

BALL POND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Monthly Meeting
March 5, 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, Hannah Schiering, Debi Coniglio-Kilcourse

Members of the public: Selectman Tom Perkins

1. Call to Order- 7:03
2. Approval of February 6, 2023 meeting minutes- Mary motions, Hannah seconds; all in favor. Motion passes.
3. Update on new member status- Ellen McHugh and Debi Coniglio-Kilcourse have both been sworn in to the committee.
4. Review suggestions from Brawley report- Mary suggests the committee members try to gain a better and more thorough understanding of the testing.
 - What we can do as residents?
 - 2 basic issues: cyanobacteria blooms and sodium chloride/road salts.
 - Jim Mellett will attend the next meeting and help forward the attempt to implement the change from sodium to calcium chloride for deicing salts.
 - Committee needs to figure how to best and most effectively petition the state.
 - Questions what the likelihood is that we could get the state to change the chemical formula.
 - Is it a matter of circulating a petition to residents? Or what steps will need to be taken?
 - Due to multiple accidents on Route 39, reduction of salts is not recommended.
 - George says the state will need to circulate two trucks; one being a special truck with different chemicals for the areas around bodies of water.
 - Monica suggests the committee reach out to other waterfront communities.
 - George has had other communities come here to New Fairfield; they are not as organized and don't do water testing.

- George addressed the issue of zebra mussels: George suggests, to check for Zebra mussels, find a flat rock and flip it over; one will find them at the bottom as the rock protects them and the wet sand doesn't freeze in the winter.
- It appears that Zebra mussels are not yet in Squantz pond.
- Boat trailers have water in them and water gets in and carries the zooplankton within the trailer and they will move into the next body of water.
- Mary suggests adding a Zebra mussel information board at Hahlawah.
- Monica suggests finding someone to spearhead a rapid response plan for Zebra mussels.
- Frank suggests residents should implement the same rock-can system that is used in Candlewood so Ball Pond residents can see if mussels are attaching.
- George added that Candlewood water level is currently down 5 feet and it pumps its water from the Housatonic when zebra mussels aren't spawning; but it is impossible to know they aren't spawning as it hasn't been sufficiently cold to stall their breeding, and if they are spawning, they will spread everywhere as the water is pumped in.
- Phosphorus supports cyanobacteria and is expensive to deal with.
- Larry recommended the bloom watch.
- Alum treatment should not be ruled out as an option.
- Mary suggests the committee consider asking Larry about developing a "phosphorus budget".
- Mary mentioned that copper sulfate had been used in the past and it was the consensus that the residents don't want the chemicals in the water.
- Friends of Ball Pond was started in response to proposed chemical use in the pond to control Eurasian Watermilfoil.
- George explained that in the late 50's, trout were introduced into the pond on a yearly basis; the pond would be maintained for trout only and about every five years the pond would be poisoned with Rotenone to kill off all of the species, and replaced with a new crop of trout.
- Other fish species got in via fisherman who caught them in other bodies of water and transferred them. The application of Rotenone to kill off all of the species and just introduce trout to the pond stopped sometime in the early 1970s.
- Currently, Ball Pond has: Largemouth bass, a few Smallmouth bass, Alewife Herring, Bluegill, Catfish, Grass carp, Yellow perch, and Trout.
- George says Ball Pond has the best water quality among all the bodies that Larry has tested.
- The watershed is tiny and spring fed, with some runoff from road storm sewers but no incoming brooks.
- Hannah questions the suggestion of a Zebra Mussel rapid response protocol. What would we do? What techniques are there, if any, to catch the zooplankton before they reach maturity? How would we remediate?

-George wants to know more specifics about proposed Alum treatment and where specifically it would be implemented; as the phosphorus is problematic at 50 feet but maybe not problematic at 30 feet or shallower.

-Monica suggests asking Larry about phosphorus and septic leakage and the correlation between the two.

5. Discuss New Fairfield sewer article- Presentation to the selectmen by Antonio Iadorola.

-Ellen had sent an article to Mary, that addressed the sewer study/proposal. In the article, Mr. Iadorola mentioned a Ball Pond Drainage issue.

-Mary reviewed Mr. Iadorola's Power Point presentation to the town and there was no mention of Ball Pond.

-Mary reads Ball Pond drainage excerpt from article "A large Ball Pond drainage project, intended to get the work 'shovel ready,' is also in progress under Iadorola." The article went on to address drainage into Putnam Lake, not Ball Pond.

-George says sewer issues are all in center of town.

-It is one specific road that is mentioned, Arden Avenue, nothing to do with the sewer or Ball Pond.

-Previously, Danbury wanted to tap into water behind the Stop and Shop and pipe it out to Marjorie Reservoir and into the Danbury High Area water distribution system.

-George added that if water were drained from Ball Pond to help support a sewage system to Danbury or taking ground water out of the aquifer via wells and sending it to out of the Ball Pond watershed via a sewage system down to Danbury then Ball Pond could eventually dry up as more water is sent out of the watershed than is coming in from springs and runoff.

-Pumping water out of the watershed without having replacement water piped into the watershed to replace the function the wells perform could create unforeseen problems that would arise decades into the future.

6. Letter from Gary to Russ Loudon regarding Ball Pond Brook- Gary affirms he should be called for the grate cleaning.

7. New Business- George says someone has taken rocks from the Lisi property and made a dam at the mouth of the brook.

-George intends to go take care of it himself. He now reports the dam has been removed and the rocks returned to the Lisi property.

-Mary has consulted with Valerie Romanello of the high school guidance department in regards to a volunteer cleanup program; who informed her they need specific and exact information and then it can be put up in the school for students to consider brook cleanup for their community service.

- Science teacher, Jean Gephart, is also to be spoken to about the potential opportunity.
- Mary has talked to Jim about deicing and he will join the committee for the next meeting in April via Zoom.
- The next FOBP meeting is March 13th.
- Larry will be asked to speak at the FOBP meeting in June.
- The Committee will follow up with Pat Callahan about deicing.
- Frank been doing dissolved oxygen monitoring on another lake in CT.
- He intends to set up, a buoy and line (has permission from town and state), at the 50-foot-deep mark in Ball Pond, a dissolved oxygen meter on the surface and a few meters above the lowest point to monitor the levels.
- He has secured \$10,000 in donations to do the project.
- It would be fully funded by donors and, as such, won't cost the town money.
- The project will be funded through FOBP, on the condition that it be earmarked for the project.
- The project will provide more data and a baseline for the pond year-round.

8. Adjournment- 8:05 George motions, Mary seconds; all in favor. Motion passes.

Received by email on 03/12/2024 @ 9:15 a.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield