

BALL POND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Monthly Meeting
February 6, 2024, at 7:00 pm
Senior Center Community Room

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: Monica Santos, Mary Yulo, Frank Yulo, George Buck (by phone), Hannah Schiering

Pending Members: Ellen McHugh, Debi Kilcourse

1. Call to Order-7:01

2. Approval of December 6, 2023, meeting minutes- Correct number from the final point of Section 6 from 2103 to 2013.

-Mary moves and Hannah seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.

3. Welcome Hannah- Board welcomes Hannah.

4. Vote on Debi- Mary motions and Frank seconds. All in favor.

5. Vote on Ellen- Mary motions and Frank seconds. All in favor.

6. Cleaning of the Hallawah grate- Monica contacted the department of public works in regards to cleaning the grate.

-George comments that Public Works hasn't done this work in the past and it was volunteer work by the residents.

-January blockages consisted of a large chunk of ice and a carp. George comments that the water level was high regardless of blockage, being at the 7th rung.

-Frank suggests getting a high school student, or a team of multiple students, in need of community service credit, to check the grate weekly and clean and document as needed.

-George organized a raking program in the 90's; having a half-dozen teenagers raking around the pond for a summer job.

-Mary volunteers to ask the high school guidance department.

-Grate used to be worse when there was an abundance of milfoil and coontail, which would create more blockage by being knocked loose by carp.

-Board would need to orient the volunteers; explain what to do and what not to do.

-Supervision will also likely need to be provided.

-George suggests appointing a team leader among the potential team members.

-The question of equipment is discussed; whether any potential volunteers would bring their own rakes and such, or what other options would be viable.

-George created his own tools out of rebar and such that he uses for himself; he also mentions that a resident offered the use of their property line for storage of equipment to prevent theft.

-Mary will bring this up at the next FOBP meeting.

7. Review of the final 2023 summary report from Brawley- George suggests putting a PDF link of the report on NF website for the residents to access. (After meeting note: Links exist on the NF Town website in the BPAC section.)

-Report contains an executive summary in front and recommendations in the back

-George suggests adding a prologue and definitions for terms such as: epilimnion, metalimnion, thermocline, hypolimnion, conductance, cyanobacteria and zebra mussels.

-Monica will check with Larry for a prologue paragraph with definitions to be added.

-Cyanobacteria is caused by phosphorus in lower layers of lake; both naturally occurring phosphorus as well as introduced phosphorus, such as from surrounding septic systems.

-One suggestion in the report was to sample three times a year.

-Long term solutions to mitigate phosphorus are expensive, well outside the current budget.

-High calcium levels in Ball Pond suggest that Zebra Mussels could thrive if introduced to the pond.

-Zebra Mussels are an invasive species and we do not want them in Ball Pond; they can attach to almost anything and be transferred from one body of water to another by hitchhiking on boats and other equipment that enters the water in which they live.

-FOBP had looked into renting a steam cleaner to clean all boats that entered Ball Pond for large events.

-Candlewood Lake residents and those who dock their boats there take coffee cans and drop them over the edge of their dock and pull them back up later to see if any mussels attached; they also look at rocks that are exposed to determine the presence or absence of them.

-Mary will talk to Jim about the deicing salts.

-Monica will follow up with Pat Callahan. He mentioned at FOBP meeting he was working with the state for change in deicing chemicals around the pond.

-Elissa Johnson takes photos of blooms that occur on the pond and sends the shots to Larry for his report.

-Mary suggests asking Elissa to consult.

-Monica will ask Elissa if she would be interested in being the permanent volunteer to watch for algae blooms.

- Monica will reach out to Larry for his availability to speak during the April meeting. We will look at making this a zoom meeting.

-Mary will ask Larry to consider speaking at FOBP Annual Meeting if he is interested/available

-Hannah suggests posting a QR code to lead residents to the town website.

8. New Business- Board considers changing some future meetings to Zoom format to increase the number of people that can attend.

-Monica will inquire as to the availability of a town moderator for Zoom meetings.

-Monica will inquire about April, August, and December of 2024 for these meetings.

9. Adjournment- 8:02 Monica motions and Mary seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.

Received by email on 02/12/2024 @ 8:30 a.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield