

Hidden Lake Association BoG  
Meeting Minutes 6.30.25  
United Congregational Church

The Meeting was called to order at 6:30 by President Mary-Beth Russo

BoG members present: Sheri Berger, Jay Cassella, Carolyn Chalifoux, Heather Edelson (Zoom), Bob Kiehm, Brian Polak, Cindy Porriello, Mary-Beth Russo

BoG member absent: Frank Nunes

HLA Members in Attendance: Jean Cassella, Sandy Kiehm, Kaleb Remski, Karin Bullock, Pat Donahue, Alan Stoke, Ed Shuman, James Nicholson, Victoria Nicholson, Eleanor Porriello Charlene Baulski, B.J. Chotiner, Merv Wood, Alan Howell, Sharon Howell, Betty Barsevich

HLA Members on Zoom: Renee Norkin, Jill Carey, Andrea Hayes

HLA President, Mary-Beth Russo, read statement thanking past BoG members and rules for decorum from the HLA by-laws and Robert's Rules.

The meeting is called to order

2. Roll call of officers

3. Reading of the minutes of the April BoG meeting minutes for adoption

- \*A motion to waive the reading of the April BoG meeting minutes was made by Jay Cassella and seconded by Bob Kiehm, the motion passed unanimously.
- \*A motion to accept the April BoG meeting minutes with corrections as stated was made by Sheri Berger and seconded by Cindy Porriello, the motion passed unanimously.

4. General discussion from the public of short duration

- Floor was open to general discussion. No members spoke.

5. Report of the Treasurer

- The April treasurer's report was read by Bob Kiehm, please see attached report.  
\*A motion to accept the April treasurer's report was made by Brian Polak and seconded by Jay Cassella, the motion passed unanimously.
- The June treasurer's report was read by Bob Kiehm, please see attached report.  
\*A motion to accept the June treasurer's report was made by Cindy Porriello and seconded by Brian Polak, the motion passed unanimously.
- Bob asked the BoG to add an agenda to New Business to discuss expenditure for an allocation for a new printer for the past president.  
\*A motion to accept the addition of the agenda item was made by Carolyn Chalifoux and seconded by Brian Polak, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Report of the Tax Collector

- The tax collector's report was presented by Sheri Berger, please see attached report

## 7. Reports of standing and special committees

- Road Committee-no report
- Lake and Dam committee was presented by Sheri Berger. She stated that they were rained out for their day of data collection with the HLA testing instruments. Lake blankets have been removed and water testing has been completed.
- By-law Committee-no meeting this month
- Aquatic Wildlife was presented by Keha Esposito. Held crafts meeting where committee painted gourds to make bird houses. Committee is trying to think of new ideas for workshops to involve the community more. Keha mentioned redoing identification of plants on the beaches.
- Audit Committee-no report
- Fund Raising-Sandy Kiehm, encouraged people to take the flags that have been purchased by HLA to put on mailboxes around the lake. She also urged people to put plants in the planters.
- Septic-presented by Anthony. This is his last report. Charlene Baulski will take over. Letters have not gone out as there will be a vote on the septic company proposals.
- Web and Media- presented by Jay Cassella, all up to speed. Mary mentioned that she responded to someone about boat stickers. She gave them Cindy contact information

## 8. Unfinished business:

- ⌘ March Meeting Minutes
  - \*A motion to accept the March BoG meeting minutes as revised in Frank's May 1 email was made by Bob Kiehm and seconded by Jay Cassella, the motion passed unanimously.
- ⌘ Lake Blanket Purchase (allocate additional funds)
  - Bob explained that there was a need for BoG to allocate an additional \$60 purchase of rebar for the installation of the lake blankets.
    - \*A motion to allocate the additional funds was made by Sheri Berger and seconded by Brian Polak, the motion passed unanimously.

## 9. New business:

- ⌘ Septic Contract

Mary-Beth stated that there are 2 proposals to be voted on for the HLA septic services. Vinny M from Septic Systems Solution spoke about the company and what the company would offer as service. Cahill chose not to attend and present to the BoG.

