

Ball Pond Advisory Committee
Minutes
Regular Meeting, Tuesday April 2, 2019
7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Ball Pond Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, April 2, 2019. Cynthia Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Members in Attendance

Committee members Cynthia Stevens (Chair), Pete Viola, Gary Mummert, Mark Spellmann and Helen Gallagher were present. The committee was joined by guests Julian Laemmerhirt and Jim Mellett.

Approval of Minutes from March 5, 2019:

Gary Mummert made a motion to accept the Minutes from March 5, 2019 as ammended. Mark Spellmann seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion passed)

General Correspondence:

Cynthia Stevens reported there is \$7000 in the budget.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ball Pond brook:

Gary Mummert spoke with Tim Simpkins of New Fairfield's Health Department and Russ Loudon of New Fairfield's Public Works Department. They are all meeting at the Ball Pond brook tomorrow, April 3. Committee member Pete Viola may join them. According to Gary, the brook is getting narrower and less deep. There is debris, plastic and 2" x 6" wood that needs to be removed. According to Tim, new property owners own property to the middle of the brook. Gary said GIS mapping shows something different. Because the town believes the brook is on private property, Public Works has only been cleaning the grate, not the brook. Jim Mellett suggested the Boy Scouts may be willing to clean out the brook. Gary mentioned there is also a boulder that is forming a dam as the brook narrows that may need to be jackhammered to remove. Jim Mellett said a backhoe may also work. Mark suggested the committee hire someone to pull out the debris and wood. Cynthia said she could have a purchase order created. Mark then suggested having the purchase order made out to Friends of Ball Pond in an amount not to exceed \$1000. The Friends of Ball Pond will hire a landscaper, then be reimbursed by the town. Gary suggested making sure the landscaping company has insurance.

Town beach:

Mark Spellmann was able to obtain a State police report regarding the incident at the town beach where a person drove through the fence and caused damage to the gate, fencing, benches and wall. From the police report he was able to learn the name of the driver's insurance company. He spoke with the insurance company who committed to covering the

damages from the accident. Mark is submitting photos to a claims adjuster. He just needs an estimate to replace the fence and gate. Gary has two contractors who will provide quotes. He just wanted to discuss how the two gates should be replaced with the committee first. Gary believes instead of two double gates (which is what existed before the accident), there should be one double gate. Gary also suggested having the gate and poles secured with cement, rather than driving them into the ground, to ensure they are more secure. The committee concurred and told Mark to determine where the gate should be installed and get an estimate for the insurance company.

Cynthia made a motion to add Detention ponds to the Agenda under New Items. Pete Viola seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion passed)

NEW BUSINESS

Overview of Ball Pond Advisory Committee History:

Cynthia said in 1995 there was concern over milfoil in Ball Pond. The southern end of the pond was using chemicals to get rid of the milfoil, the northern end objected. The First Selectman at the time, Cheryl Reedy, formed the Ball Pond Advisory Committee. Cynthia Stevens, George Buck, Jim Mellett and Pete Viola were some of the original members. The committee researched and provided cost analysis on various ways to rid the pond of milfoil including chemicals, raking with a harvester, mats, and more. It was George Buck who suggested carp. It took a long time to convince the State to let New Fairfield use carp in Ball Pond. Fisherman opposed, as fish like to hide in milfoil and milfoil creates oxygen. Finally, in 1997, the State agreed.

Ball Pond became the first pond in the State to receive 411 sterile Triploid Grass Carp. Every year, BPAC has a weed dive done to analyze how many weeds exist. After five years there were significant changes. It took ten years to get the milfoil under control. Ball Pond had been stocked with carp nine times (not in the first five years because of a controlled study). BPAC annually applies for a permit with CT DEEP for more carp. The ratio is 15 carp per vegetative acre (plus 15% for attrition, up from the original 10%). Up until last year, residents had to spend a lot of money having channels cut into the weeds to allow for passage of vessels like kayaks and canoes. However, last year there weren't a lot of weeds. Committee member George Buck, who was not at the meeting, had previously expressed the opinion that the lack of weeds may be climatic. He had attended a Lake conference where the same lack of weeds were noticed in several other lakes that had not used carp. Cynthia said a weed dive will be done again in July. It is always done by the same people: Tim Simpkins of the Town's Health Department, George Benson, and diver Mike Coleman.

Pink water lilies are another challenge. They are pretty, but very invasive. Someone had planted them in the pond. They were on the east side of the lake. Now they are also on the west side. The roots grow very deep. Divers have to dig them out. Someone had used

chemicals (Round Up). It destroyed the pink water lilies. The committee spent money cleaning it up.

There was also an oil spill in a home on Ball Pond Road that overflowed into the pond. CT DEEP was involved with the clean-up. It is under control and the property owners switched from oil to propane.

Other issues the BPAC has been involved in include a gentleman harpooning carp, motors on boats (even though there is a Town ordinance against it), four-wheelers on the ice in winter, and someone building out over the water and bringing in sand to create a beach.

Jim mentioned that another issue is the amount of road sand that washes into the pond. Cynthia said dredging was looked into, but cost \$80,000 to do the northwest corner.

Cynthia said if anyone wants to join the committee, they need to write a letter to the First Selectman, copying the two other selectman, expressing interest in serving on the committee. The existing members need to write a letter expressing interest in continuing to serve on the committee. The current committee expires in July.

Detention basins: (added to Agenda by motion)

Gary said there are three detention basins around Ball Pond, and five more in New Fairfield (8 total) that need maintenance. It was noted that one of the detention ponds east of Ball Pond Road East is maintained very well by a private property owner. There are two detention ponds along the driveway to the boat launch that the town maintains. The purpose of the detention ponds is to catch chemicals from lawns and roadways and prevent them from entering Ball Pond. They are also supposed to protect from flooding. The one by the Meadow Ridge development was near overflowing in February. Gary placed a call into the Public Works department. After a couple of days they contacted him to say the detention pond was functioning properly.

Gary spoke with Joe Reilly, whose property is by the Meadow Ridge development detention basin. Gary and Joe did some research at the site and believe the water from Meadow Ridge Drive flows into the detention pond. Joe believes that the first section of the pond had been sand-lined to allow for road residue to leach into the earth. Since the development went in in 2000-2001, little or no tree trimming was done. Now there is excess organic material and tree trunks in the detention pond. Gary found that the detention pond was supposed to be deeded to the Meadow Ridge development when completed. A neighborhood association was supposed to be formed - one of the purposes would have been to maintain the pond. There is a catch basin in the pond and Joe Reilly has been raking it which is why it has not overflowed recently. The invasive weeds had been weed-whacked between Ball Pond Road East and the pond. Joe volunteered to clean out the pond, per a town official. Gary mentioned that the circumference of the pond is not well stabilized with rocks. Cynthia raised the possibility of BPAC spending money to purchase some rocks.

Mark asked how much it would cost for the Town to clean the detention ponds in the future? The Town should budget for it. Gary said he has a detention pond of comparable size and was quoted \$12,000 to clean it. Each detention pond should be cleaned every 10-12 years.

Adjournment

Mark Spellman made a motion to adjourn at 8:07 pm. Pete Viola seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting:

The next Regular meeting of the Ball Pond Advisory Committee is Tuesday, **May 7, 2019** at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Arasim
Recording Secretary