

Ball Pond Advisory Committee
Virtual Meeting
April 7, 2020
Special Time 5:30 PM

In attendance- Committee Members: George Buck, Peter Viola, Monica Santos, Gary Mummert, Jim Mellett, Mark Spellmann (Vice Chair), Julian Laemmerhirt (Chair). Guests: Tim Simpkins of the Health Department, Selectman Khris Hall and Elissa Johnson

Calling the Meeting to Order: Julian called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm

Public Comment

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Peter made a Motion to accept the Minutes as published for March 3, 2020
Jim Mellett seconded the Motion

Vote: 7-0-0 (Motion passed)

Correspondence: None to report

New Items:

1. Water testing:

Tim Simpkins said water testing has been done for the past twenty years. Samples are usually collected twice a year in June/July and again in Sept/Oct timeframe. It costs \$400 for testing per sampling by Hydro Technologies. The town has an oxygen machine to test oxygen and temperature. It is important to gather as much information as possible. Seven tests would be \$2800. Even five tests would be helpful at \$2000. He is willing to go out a couple of times to train a couple of people. Time does not allow for him to go out seven times a season. A boat would be needed. The annual weed dive is in July. CT DEEP has cut back on carp stocking. That is not expected to change unless weeds come back.

- Elissa asked how many sites water samples are taken from. Tim said one site in deep water. Elissa volunteered to do water testing. She has done it in the past. She teaches Environmental Studies. Her email is johnsonelissa10@gmail.com
- Jim, who was an Instructor at Iona, used to take his class out and do water testing. He would be willing to do as well.
- Peter would like to go. He may be able to borrow a boat from Ball Pond Beach.
- Mark and Julian would like to participate by kayak
- George mentioned there were two boats confiscated recently. If no one claims them, they could claim one as property of BPAC.
- Tim will check with Russ Loudon of Public Works to see if they can work on the boats, if needed. Julian and Mark saw the boats and believe they are in good shape.
- **Action Item:** Peter will check to see if the boat can be stored at Ball Pond Beach. Their meeting is tomorrow.
- Jim has a couple of life preservers.
- Mark may be able to get oars from Friends of Ball Pond.
- **Action Item:** Tim will set up April water testing through Julian.

- George said there is turnover on the pond in April and October. He asked Tim if that messes up water test sampling.
 - Tim heard reports of people finding dead fish. The pond may have turned over recently and could be devoid of oxygen.
 - George said sometimes trout are not stocked in the right area and they end up deprived of oxygen. It should be towards the middle of the pond.
 - Gary saw some dead fish that were around 5" – 6" in size. He pushed them through the grate.
 - Mark saw dead fish by the boat launch. They may have been sunnies.
 - George said they may have been blue gills or sunfish. The pond loses oxygen if there aren't enough weeds, sun or ice in winter.
 - Both Mark and Julian saw carp.
 - George said his carp survived the winter in his pond. Carp swim closer to shore and feed on algae if there are no weeds. Last year they fed on lily pads
2. **Covid-19 Restrictions.** Mark asked Tim if he had a sense of how long gatherings would have to be avoided. Friends of Ball Pond is planning a music festival July 25. Tim said it is up to the Governor to remove restrictions but is hopeful by the end of May. People may still be hesitant afterwards to gather in groups.
3. **Newsletter mailing-** \$968.39 spent as follows:
- Cost for 2000 pieces of stationery and envelopes was \$470 (paid- Purchase order 2000037)
 - Cost for printing 700 newsletters, stuffing and sealing envelopes \$375 (paid- Purchase order 2000037)
 - Mark dropped off the envelopes at the post office today, April 7. They charged his credit card \$123.39 for 683 newsletters. Mark will send the invoice to Julian for reimbursement.
 - **Action Item:** Selectman Khris Hall will see if there is bulk mailing through the town. She believes the Tax Collector may use.
4. **The "garden" at the beach**
 Jim said the soil by the triangular garden had washed away. He would not be able to plant anything there unless rocks were removed and topsoil brought in. He had wanted to plant grass seed and clover. Gary said the rocks were there by design to control water flow. He had discussed putting in smaller, smoother stones at the last meeting that would be easier to walk on. He would not be in favor of removing the rocks, which would also most likely require approval from wetlands. Jim said he would excavate on the north end instead and prepare for seed.
Action Item: Jim will send a schematic of what he has in mind.
5. **Budget concerns:** Peter had concerns over how Covid-19 was going to affect the budget process. Selectman Khris Hall said there is an Executive Order that there will be no in-person voting this year. Dates have also been extended. Normally the budget would be finalized around the end of April. It has been extended by a month. There is more time and flexibility. This Thursday there will be an article in the *Town Tribune* with a proposal for the budget process. The Board of Selectmen authorizes the Board of Finance to set the budget and mill rate. The Board of Selectmen is going to take advantage of the extra time to make decisions. Some time in early June, the Board of Selectmen will authorize the Board of Finance to set the budget and mill rate.

6. **Salination of Water:** Jim had promised to forward to the committee an article on the effects of road salt on the salination of well water. He has not been able to track down the article. First Selectman Khris Hall said she has been personally affected by salination in her well. UConn put together a program called Green Sno. **Action Item:** First Selectman Khris Hall will forward materials to BPAC, since they are looking to reduce salination of water.

7. **Adjournment:**

Motion: Gary made a Motion to adjourn at 6:16 pm. Pete seconded the Motion

Vote: 7-0-0 (Motion passed)

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Arasim

Lisa Arasim
Recording Secretary
Ball Pond Advisory Committee