\*Motion was made by Bob Kiehm to accept the proposal from Cahill as our septic vendor. Sheri Berger seconded. Discussion ensued-Anthony explained that Cahill has been servicing HLA for over 20 years. Cahill is a licensed septic company. Anthony personally advocated to continue with Cahill. Mary-Beth stated that she encouraged Cahill to attend the meeting so that questions could be answered by both vendors.

Brian spoke about wanting to see a change in vendors based on several factors: Cahill adjusting price based on competition's price, lack of detail in the septic reports, issue with his own septic. Carolyn asked about increase based on disposal price as stated on the Cahill price. Would Septic Systems Solutions also increase price if disposal price increases? Vinny would honor his price in the proposal for the year.

\*Bob stated that he is in favor of going with a local vendor, therefore withdrew his original motion. Sheri also withdrew her second to the motion.

\*Carolyn Chalifoux made a motion to accept Septic Systems Solutions, the motion was seconded by Brian Polak. Discussion continued about both of the companies. Jay spoke about his positive interactions with Skip from Cahill over the years. He is struggling with the decision between the 2 companies. Anthony again addressed reports provided by Cahill stating the information in the reports.

\*Vote on the motion-in favor 6, 1 no. See motion votes for details.

#### ⌘ Landscaping Contract

Mary-Beth presented the 2 companies for landscaping for HLA-Wilder Gardens, Kaleb Remski and Northern Ground, AJ Labbaddia.

AJ presented his 2 proposals. The 2-year proposal will keep the same prices at \$800 per month (\$8,000 per year) and \$1,200 for spring and fall clean up. Kaleb presented his proposal, about \$7,200 for all work, based on hours and then dumping costs.

\*Motion was made by Jay Cassella to accept the proposal from AJ (Northern Grounds). Carolyn Chalifoux seconded. Discussion ensued-Carolyn mentioned the dumping fees could change the pricing. Bob stated that he liked the 2-year steady price, but also liked going with local work. Jay stated that he has worked with AJ over the last 3 years and has had good results. Jay also stated that since Kaleb is a member he would do good work, but having an hourly rate is difficult to vote on.

\*Vote on the motion-in favor 6, 1 no. See motion votes for details.

#### ⌘ Fence Request

\*A motion to accept the request for a 4ft green fence around property on 85 East Shore was made by Bob Kiehm and seconded by Jay Cassella. Discussion ensued on the type of fence and height. Also, whether the neighbors had been notified.

\*The motion passed unanimously.

#### ⌘ Pond & Lake Update

Mary-Beth read an update from Pond & Lake. On the last visit the lake was inspected. It was found that it was looking pretty good overall. The shoreline did have some Filamentous algae that was treated as well as several patches of Snailseed pondweed around the docks. Lilies were left untreated in each cove.

€ Building Proposals

Mary-Beth wanted to update members as to the HLA By-laws for building proposals. When selling or buying a house you should receive the by-laws from the realtor. We need to look to get HLA By-laws up-to-date about seeking permits. She added that when selling or buying a house you should receive the by-laws from the realtor and when putting in a dock you should go to Inland/Wetlands for approval. Jay stated that anything being built or excavated within 100ft of the water needs approval from Inland/Wetlands Commission.

€ Japanese Knotweed Mitigation

Mary-Beth asked Kaleb Remski to speak to the plan to mitigate Japanese knotweed. Kaleb gave overview of treatment that takes about one year. See attached proposal (#4). He advised cutting it back to the ground removing all debris and then using an herbicide rated for use around wetlands in the fall. One cutting and 2 sprays is estimated between \$1,100 and \$1,460 plus dumping fees. \*A motion to accept the proposal for the mitigation of Japanese knotweed was made by Jay Cassella and seconded by Carolyn Chalifoux, the motion passed unanimously. Discussion followed: Jay asked Kaleb about the possibility of putting large rock over the area where the knotweed is. Jay explained that no vegetation should be growing in the spillway, 100ft from the dam. Jay suggested that the Board look into covering the area with rock and also be aware that there may be other costs associated with keeping the spillway clear as outlined by the DEEP. Cindy asked about the dumping fees. Kaleb mentioned about 2 dump loads at between \$50-\$60 per trailer, this job would probably take 2 trailer loads. Bob suggested that the funds should be taken from \$2,500 property maintenance in the reserves.

