

Ball Pond Advisory Committee Meeting
July 2, 2019
Town Hall Conference Room
Special Time: 5:30 pm

Next meeting: August 6, 2019 at 7 pm

Committee Members present: Gary Mummert (Vice Chair), Mark Spellmann, Julian Laemmerhirt, Pete Viola, George Buck, Helen Gallagher and Jim Mellett. Others present: Friends of Ball Pond members, Director of New Fairfield's Health Department Tim Simpkins and Selectman Khris Hall

Gary Mummert called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm. He made a motion to add Election of Officers to the agenda under New Business. Pete Viola seconded.

Vote: 6-0-0 Motion passed

OLD BUSINESS

Environmental Threats to Pond

Tim Simpkins said he was invited by Mark and Gary to discuss the health of Ball Pond. He did a water sampling yesterday. While a complete analysis isn't ready yet, a few observations could be made when comparing physical data to 2017 and 2018:

- Results have been consistent over the last few years
- Stratification is stopping the lake from freely circulating
- Oxygen is being consumed at the bottom of the deeper parts of the lake
- Phosphorous is being released which leads to algae blooms
- Blue-green algae in the water is affecting clarity

Tim said another water analysis will be done in October. A weed dive is scheduled for July 30. Quick observations yesterday suggested not a lot of weeds. Some coontail was seen.

George Buck said he spotted carp by lily pads. Fragments were spotted. Carp are eating off the surface (cotton weed and rock algae). Tim said the cool spring temperatures did not warm the water up until mid-June.

George said he spoke with Greg Bugbee, a scientist who is a principle investigator of aquatic invasive plant species in the Department of Environmental Sciences at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven. Greg is investigating twenty lakes around the State, including Taunton Lake in Newtown. Bugbee is theorizing that the lack of weeds is weather related. He also thinks herbicides or pesticides in the water could be an issue, but testing would be a challenge because you would need to collect water samples very quickly after the herbicides or pesticides are introduced into the water.

Jim Mellett thinks pesticides should be banned in the entire water shed area. He said 80% of pesticides run off into the lake. That is the Nitrate at the bottom.

Health of Ball Pond and potential investments

Gary asked Tim about the health of Ball Pond. Tim explained there is Oligotrophic which is clean of algae and aquatic plants, Mesotrophic which are moderately productive and are free of excessive algae or plants, then Eutrophic which tend to have high levels of phosphates entering through stormwater runoff and sediment bed within the lake. Ball Pond is Mesotrophic.

Tim made the following recommendations:

- Do water quality sampling monthly from March through September/October to monitor temperature, oxygen level and nutrients. Maybe train someone to do it. The analysis will cost \$300 to \$400 each time. Currently it is being done two times a year (in June or July, and October). The results are shared with BPAC and CT DEEP
 - Friends of Ball Pond (FoBP) said they would like to receive copies of these reports so they can educate residents about the health of the pond. Gary added the role of BPAC is to advise the Town government, not necessarily educate residents, although BPAC could help.
 - Tim suggested FoBP consider doing a quarterly newsletter to distribute information. Maureen D'Angelo of FoBP said they had a Lake Management Plan at one time. Jim Mellett offered to do the newsletter, if FoBP was willing to help him.
 - George mentioned Candlewood Lake educated with volunteers through the Senior Environmental Corp or Project Clear.
 - Tim said Ball Pond beach is testing weekly for bacteria. If there is a problem, Peter Aarrestad at CT DEEP is contacted.
- Document stormwater flowing into Ball Pond. Educate residents on how to prevent the runoff into the lake. Simple things like blowing leaves into the pond and using pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides on their lawn are two preventable things.
- Jim added that fertilizers and salt are the deadly things. He read a recent study that suggested that by 2035 the salinity of ground water will approach that of sea water because of what is being used on roadways. He suggested people plant clover for green lawns instead of using fertilizers.
- Tim suggested planting native plants. The State did a report in the 1980s that documented native weeds in lakes at that time. Larry Marsicano, of Aquatic Ecosystem Research, may be a good resource.
 - George added that carp have not been stocked since there were a lot of weeds a few years ago. Coontail will return. Milfoil was introduced into the lake in 1985 by a harvester. There is still some milfoil.
 - The lack of oxygen at the lower levels are preventing weeds from growing. George tried growing Lotia, which is a low growing weed. It grew fine in the detention ponds but not his main pond. Oxygen levels are fine in the shallow areas of Ball Pond.

