

BALL POND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REVISED: Change of Location
Special Meeting
November 15, 2023, at 7:00 pm
New Fairfield Public Library

The Ball Pond Advisory Committee closely monitors the water quality and living community comprising Ball Pond: applying best lake management practices, and encouraging good stewardship by the watershed community, to ensure the health of the lake for current and future generations, as well as for the wildlife that relies upon it.

In attendance: Committee Members: George Buck, Mary Yulo, Frank Yulo, Monica Santos

Members of the public: Hannah Schiering, Ellen McHugh

1. Call to Order- 7:13 Monica calls to order.
2. Approval of September 6, 2023 meeting minutes- Mary moves to approve, all in favor. Motion passes.
3. Review of Brawley's reports for September and October 2023- Conclusions for September: Open Water cyanobacteria reported low to moderate levels and present low public threat.
 - Planktothrix spp. and dolichospermum were the two dominant algae.
 - The highest concentration of algae was at 7-8 meters below thermocline, taking advantage of the high concentration of phosphorus; cyanobacteria can regulate buoyancy and seem to favor the phosphorus below the thermocline over the sunlight closer to the surface.
 - Surface blooms are usually at shoreline and Hahlawah preserve.
 - Ball Pond had two early blooms this year, both of which quickly dissipated; then a few more in September/October.
 - Concerns of phosphorus levels; as a glacial lake, Ball Pond has a build-up of phosphorus, but there is still a component of residential usage of fertilizer and septic systems.
 - Suggestions to put warning signs about blooms and how to report them.
 - Surface blooms in water should be avoided, as they can contain cyanotoxins; should be particularly mindful to keep children and pets away.
 - October also reported low to moderate cyanobacteria with low public threat.
 - It is very difficult and very expensive to get rid of phosphorus.
 - Glacial lakes have higher concentration of phosphorus.
4. Membership updates- Debbi Kilcourse has begun the process to join the board.
 - Members of the public present at the meeting (Ellen and Hannah) are interested.
5. Proposal from Brawley for 2024/2025- Same pricing as previous years.
 - Brawley will do testing and Larry will synthesize information.
 - Suggestion to ask Dr. Wong about grad students, and their interest in assisting with water testing.
 - Consider ordering a saxitoxin testing kit.
 - Pricing- Option 1: May to October \$5999.35 Option 2: April to October \$6498.52
 - Committee chooses option 2: April to October, include water quality report. Monica motions,

George seconds; all in favor. Motion passes.

6. WestConn intention for 2024- \$795 was the approved budget for 2023, and will likely be the same for 2024.

7. Bloom activity- Nothing new on bloom watch activity since last meeting.

-FOBP update- Mark Spellman put out an all call for a bloom watch, nobody picked up to head the watch; Mary will post an update in the newsletter.

-Purpose is to report and send to potential distribution list with the intention to inform residents if there is a new bloom.

-Frank suggests to suggest to the town to post a kiosk of information on the pond.

-Last FOBP meeting was Oct 25th; FOBP has an \$18,000 budget, \$8000 of it is earmarked for educational purposes; Frank suggests it be used for a kiosk and include a QR code for the CAES (Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station) 4th edition guide to invasive aquatic plant/clam/mussel species.

-Last FOBP newsletter featured a tribute to Maureen Dangelo, who has since moved out of state.

-Holiday party December 3rd at the Spellman home, 1-4; there will be food, a silent auction, a BPAC update, and their yearly tree lighting.

8. New Business- George reported that a new floating raft, specifically a walkway connected to a floating raft, appeared and blocked the boat launch.

-Kayakers moved it away and forced it into sticks.

-George got it off to the side and will leave it there as it is not in the way of the launch and it will freeze first, providing ice skaters a place for their equipment.

-Dragging it out and cutting up was considered, but decided against.

-Frank suggests putting an anchor and buoy to mark deepest point on lake, adding verbiage as to why it is there. He will get a price estimate.

-50 feet was the deepest point when last measured.

-Frank details the CAES annual science day. It takes place at Lockwood farm in Hamden in August; explanations as to how to decontaminate boats before taking them to different bodies of water, features guest speakers, etymologists, etc.

-Mary noted that our native freshwater mussels are biofilters, the more you see the better it is for the water. But there is a threat of invasive zebra mussels entering Ball Pond. They are in Candlewood.

-George added that zebra mussels, which have been discovered in Candlewood Lake, come in via the live wells of bass boats and, as Candlewood has no streams coming in when the lake is drained in the winter for weed control and dock cleaning, water is pumped up from Housatonic River, which is full of zebra mussels.

-Zebra mussels are notably more concentrated on west side of Candlewood.

-Mary added that zebra mussels are very sharp and cluster, but they also create crystal clear water as they, like other mussels, are biofilters.

-George continued...Evident by the fact that Hudson freshwater from Albany moves into the tidal stream, and by the time it reaches the Tappan, mussels have filtered 50% of water as they are always syphoning water.

-Zebra mussels have a very narrow ph in which they can survive.

-Ball pond water likely comes from Marble Valley limestone. Limestone creates a more basic ph and likely enters Ball Pond through underground rivers.

-The more lime in the water the more profound systems it can support.

-Mary noted that Ball Pond calcium content is conducive to shell building.

-Ball Pond could theoretically support zebra mussels.

9. Adjournment- 7:54 Frank motions, Mary seconds; all in favor. Motion passes.

Received by email on 11/21/2023 @ 12:55 p.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. town Clerk, New Fairfield