

# Lake Zoar Authority

P.O. Box 931  
Southbury, CT 06488  
Email: info@lakezoarauthority.org

## Member Towns

Monroe-Newton-Oxford-Southbury

The regular meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority was held on Monday, July 1, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Community Center.

### Commissioners Present:

Barbara McWilliams, Chairwoman  
Tony Fischetti  
James Galarneau  
Tim Glover  
Dennis Lawler  
John Morin  
Lesley Pires  
Dick Speer

### Absent:

Mark Saksa  
Jerry Kozera  
John Downs

### Call to Order

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

### Secretary's Report:

A motion to accept the minutes from the May 7, 2024 meetings was made by Dennis Lawler seconded by Tony Fischetti; the motion was passed unanimously.

### Public Comments:

A Newtown Eagle Scout presented from troop 270 in support for Lake Zoar while he earns his communications merit badge.

Chairman Barbara McWilliams reported to public in attendance that FirstLight needs to shut down the damn for 48 hours for weed treatment application and due to consistent rain they were not able to close for that duration during the spring months. Commissioner John Morin reported that if treatment is too late in the season, after May 15, the weeds have grown above the surface water and biomass will be created on the surface of the water as the weeds die, which results in nutrient overload that feeds algae blooms. The agreed upon window for treatment has closed, and treating late increases the likelihood of algae blooms. Algae blooms may have harmful cyanobacteria mycotoxins which can have negative health impacts on humans for a radius of miles.

One member of the public brought up Lake Candlewood sterile carp and wanted to know if the carp could help reduce the weeds. Commissioners explained that the carp in Candlewood Lake destroyed the majority of all vegetation in the lake and it is not applicable for a reservoir like Lake Zoar, but John Morin will inquire with the CT DEEP.

A second member of the public presented photos of weeds near the 84 bridge residences and asked for remediation ideas. Barbara McWilliams explained that residents can treat weed treatment within their neighborhood associations and can obtain a permit through the vendor as a group. The resident also mentioned how the sediment near the construction zone has thickened so much that boats are routinely getting beached in the shallow water. Dick Speer

explained that dredging in the lake is not permitted due to PCB's and the bottom cannot be disturbed. The resident asked for more information about the construction companies being responsible for removing the sediment that was displaced. Commissioners suggested he contact the CT DOT on behalf of the property owners and expressed that the LZA would support such efforts.

A resident with properties between the Sandbar and Rochambeau bridge reported the lake is unusable due to excessive weeds and sludge in Southbury. She expressed that two years ago they could access the water until July, and last year until June, while this year not at all. Barbara McWilliams reported that commissioners will gather information regarding remediation.

A resident inquired about a weed cutter to remove the weeds like as in the past and asked about dropping the water level 4 – 6 feet during a winter deep freeze to reduce the weed growth. Commissioner Dick Speer reported that the weed cutter also required a permit, which requires removal of the clippings, and that cutting encourages new regrowth of the plants.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams reported current treasury balances. The ending balance for the month of May was \$94,614 with \$35,000 to be paid towards the new boat. After this month's invoices are paid, \$191,635 will be available by the end of July. A motion to pass the treasurer's report was made by Dick Speer seconded by John Morin, the motion was passed unanimously.

#### **Marine Patrol Report:**

Marine Patrol Coordinator Dan Semosky reported that for the month of May there were four patrols with 26 warnings and no infractions, and two tows. A majority of the warnings were for kayakers not wearing PFD's which must be worn until June 1<sup>st</sup>. Two of the buoys near the Pootatuck River disappeared and one was recovered, and one was donated from a resident. There were 16 patrols during the month of June and one special call out from the State Police and Southbury Fire Department. The call was for a sinking boat with adults and children. The claim was completely unfounded and the driver of the boat was safely fishing. There were 64 written warnings for lack of PFDs and registration stickers, and 2 infractions. There were seven tows and approximately twelve debris removal incidents, in which one was a floating dock. On June 21<sup>st</sup> there were kids swimming in thunder and lightning near Kettletown State Park who had to be asked to leave due to safety concerns. There were some complaints of erratic jet skiers where contact was made but not tickets were warranted.

#### **Publicity/ Public Awareness:**

James Galarneau and Dennis Lawler reported the website is being routinely updated with weed treatment issues and Cyanobacteria Monitoring test results.

#### **Water Quality**

##### **Weed Treatment Committee:**

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams reported that once hydrilla is found in the lake, she will apply for a removal grant through CT DEEP.

##### **Water Quality Monitoring Committee:**

John Morin reported WCSU has begun testing for the cyanobacteria monitoring program this season. The LZA is receiving data from the same nine sites as last year; Eichler's Cove, Jackson's Cove, Kettletown State Park, the Shepaug Dam, the Pootatuck River inlet to Lake Zoar, the Pomperaug River near the Audubon Society, the Sandbar, Lakeside Marina, and Frenches Cove. All water samples collected for the WCSU water quality monitoring program remain under the microcystin threshold of 8.0 parts per billion (ppb; µg/L) for recreational waters.

**Boats and Motors Report:**

Dick Speer reported that the boats are in good working order. There is a small electrical issue on the new boat and it will be investigated. The propeller on the new boat was chewed up but replaced with a spare. A sea trial for the new boat is scheduled for July 2<sup>nd</sup> with intentions of completing the purchase this month. Quotes for signage for the new boats will be presented.

**Grants:**

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams reported she did get a permit to install a lifejacket stand at the state boat ramp and a shed will be erected with grant money. The shed will be open every Saturday and Sunday for loaning life jackets. Last year's stand at Eichler's Cove will also be reopened.

**Unfinished Business:**

John Morin reported a permit has been approved for 4 navigational lights to be posted marking two abandoned bridge abutments on Lake Zoar in Newtown and Southbury. There will be one solar light (red or green) on each corner of the abutments. Several quotes have been secured. The installation can be completed by the LZA.

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams reported that she attended a debris tour for Lake Lillinonah with First Light, and a Lake Zoar debris tour is planned for this month.

Commissioners agreed the text message alert system will be revisited in the Fall.

**New Business:**

Commissioner Lesley Pires reported an update to the online meeting rules has been made by The State of CT Freedom of Information Commission. Official online only meetings are authorized but must be recorded and posted online for 45 days, whereas hybrid in person and online meetings do not require recordings. This amendment will be included in the annual LZA Bylaws update.

Tim Glover reported there is a need for more markings at the Monroe boat launch regarding invasive species. Commissioners will check with CT DEEP regarding posting more informational signage.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Dennis Lawler seconded by Tony Fischetti, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned 8:30pm.

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 Monday, August 5, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Oxford Town Hall.