Town Beach Wall

Gary said the retention wall is failing. The wall is tilted and bent with stones falling into the water. He asked if the wall is needed.

- Tim said the wall is probably not needed. It was built to stop road water from Route 39 from going into Ball Pond. It was built without footings. Now there is a curb along Route 39. He suggested he and Gary take a look at it.
- Helen asked if a new wall could be built.
 - Mark said he had gotten a quote from Tulio for \$28,000.
 - Tim added a footing is expensive.
 - George added people like to sit on the wall.
 - Mark said grass now grows up to the road, which prevents sand from washing into Ball Pond.
 - Tim reminded the committee that any changes need approval from Wetlands.
- Someone asked if the beach could be used by anyone. The answer is yes.

Town Beach Report

Mark Spellmann reported the beach is ready for July 4. The fence and benches are in. The property has been weed-whacked and the grass cut.

- Gary added that the abandoned boat is gone. Police put a sticker on it. It was not claimed, so it was removed.
- Gary also added he was receiving today a sign “No Vehicles Beyond this Point”, which will be up for the 4th of July.
- Gary asked for a volunteer to call the State with regards to the guard rail. It is missing three posts. Mark Spellmann said he would call them.
- Gary added that the GIS mapping was not accurate. The two additional boats near the beach are on Town property.

Phragmites Plan

Gary said that Friends of Ball Pond have been handling the phragmites by Satterlee Road. Mark added that within two years they have all but gotten rid of them. They have been replaced with cattails. Gary added that BPAC has been handling the phragmites by the boat launch in the detention basins. Gary is now reading that it is not good to remove phragmites. They were being transported to a land fill. Now the land fill has phragmites growing there. Tim believes there is a State law regarding transporting phragmites. Gary suggested they be composted in place.

George added a new invasive, Japanese Knotweed, is a new concern. It is everywhere.

Boat Launch Area Detention Ponds

The detention ponds are on Town property. According to Tim, they have not been cleaned out with heavy equipment in 7-8 years. Selectman Khris Hall told Gary to just send an email to Public Works and they will schedule it.

Brook Cleaning Plan

Gary and George have been handling the brook cleaning. George has a new tool that will help. The brook seems to be getting more and more narrow every year. Gary doesn't want to see it dug out, but maybe the roots removed. He said it looks as though large stones may have been put in by the contractor at the mouth of the brook. Tim said he will need to take a look. The contractor did not have permission to put anything into the brook.

Jim added vegetation is clogging the grate. He suggested a rip rap system to catch the vegetation before it reaches the grate. Tim said they could look at it together. Gary said it is the Town's responsibility to clear the grate, but BPAC tries to assist them.

Pink Water Lilies

Gary said there is money in the new budget to remove them. It was decided to wait until next month to decide. Right now, there aren't many.

Homemade dock

Mark took photos of the homemade dock that is hanging from a tree and sent them to the new owners. He has not heard from them. It is believed the dock was not permitted. If the owner does not respond, it could be taken down by boat, if no one wants to enter private property. Mark said he will knock on the owner's door.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes from June 4, 2019

Pete made a motion to accept the Minutes. Mark seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-1 Motion passed (*Jim Mellett abstained*)

General Correspondance

Gary said he needs an invoice from Friends of Ball Pond for mowing.
The water testing was not done in last year's budget, so it will be in the current budget.

Elections

Pete Viola nominated Julian Laemmerhirt to be the **Chair**. (*pending registering to vote*)

Vote: 6-0-0 Motion passed

Jim Mellett nominated Mark Spellmann to be the **Vice Chair**. The motion was seconded by Helen Gallagher. (*Mark will abstain from votes regarding FoBP with regards to invoices*)

Vote: 6-0-0 Motion passed

Gary asked Secretary Lisa Arasim if she will stay on as Secretary. Lisa said the summer was not an issue, but if she works full time in the fall for the school system in New Milford again, she may have to resign. She explained that the Town Clerk's office requires Agenda and Minutes be filed in person, not by email, and it is tough to get to Town Hall in time. Anyone can file the paperwork as long as it is signed. Committee members offered to help her with filing the paperwork.

Adjournment

Pete Viola made a motion to adjourn at 6:53 pm. Mark Spellmann seconded.

Vote: 6-0-0 Motion passed

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Arasim
Recording Secretary