\*The motion was amended by Jay to include that the monies be allocated from the property maintenance reserves. The motion passed unanimously.

€ Money Market Account (switching banks)

Bob explained that he had spoken with Citizens' Bank to get a better interest rate on the money market account. They have not responded to his request as of yet. Bob is asking the Board permission to move the money market account if Citizens' Bank does not come back with a better offer on the interest rate.

\*A motion to was made to give Bob permission to move the funds in the money market account only, with the stipulation that Citizens' Bank does not come back with a higher interest rate was made by Cindy Porriello and seconded by Brian Polak, the motion passed unanimously.

€ Neighborhood Library Request

A request for a neighborhood library to be put on the corner of West Shore and Hidden Lake Rd. Andrea Hayes explained her idea of putting up a two-story neighborhood library.

\*A motion was made by Jay Cassella and seconded by Cindy Porriello to accept the request to put a neighborhood library on the corner of West Shore and Hidden Lake Rd. Discussion ensued as to the exact location. Jay stated the right side is Town of Haddam, the left side belongs to the Soby's. Suggestion to attach the library to the side of the mailboxes. A question was asked as to who would monitor the library for overflow. A suggestion was made to move the flower planter from the right to the left side.

\*Vote on the motion, 6 in favor and 1 opposed. See motion votes for details.

∄ Boating Letter

Mary-Beth informed the BoG that the boating letter that usually goes out to all members to explain the need for boat stickers. Cindy explained the process and documents that she sends out when members get boating stickers. Mary-Beth mentioned that we will be checking on the beaches for boats that don't have stickers to notify members to get stickers. Cindy shared the letter with Sheri so that the documents can be updated.

∄ Property by the Dam

Mary-Beth mentioned the vegetation going up by the property where trees that were removed by the dam. Mary-Beth suggested that the BoG get Jay and Cindy clarified that the property owner had been given permission to put a fence up in a previous meeting (up to 8ft high). Mary-Beth will get a proposal on the cost of doing that work.

- \*Bob Kiehm made a motion to purchase a printer to replace the one for the past president for \$225. Carolyn Chalifoux seconded the motion. Bob explained that the past president had been using his personal printer for the last 7 years and it seemed only fair to replace it.

\*Motion passed unanimously.

- \*Jay Cassella made a motion that the BoG vote to add another agenda item: to purchase a printer for BoG. Cindy Porriello seconded the motion. Discussion ensued as to where the printer should be housed and to go up a model which would be about \$50 more, as well as a tank fed model.

\*Motion passed unanimously.

∄ Paper Road

Mary-Beth explained that the clearing a part of the paper road on Twin Oaks of the Discussion ensued about clearing of a part of the paper road on Twin Oaks. Cindy explained that as long as the property owner understands that the property belongs to HLA. Jay stated that there was personal property on the paper road and no one is permitted to put personal property on HLA property. He also mentioned the monument that appears to be missing.

Mary-Beth stated that she will research the monument and whether a survey overrides the need for a monument. There is also the need for more investigation for the permission for the fence given to another property owner on the other side of the paper road. Agreement was that the clearing of the property has beautified the landscape.

- Committees

Mary-Beth explained that new members have volunteered. The website will be revised to reflect the new members and perhaps new meeting dates. She thanked those new members who have stepped up to serve on committees.

#### 10. General discussion

- Mary Shea suggested a boating activity on Sunday evenings. She asked if that an announcement could be put up on the website. Jay said yes.
- Charlene Baulski asked that the BoG send out a thank you note to Cahill for their years of service. In addition, Charlene asked about the transition of the septic pumping, how will we know where the septic systems are. Jay stated that he had spoken with Vinny from Septic Systems Solutions and explained that there might be additional work to locate septic systems for pumping. Mary-Beth will meet with Charlene to discuss the process more.
- Jean mentioned that Liberty Bank had given a good rate to her organization. Bob stated that he plans to check out Liberty Bank.
- Kaleb volunteered to put in a garden on East Shore. He would pay for the plants and do the planting. Mary-Beth suggested that he collaborate with Keha from the Aquatic Wildlife Committee as well.

#### 11. Adjournment

\*Brian Polak moved to adjourn the BoG meeting, Jay Cassella seconded the motion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM.