with something different to change the flow. Mr. Laemmerhirt offered to meet with members of the public to visit the grate. He shared his contact information.

Stephen Michael Smith, 41 Ball Pond East, commented that he swims in Ball Pond, and has been for 20 years. He said algae is part of the pond where there are cattails. He believes the grate needs to be cleared and vegetation has collapsed into the outflow.

Mr. Spellmann, committee member, commented that he is getting water sampling results on nitrogen and phosphorous from Hydro Technologies and will communicate through Friends of Ball Pond.

Ms. Johnson mentioned Inland Wetlands. Vegetation cannot be removed. They are protected by Inland Wetland regulations and the Inland Wetland Commission. Removal could lead to an injunction and possible fines. She then discussed cattails. They look to be Broadleaf Cattails which are not invasive. They are native and support wildlife. Heavy nutrient levels in the pond are feeding them. Some places use cattails to remove nutrients and even heavy metals from water. They are protected. Removal requires a permit.

With regards to AER, the grant is specific to water quality. They will analyze this year's sampling data and provide a report to include appropriate things to do. She added that vegetation helps with protecting embankments and preventing erosion. She discussed vegetation removal with AER. She would like to know if BPAC would like to add a study on vegetation with AER. She said someone has already cut down two dozen cattails and someone cut the lock on the grate. These are violations with Inland Wetlands. She would like to see someone from BPAC contact Inland Wetlands Commission about this. While vegetation may slow the flow of water, it helps with stabilization and erosion. There are two things she would like to see:

1. Expand AER contract to include a study on vegetation now, or for a more comprehensive study in the spring
2. Contact Inland Wetlands

Mr. Buck responded, with regards to Inland Wetlands, BPAC has been clearing the grate for years in the fall. It is located between two different property owners. He does not think Inland Wetlands needs to be involved with BPAC continuing to do the clearing of the grate.

Ms. Johnson said the invasives die off in the fall anyway. They dry up. They are, however, building resilience because of global warming.

Mr. Spellmann said clearing needs to be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Johnson said those decisions fall under Inland Wetlands. It is not up to BPAC to decide what is and is not acceptable. Inland Wetlands needs to communicate regarding regulations.

Ms. Johnson wanted to make a motion to contact AER regarding their professional opinion on vegetation and its effect on the lake. Mr. Spellmann did not believe a motion was necessary to contact AER for costs on expanding or adding a study on vegetation. BPAC would make a motion on whether to move forward with a study once they have costs.

#### **Studies:**

##### **Candlewood Lake Wastewater Study as a model for quantifying septic impact on Ball Pond**

(<https://brookfieldwpca.org/projects/candlewood/>)

Ms. Johnson mentioned that the above study focused on nutrient loading by inadequate septic systems in a Candlewood shoreline area of Brookfield. It was done by the WPCA in Brookfield and resulted in a recommendation of sewerage the area to protect the lake. This is a very similar situation to the Ball Pond watershed.

Mr. Spellmann was concerned about the cost. Ms. Johnson said the study cost \$300,000 but was for 1500 homes around Candlewood Lake. A similar study of Ball Pond should be a lot less. There are only 40 homes directly on Ball Pond. Ms. Johnson would like to see the Water Pollution Control Authority do the study.

##### **Lake Management Study, circa 2001 Part 2**

(<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1M7HC5hrPdVWhZfZQmzQCM-nUgMkrPeEC?usp=sharing>)

Mr. Laemmerhirt would like to see BPAC focus on the Lake Management Study that was done 20 years ago and cost \$6000. He is concerned about doing additional studies when this one was done already, and several recommendations were not acted upon yet. The study points out stormwater from roadways collecting in basins that aren't deep enough and making its way into Ball Pond. He is concerned that BPAC is focused on fertilizers and septic causing the rise in phosphorous. He would like BPAC to look at all potential variables including things like stormwater drain off and the lack of weeds that have been eaten by carp. He is concerned about the cost of an additional study. He also does not want BPAC spinning their wheels when everyone agrees there is a rise in phosphorous.

Ms. Johnson is concerned about where the nutrients are coming from. She feels the studies are necessary to understand what the source of the nutrients are.

Mr. Spellmann said BPAC supports the studies and the collection of data but is concerned about the cost. The current budget does not allow for any additional studies. He said Ms. Johnson can, as a member of BPAC, research the cost for the studies.

Mr. Laemmerhirt asked about soil test results and whether they showed significant changes in phosphorous.

Ms. Johnson said there was not a lot of participation in recent soil testing, however, two of the homes tested 20 years ago did submit samples recently. UConn was used for testing the soil 20 years ago as well as recently. The results showed very low to medium phosphorous 20 years ago and are now medium to high phosphorous levels. She would like to see soil collection from the same spots as 20 years ago. She stressed again that it is very important to understand where the phosphorous is coming from. She believes it is septic and fertilizers. Road salt does contribute sodium and chloride ions and is likely contributing to our high conductivity levels but is not a source of nitrogen and phosphorus.

Mr. Buck mentioned that sand coming off the roadways is a contributor to pollution. Fifty to one hundred yards of material had to be removed by the Reilly's. He believes storm sewers and septic are always things to watch.

Mr. Spellmann said phosphorous has been increasing since 2016 and water quality analysis is very important for education.

Ms. Johnson said she is very committed to researching the concerns expressed by the public and not making any decisions without gathering good information. She also mentioned calcium readings are perfect for zebra mussels.

Other items on agenda were discussed as part of conversations with public and above agenda items.

Ms. Johnson reiterated that vegetation cannot be touched without a permit from Inland Wetlands.

Mr. Laemmerhirt said he would discuss a replacement lock for the grate with Public Works.

**MOTION**

*Mr. Spellmann made a motion to adjourn at 8:39 pm.*

*Mr. Buck seconded the motion.*

**Vote: 5-0-0 (motion passed)**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Lisa Arasim*

Lisa Arasim  
Recording Secretary  
Ball Pond Advisory Committee