

Lake Zoar Authority

P.O. Box 931
Southbury, CT 06488
Email: lakezoar@gmail.com

Member Towns

Monroe-Newtown-Oxford-Southbury

The special meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Community Center.

Commissioners Present:

Frank Cavallo
John Downs
Jerry Kozera
Bill May, Treasurer
Barbara McWilliams
Lesley Pires
Dick Speer

Absent:

Mark Saksa

Call to Order

Chairperson Barbara McWilliams called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Secretary's Report:

A motion to accept the minutes from the February 13, 2023 special meeting, was made by Bill May, seconded by Dick Speer; the motion was passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

One resident from Oxford and one resident from Sandy Hook were in attendance. John Morin of Southbury attended with interest to fill the current Southbury vacancy. Dennis Lawler from Newtown attended. He has been selected by the town of Newtown to fill the Newtown vacancy, and will be sworn in on March 20th at the Board of Selectmen meeting.

Correspondence and News Clippings:

None.

Treasurer's Report:

Bill May, Treasurer, presented account balances, with cash on hand equaling \$153,166.37 which includes partial grant funds received for the new boat. Bill reported the budget reserve can go down to \$50,000, with remaining funds spent to finance the new boat. A motion to pass the treasurer's report was made by Lesley Pires seconded by Dick Speer, the motion was passed unanimously.

Marine Patrol Report:

Marine Patrol Coordinator reported that patrol driver Bill will be back on duty this season.

Publicity/ Public Awareness:

Lesley Pires will work with Dennis Lawler on enhancing the LZA webpage. Dennis has extensive professional IT experience and will look into better programs for emailing and sharing documents. Lesley reported there is opportunity for the LZA to make Lake Zoar T-shirts available online for public purchase, through various online stores. Treasurer Bill May will look into how profits can be appropriately managed.

Water Quality

Barbara McWilliams, Chairperson, reported concerns with weed treatment management. Northeast Aquatic Research has been paid on an annual basis for pre and post weed treatment reports. According to the CT DEEP, these reports are not required for submission during permitting. The most recent report paid for by the LZA was identically published by FirstLight and distributed to local lake authorities. In addition, Lake Lillinonah does not fund weed control due to reported inability to effectively treat the lake equitably and economically. Commissioners discussed equitably funding several water quality issues, and not focusing solely on weed treatment. To better manage this endeavor, Barbara suggested the water quality commission be split into two subdivisions, weed treatment and general water quality. Barbara will head the weed treatment sub commission, and Lesley Pires will work on the general water quality sub commission, with assistance from Southbury resident John Morin. Lesley will contact the Western Connecticut State University biology department to inquire about more specific cyanobacteria monitoring geared towards Lake Zoar, that better reflects the concerns of local residents and recreational boaters. Lesley will report on potential water quality monitoring services available with WSCU labs. Barbara will reach out to Lake Lillinonah regarding water quality funds received for their projects, and report on any similar opportunities available to the LZA. Barbara also reported that FirstLight announced they will hire a crew to remove hazardous debris from the main waterway before the start of this season.

Boats and Motors Report:

Dick Speer reported that boat one is being prepared to be put into the water. Flash Signs will perform work on the decals.

Grants:

Barbara McWilliams reported that the LZA has received \$60,000 in full from FirstLight in grants for a new boat. She continues to work on the new grant opportunity from the town of Southbury.

Unfinished Business:**New Business**

The New Boat Committee reported that the boat selected for purchase is a Highfield Patrol Range 660. Discussions were had regarding a cover for the boat and limited color options. The boat is 21 feet, and the estimate includes the boat, engine trailer, T top, tow bar, hydraulic steering, electronics, sonar, engine monitor, standard equipment, for \$82,919.95 from A&S Boats of South Windsor. In addition, Dick Speer presented an estimate from T&M Automotive for \$9,327 to install and transfer electronics to the new boat.

Treasurer Bill May motioned to approve funds not to exceed \$100,000 for the purchase of a new boat and associated equipment, the motion was seconded by Dick Speer, and passed unanimously.

The Bylaws Committee read a new draft of proposed bylaws to commissioners. Copies were passed out to each member. Lesley Pires will accept any additional changes to the bylaws from commissioners. A vote to change the bylaws will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Chairperson Barbara McWilliams reported that towards the end of August 2023, the Algonquin Gas Transmission pipeline will be repairing an underwater pipe in Newtown, between Shady Rest beach and the northern end of Bridge End farm, from 7am – 7pm, 6 days a week. Work zones will be identified with hazard buoys. Scuba divers will be working underwater. The company inquired about how the LZA could support operational safety.

Chairperson Barbara McWilliams proposed a third patrol boat be available with one driver to standby. Treasurer Bill May reported costs estimated to be upwards of \$100 per hour, per driver. Marine Patrol Coordinator Dan Semosky reminded members that we do not have the staffing to support this operation, and new part time drivers will need to be hired. Dan reported that local lake authorities pay drivers \$28 per hour, and the LZA pays \$22. Lesley Pires suggested job postings will need to be created that reflect current market wages for drivers, and the wages for current drivers will need to be raised. Commissioners discussed calling a meeting with Algonquin Gas Transmission to determine the specific needs of the project, and if the LZA can properly support the project with current resources.

Treasurer Bill May motioned to raise current driver pay to \$28 effective immediately, and a 10% raise for the Marine Patrol Coordinator effective immediately, the motion was seconded by Lesley Pires, the motion was passed unanimously.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Bill May and seconded by Frank Cavallo. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Pires
Secretary

The minutes are not considered official until approved at the next regular meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority to be held on April 4, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Oxford Town Hall.