

**Ball Pond Advisory Committee Meeting
September 3, 2019
Town Hall Conference Room
7 pm**

Next meeting: October 1, 2019 at 7 pm

Committee Members present: Gary Mummert, Mark Spellmann (Vice Chair), Julian Laemmerhirt (Chair), Pete Viola and Jim Mellett. Others present Monica Santos.

Call to Order:

Julian Laemmerhirt called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Pete Viola made a motion to add Review Essay to the Agenda as item # 5 under Old Business. Gary Mummert seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion passed)

Approval of Minutes:

Gary Mummert made a motion to accept the Minutes of August 6, 2019. Mark Spellmann seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion passed)

General Correspondence:

Julian reported there is \$7643 in the budget, \$7000 for weeds and \$643 for salaries.

Public Comment:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Report on boat ticketing

Mark Spellmann met with Officer Oscar Johnson on Sunday, August 25, 2019 at the town beach. Officer Johnson put a removal ticket on an abandoned boat. He said typically the police wait three weeks before having a boat removed once it has a ticket on it. However, since the abandoned boats have been there for a long time, they can be removed now. Public Works needs to be notified. Julian will contact the First Selectman's office. Officer Johnson suggested waiting on tickets for the abandoned boats at the Satterlee Road access until the frost season because it is very overgrown. Gary added that he cut a path through the overgrown weeds there and found there are three boats and a trailer. They all looked damaged. It was apparent no one used the Satterlee access area this season.

Phragmites on Rohan property

Gary cut down the phragmites by the water, but suggested BPAC contact the Rohan's regarding having them cut back the phragmites on their property. However, it is late in the season to do it. Gary was concerned that cutting them down now could cause them to spread. Jim added

phragmites are an invasive series that chokes out other vegetation, creates an impenetrable barrier to fish and is highly flammable with no ecological benefit.

Dumping of weeds, brush and a tree into the pond

Pete Viola said a tree, which had threatened power lines and was dead, was taken down and dropped into the pond at the private beach. Jim Mellett added that a dead tree in the water is a benefit to the pond, allowing cover for fish and turtles. Since the tree is dead, it slowly releases nutrients into the pond. According to Pete, there was no dumping of organic matter, weeds or brush. Mark Spellmann added that organic matter, weeds and brush need to be hauled away. Leaves should not be blown or dumped into the pond, as the goal is to reduce phosphorous.

OLD BUSINESS:

Weed control budget- algae control?

Julian spoke with Ed Sbardone of the Finance Department to see if the weed control budget could be used for algae control. According to Ed, the line item "weed control" is a formality. The committee could use the money as it sees fit.

Detention pond maintenance

Gary spoke with Public Works. They will mow by the detention pond at Meadow Ridge several times a year. The detention pond by the boat launch cannot be mowed. Public Works has a backhoe, which is not efficient. Public Works is getting a monster machine, which will enable them to clean out the detention pond this fall.

Town beach issues with retaining wall and no lifeguards on duty

Gary spoke with Tom Quigley of the Conservation and Wetlands Commission regarding the stone retaining wall. Removal of the wall is being considered. It was never installed correctly, is not serving its intended purpose of preventing run-off from the roadway from getting into the pond, and because stones are falling out of it, poses a safety risk for children who climb on it. In addition, Gary spoke with the First Selectman regarding no signage indicating there are no lifeguards on duty. He questioned if there could be a liability issue for the town. The First Selectman is checking with the town attorney.

Status of unauthorized dock and boats at Santos property

Mark Spellmann indicated police are not willing to go onto private property to place tickets on unauthorized docks or boats. Private property owners are free to remove them. It was suggested that they be towed by boat over to town property, so they can be disposed of. Mark suggested Monica have a sticker created and placed on them indicating they will be removed, since she does not know who placed them on her property and would like to give the owners an opportunity to remove them themselves. Another suggestion was a private property sticker.

Review Essay

The committee reviewed Jim Mellett's essay "The Life Cycle of Lakes". Monica suggested a link to instructions on how to use clover (which can be mixed with sand or grass seed, then spread

on the lawn). Mark suggested not mentioning clover is a weed, but instead focusing on the positive attributes of clover- it feeds bees, is green, is natural, is drought-resistant. He also suggested mentioning the Friends of Ball Pond did extensive soil testing of nitrogen and phosphorous and virtually no lawns had a deficiency. Jim mentioned that there are findings that fertilizers are creating blue-green algae blooms that are killing pets and animals in Washington and down south. Mark mentioned that Friends of Ball Pond is getting ready to mail brochures. They purchased two post office routes in the watershed area for @ \$200. The post office requires the mailings to be placed into envelopes with return addresses. Mark offered the Friends of Ball Pond could do the mailing of this pamphlet or newsletter, when completed. There would need to be some research on printing costs, envelopes and postage, and whose return address would be on the envelope.

Jim Mellett made a motion to explore using Friends of Ball Pond to mail the finished product (whether it be a pamphlet or newsletter), to two post office routes within the watershed area, and reimburse Friends of Ball Pond for their expenses.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion passed)

Gary suggested that watershed property owners also be encouraged to do soil testing, which is free.

Adjournment

Gary Mummert made a motion to adjourn at 8:04 pm. Mark Spellmann seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion passed)

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Arasim

Lisa Arasim
Recording Secretary