

Aquatic Wildlife Management Sub Committee
Stewards of the Lake

MEETING Minutes—8/16/21 @ 23 Ledge Rd. 5:30pm

VOLUNTEERS:

Present:

Betty Barsevich bbarsevich@yahoo.com
Jill Carey jillcarey2@comcast.net
Keha Esposito kwind159@yahoo.com
Mary Beth Russo russom002@gmail.com
Kerri Wilson dragonfly747@outlook.com

Jay Cassella (HLA President) hlapresident1@gmail.com
Diane Honer-guest speaker, Beaver & Wildlife Solutions
Kaylee Wilson-guest

AGENDA:

Meeting was called to order at 5:30.

⇒ Keha introduced Diane Honer from Beaver & Wildlife Solutions, Chester CT. Keha asked members to introduce themselves and give brief introduction. Keha explained the background of the inception of the committee as well as its goals.

Goals of the committee

- Resources and education for the association homeowners.

Some key points that were stated for background information on HLA included:

HLA is part of a watershed.

There are 117 properties within the association.

The majority of association members do not own lakefront property.

26% of the membership attended and voted on applying for the special permit to eradicate the beavers.

⇒ A Q & A period with Diane Honer followed.

Diane mentioned an international FaceBook forum--Beaver Management Forum to view some of the events supporting beavers. Keha will send the link out to all members. Some of the major points that Diane discussed included the benefits of having beavers in the lake. Diane gave a handout to Jill from Beaver Solutions in MA.

- Benefits of beavers (PDF)
 - Keystone species because other species rely on them for ecological services.
 - Beavers eat the lily pads and phragmites.
 - New beavers may come as soon as 6 months after current beavers would be eradicated.

Some of the other topics discussed were that beavers have strong family ties. Traps used are inhumane. Sometimes beavers are trapped and then removed from the area to be killed. Jay mentioned that the trapper he spoke to would use a conibear trap. Diane will investigate how this trap works and how humane it is. She also discussed

Explanation of the traps

Diane will check on whether it's a conibear

Share about what the traps will be like

Go public and write about the cruelty of the killing of the beavers.

⇒ **Plan of Action** and Project Deadlines

The plan of action and project deadlines were discussed. Below is a summary of the discussion:

Phase 1-Protection of Beaver Lodges-Beaver Hut Signage

- Signage is here
- Jay will put an email out to ask for volunteers to help put the signs up near the beaver lodges

Phase 2-Resources

a. Wrapping of the trees

Diane suggested wrapping the trees 3-4 ft up the tree to allow for depth of snow around trees in winter. Place wire 6 inches away for growth of the tree. Wire could protect tree for about 10 years. She also suggested black fencing because it fades in better to environment.

The committee decided to wrap trees on the public beaches first. Committee members will count the number of trees, all trees under the circumference of 31. The count should be emailed to MB by Sunday, August 22. Jill will do the calculations and send the information to Jay so that he can present the specifications to the BOG to purchase the wire to wrap the tree. Members agreed to count and measure trees as follows:

West Shore Beach-Jill/MB

East Shore Beach-Kerri/Kaylee

Shore Beach-Betty/Keha

Kerri, Jill, Diane, MB, & Kaylee all volunteered to wrap trees once the materials are purchased to wrap the trees.

b. Resources for home owners

- Jay will propose to BOG to buy wire for public beaches as well as all homeowners who want to have their trees wrapped.
- At the next AWMC meeting, committee members will discuss outreach to association homeowners that would like to have their trees wrapped.

c. HLA membership outreach

Other outreach options will be discussed at the next AWMC meeting.

⇒ **Education**

• **Progress report on HLA Wildlife Handout #1**

Discussion around the wildlife infographic occurred. Jill stated that she needed more information from committee members to complete the task. Members discussed focusing on wildlife benefits, specifically benefits that people might overlook. Below are the wildlife and members who will provide information to Jill by Monday, August 24:

MB—geese

Betty-turtles

Kerri—fish

Keha-Snakes

Kaylee-frogs

Diane-more beaver benefits

Keha previously provided information from the Audubon Society on taking in birdfeeders. Kerri and Kaylee provided a write up on attracting Monarch butterflies. Jill will have the infographic completed by August 31.

⇒ Kerri mentioned the idea of fundraising for the committee, one idea being a plant sale. MB wondered if flora is part of the work of the AWMC committee and possible working with the Beautification Committee to integrate more native plants into the environment.

• **Next HLA BOG Meeting 8/30**

• **Next meeting date—Wednesday, September 8 1:00-3:00**

Topics to include

- Outreach to association member for tree wrapping and education
- Fundraising ideas

