

Ball Pond Advisory Committee

BPAC Regular Meeting (Virtual)

Time: March 1, 2022 07:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Elissa Johnson (Chair)

Jim Mellett

Pete Viola

George Buck

Julian Laemmerhirt

Mary Yulo

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Monica Santos

MEETING CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEB 1, 2022:

MOTION

Mr. Viola made a motion to accept the Minutes from Feb. 1, 2022

Ms. Yulo seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0-0 (motion passed- Mr. Buck and Mr. Mellett joined after the vote)

BUDGET ISSUES:

Meetings:

Ms. Johnson said there is \$2653 left for lake management in the 2021/2022 budget, and an additional \$77 is available for salaries. There are three more meetings in the 2021/2022 fiscal year, and the salary will not be covered by what is left in the salary budget. One option is to cancel a meeting. Mr. Viola would like to see a transfer from the water testing line item. Ms. Johnson said there is April, May and June left in the 2021/2022 budget. Ms. Yulo wanted to know what the impact would be if money was transferred from the water testing budget. Ms. Johnson said she was not sure, as the new budget would take effect July, 2022. She asked committee members to think about it. AER will start water testing in

April. The First Selectman will make money available from the Lake Studies fund so AER can start in April. AER will start being paid \$943.50 monthly in April for water testing. There is \$2000 available left in the current budget towards that.

AER Proposal Signing:

Ms. Johnson would like approval from the committee to sign the AER proposal (contingent upon approval from Board of Finance).

The proposal includes 4 tasks:

- Task 1. Water Quality Monitoring (Option 2 – Seven Months– April through October). Including monthly summaries on cyanobacteria counts. \$ 6,541.50
- Task 2. Quantitative / Rare Plant Survey \$ 3,000.00
- Task 3. Statistical Analyses of Water Quality and Plant Community Trends from 1997 to 2022 2,000.00
- Task 4. Comprehensive Report (water quality, plant survey, historical trends) and Lake Management Plan \$ 5,500.00

Tasks 1 through Task 4 (Option 2) Total \$17,041.50 _____

Ms. Johnson asked for a motion to sign the AER agreement with the understanding that tasks 2-4 are contingent upon funding by the town.

MOTION

Mr. Mellett made a motion to have Ms. Johnson sign the proposal with tasks 2-4 being contingent upon funding verification from the town.

Mr. Viola seconded the motion.

Mr. Laemmerhirt said he needed a moment to review the proposal.

Ms. Johnson reminded the committee that BPAC based their 2022/2023 budget on the proposal and the First Selectman said there is lake studies money to cover what is not in the normal budget for water testing. She also reminded committee members that the Board of Finance budget meeting is at 10:45 am on March 5. Everyone is welcome to attend. She was not sure if the meeting was in-person or remote.

Ms. Johnson applied for an AIS grant for the Rare Plant survey for \$3000 (task 2 above). Tasks 3 and 4 are the first phase of the Lake Management Plan.

Vote: 5-0-1 (motion passed- Mr. Laemmerhirt abstained)

Reimbursement

Ms. Johnson spent \$170.55 for additional equipment needed for water testing and an anatoxin testing during the algae bloom. Dr. Wong did not have the capability to test for cyanobacteria. The testing was free but shipping on ice cost \$54.50. The total reimbursement requested was \$225.05 by expense voucher.

MOTION

Ms. Yulo made a motion to reimburse Ms. Johnson for cyanobacteria expenses.

Mr. Mellett seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (motion passed unanimously)

EDUCATION GOAL:

Ms. Yulo reminded the committee of the education goal: To educate the community about good lake stewardship

Ms. Johnson wanted to discuss what the role of BPAC should be and was hoping committee members would step up and take ownership of it.

Ms. Yulo would like to bring back the Friends of Ball Pond (FofBP) Newsletter, which contained a BPAC report column, along with human interest stories and interviews. She would act as liaison with FofBP, report to FoBP, and share FofBP concerns with the committee. She would like to take the AER report and simplify scientific information and share their recommendations on FofBP social media pages, along with links to informational documents. The annual meeting of FofBP is June 11. She will confirm time and location. They will have guest speakers who were involved in the AER report give a presentation.

Mr. Mellett would like to give lectures at the Senior center. He could put together a Powerpoint presentation with images.

Ms. Johnson would like someone to lead the educational goal and update committee members at meetings. Ms. Johnson also mentioned possibly having BPAC do a blog with a link from the town's website, if someone was willing to take on that role.

Ms. Yulo said membership in FofBP is somewhat low (less than 50 households) but using social media and referring people to websites that are accessible to everyone and establishing an email or distribution list for people in the watershed, if possible, would help.

Ms. Johnson shared an image of the Ball Pond watershed she received, along with files, from the Water Institute at UConn. It is a small, but highly developed watershed. Larry Marsicano had mentioned 240 households. Ms. Johnson is taking that image and providing it to Town Hall for them to send to GIS to merge the two files so BPAC can have all of the property holders within the watershed. It will be a much more targeted list.

Ms. Yulo said with that list a flyer would be effective and can be hand-delivered. She believes there needs to be a mix of active and passive education.

Ms. Johnson said she does not believe it is necessary to mail to 1000 or 2000 households. She agrees with Ms. Yulo. Theoretically, BPAC could walk around and hand-deliver.

Ms. Johnson mentioned Julian was working on a postcard.

Ms. Yulo mentioned doing an article in the *Town Tribune*.

Ms. Johnson asked which idea is the priority and aligned with the mission and goal? She is busy with the grants and water testing. Sharing ideas is great, but which is the most effective way to reach people? And what is BPAC going to tell them?

Ms. Yulo said obviously understanding what BPAC does. She also liked the end of the AER presentation when they provided ways people can help. For example, less lawn and more native plantings, reducing fertilizers, pumping septic tanks, and looking into the DOT issue of sand and salt. Reducing weed killers used around Ball Pond. She thinks it needs to be put out in a simple way that empowers people. Maybe a check list for people to understand how they can make a difference. Engage people with very simple concepts.

Ms. Johnson downloaded an article from North American Lake Management Society. She will see if it is something BPAC can use, or at least pull information from.

Ms. Yulo offered to do a column and get the FoBP newsletter off the ground.

Ms. Mellett will put together a Powerpoint presentation.

Ms. Yulo said how to best get information out needs further discussion and possibly some sort of survey to those in the watershed.

Ms. Johnson said maybe a flyer or mailing with a link to the survey for future mailings and information.

MEETINGS:

Should meetings remain virtual or be in-person going forward?

Ms. Yulo said she would love to meet in person, but she wishes there was a way to allow for community attendance for those who cannot make the meetings. Maybe one computer set up? A Zoom and in-person?

MOTION

Mr. Viola made a motion to have BPAC start meeting in person at Town Hall for the April meeting.

Mr. Mellett seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-1 (motion passed. Ms. Yulo abstained. She said she would support the idea if there could be virtual access for community members and in-person)

Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Laemmerhirt to explore having an in-person meeting, with Zoom access for community members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Arasim read some of the chat comments. They were very positive comments regarding Ms Yulo and Mr. Mellett. There were comments agreeing with having meetings that were in-person with remote access.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

*Mr. Viola made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm.
Mr. Mellett seconded the motion.*

Vote: 6-0- (motion passed unanimously)

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Arasim

Lisa Arasim
Secretary
Ball Pond Advisory Committee