



**CRC MEETING MINUTES  
5-12-20 ZOOM MEETING**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Michelle Pratt –President, Scott Perusse-Vice President, MaryAnn Philo-Secretary, Jerry Crane – Emeritus, Deb Herath – Emeritus, Penni McEleney-Treasurer, Sandy MacDowell-Hospitality Kevin Maloney, Ginny Graves, Sharon Jones, Linda Champagney

**Absent:** Ron Greene, Rick Seaman, Beth Thomas

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

2020 Meetings Schedule: June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13

**DISCUSSION:**

Michelle described how the zoom procedures work. The meeting was called to order at 7:11 pm.

There was a moment of silence for the CRC members we have lost in the last few months, as well as the COVID-19 victims.

Jerry Crane gave a short summary of the accomplishments and highlights of CRC. The mission of CRC is the protection and betterment of the Congamond Lakes. It originated in 1977 and was incorporated in CT and MA in 1988. The CRC works hand in hand with both Southwick and Suffield on a lake management plan which helps to keep the lakes clean. CRC has been recognized by the State of CT and the Federal EPA for the efforts and accomplishments. CRC has raised well over \$200,000 over the years for lake projects. The costs of lake treatments are shared 1/3 ea with CRC and the towns of Suffield and Southwick. This amounts to a CRC payout of between \$6,000 and \$9,000 yearly. CRC has provided no dumping signs at the drainage ditches in town, does dredging and beach improvements and bi weekly water monitoring. They provide a community voice to local governments, have annual clean up days and make donations to community organizations in need. In 1999, CRC paid for the first milfoil treatment and was in The Guinness Book of Records for having the longest pontoon boat bridge connecting 2 states. The website was started in 2001 to keep everyone informed of lake happenings, and most recently CRC has been involved in the preservation of Babb's beach and skating rink as well as instrumental in the preservation of 62 acres on North Pond which includes 2500 ft. of shoreline.

Selectman Doug Moglin stated the Alum Treatment was able to be completed because of the combined efforts of the Select Board, the Community Preservation Commission, Lake Management and CRC. Hopefully this will be a long term solution, to keep the lake clean. The Board is watching what's happening with COVID-19 as far as social distancing on the lake and north pond. Mass Fishing and Boating has issued a state guideline that only Mass Plates are allowed to launch boats on the boat ramp. Signs are up on the north pond property, because we need to continue to slow the covid curve. There's an extension on the LPP Permit program.

Police Chief Kevin Bishop, Harbormaster, spoke about the COVID -19 distancing issues. No one 's maintaining the boat ramp so there were many boats on the water the last beautiful Sunday. He worked with Dennis Clarke, Chris Pratt and CRC to put up signs on the north pond property and the boat ramps. People need to use common sense and follow the board of health rules. CRC also made a revised set of guidelines to hand out, and posted them on the website. Kevin Maloney asked the chief about the violations of speed limit. The chief responded that they are going to try to do various timing for patrolling the lake. They are striving to increase the hours that patrols are on the lake, and he reviewed the training that the officers must receive before going out in the boat. CRC will consider contributing to training officers to patrol the lake.

Dr. Eric Mueller did an update on the Alum Treatment that is currently finishing up on the lake. Initially, there was analysis of data that the state needed to review and approve the Alum treatment to be done. Once the state agreed, it was a combined effort of many town committees that made this treatment possible. Lake water measurements were done prior, during, and post treatment and LMC will continue to monitor the water. The Alum Treatment was done by dividing the lake into zones to prevent ancillary problems. The treatment was applied to South and Middle Ponds 4x and North Pond, which was initially cleaner was done 2x. There is continual PH monitoring to make sure the lake water stays in balance. The Clarity of Middle Pond almost doubled while keeping good oxygen count. North Pond didn't have as big a change in clarity because it was in better shape to start, and South Pond had the most dramatic change. South Pond has never had as much clarity since collecting data. We need to watch for an organic material that breaks down and produces a yellow algae. This may not happen, but we need to watch for that later in the year. Thank you to Dr. Wager for his tireless efforts and the LMC. Fish mortality was attributed to rainbow trout stocking and transport and not the Alum Treatment. Analysis of the fish determined the fish didn't eat because they were stressed, and the death rates were within the normal range. There will be communication back to the company that stocks the lake about the process. Expectation is that there will be no more cyano- bacteria blooms for about 20 years. All the chemistry looks good but the data needs to be analyzed.

The town is in charge of collecting the state fee at the boat ramps. The selectman requested an increase in fee to \$8 for motor boats and \$5 for kayaks and canoes. The fees go to a revolving fund that helps lake activity and patrols on the lake; it doesn't go to general fund.

Penni reviewed the Treasurers Report. There is currently \$20476.26 in the checking account, \$1778.91 in the savings account, and \$30,515.98 in the investment account which is used for the weed treatment every year. With increased clarity in the lake, we may have increased weed growth, so we need to be

prepared for that. Yearly we incur expenses for postage, signs, printing, insurance, and P.O. Box. We no longer have maintenance for rental storage space. We receive donations from a few outside organizations, including a large one last year from CLEPO for \$13,720. We also receive memorial contributions and realty donations, as well as event and fundraising money. The cost of mailing is done in the previous year. Office supplies doubled because we will do a double mailing in 2021. The budget was accepted as presented with a unanimous agreement.

Jameson Crowley is organizing a North Pond Cleanup for his Boy Scout eagle project. This will take place on Saturday the 16<sup>th</sup> on the north pond property. There will be maps provided to find the areas that need to be cleaned, as well as trash barrels and trucks and a dumpster. Volunteers are needed to clean up debris.

Michelle Pratt stated CRC is looking for ideas for topics at meetings. The history of the Canal, wildlife and birds were mentioned. Any ideas can be forwarded to Michelle or the board.

The membership letter has been reformatted. Information about the COVID-19 distancing rules and guidelines, the zoom meetings, and the calendar have been included. Membership fee has been waived for those that can't afford it, and a t- shirt or sweatshirt is offered for higher level contributions. There was a motion and second to change the membership fee as described. There is also the opportunity to volunteer in lieu of membership fee. It passed with 96% approval rate.

The board agreed to donate \$1000 each to Southwick and Suffield Food Pantry  
Motion presented and seconded  
Vote passed 96% approval

250<sup>th</sup> year update: The town of Suffield has cancelled events through the summer. Deb said Southwick meeting is next week to decide how to proceed. Kevin said he thinks the car show will move forward. The social distancing regulations will determine if it can move forward. Jerry said we are waiting to see if we can have the boat parade. He's disappointed that the plans so far have been cancelled. Michelle said Chief Bishop is in favor of the boat parade and we will plan to move forward if we can. The date will be Saturday July 4<sup>th</sup>. The light up the lake plan is going to move forward. We need to get a drone operator to take photos and possibly make calendars. Chief Bishop wants the drone operator to be licensed and certified. At night, the drone has to stay within line of sight. We will continue to investigate this, and we may need volunteers as it gets closer.

MaryAnn Philo will do apparel with CRC logo and will put them on the Stitches by Me website. Michelle would like to plan a golf tournament and is looking for other fund raising ideas. Please keep up CRC publicity. A kayak race was suggested.

Meeting Adjourned 8:45