

Lake Zoar Authority

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Member Towns

Monroe-Newtown-Oxford-Southbury

The regular meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority was held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Community Center.

Commissioners Present:

Barbara McWilliams
James Galarneau
Tony Fischetti
Bruce Lafky
Jerry Kozera
John Morin
Lesley Pires
Dick Speer
Avi Veerarahav

Absent:

Tim Glover
John Downs

Call to Order

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

Secretary's Report:

A motion to accept the minutes from the February 4, 2025 meeting was made by Tony Fischetti; seconded by John Morin; the motion was passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

Residents from each Sandy Hook, Newtown, and Monroe were in attendance.

Dan O'Donnell of Newtown spoke on behalf of the Lake Zoar Homeowners Rights Association. The organization is concerned about FirstLight sending letters to Lake Zoar homeowners demanding that homeowners apply for permits from FirstLight and demanding fees and fines of homeowners. The LZHRA quoted language from FirstLight's license stating the requirement for FirstLight to acquire land and deeded rights, rights that town records show FirstLight has failed to acquire on Lake Zoar. The representative from LZHRA suggests that all homeowners on Lake Zoar email the LZHRA at info@lakezoar.org to join the organization and work together to protect their rights. Membership with LZHRA is completely free and open to all that own land on Lake Zoar.

Treasurer's Report:

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliam reported current treasury balances with cash on hand equaling \$83,493.45. 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 early activity on the lake with sightings of ice fisherman near the sandbar and few bass fisherman in Southbury.

Publicity/ Public Awareness:

Avi Veerarahay has updated the outlook application for new members. He is also reaching out to member town public school principals for interest in student volunteers for the life jacket stands.

James Galarneau reported CT DEEP offers free “if found” stickers for paddle crafts and he has shared the details on the LZA Facebook page.

Water Quality**Weed Treatment Committee:**

Tony Fischetti reported FirstLight and Pond and Lake have been difficult to correspond with regarding planning this season’s weed treatment plan. No phone calls have been returned. Tony would like to narrow the “early season / May 15” treatment down further, more specific to this year, and begin to identify a treatment date. Tony reiterated it is important amongst residents to balance cyanobacteria blooms with organized weed treatment plans.

Water Quality Monitoring Committee:

John Morin reported FirstLight held a public meeting to review proposed Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) modifications on February 26, 2025, from 6-7:45 pm at the Heritage Hotel in Southbury, CT. Seventy-four public members including town members and lake authorities attended. Main concerns raised included permit processes, property ownership rights, SMP issues, and water depth management. FirstLight did confirm they received the six LZA inputs and will consider them for final for input for FIRC. Two of the six have already been approved to the current draft, wherein the SMP modification review will be kept at six years instead of the previously proposed ten years, and the requirement for public input will be kept in place before changes to the SMP are made.

Boats and Motors Report:

None.

Grants:

None.

Unfinished Business:

John Morin and Jerry Kozera reported signal lights will be purchased for the approved CT DEEP permit for waterway markers on the bridge abutments at Silver Bridge.

By-Laws Review:

A motion to amended the bylaws to state, “meetings held in electronic attendance only will be recorded and uploaded to the LZA website for 45 days, in compliance with FOIA regulations” was made by John Morin, seconded by Dick Speer, the motion was passed unanimously.

New Business:

Chairperson Barbara McWilliams reported that First Selectman from Southbury has concerns about the unmanaged silt levels around River Road, and FirstLight is not remediating the resulting decreased water depth issue. The issue is being investigated by the town.

Barbara reported she has an upcoming meeting with FirstLight and her goal is to determine answers to the following questions;

- Who is installing the buoys at the Shepaug dam
- What is the permit status for the second log dump?
- What is the 2025 debris plan?
- What is the turnaround time regarding simple questions for a permit, is it 48 hours?

Barbara reported the permits are in process for the life jacket shed for Memorial day through Labor Day.

Barbara also reported CT DEEP has an Invasive Investigator Program with upcoming training dates for public volunteers to help identify invasive species on Lake Zoar and help train others. Training dates will be announced.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Tony Fischetti, seconded by Jerry Kozera, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned 8:13pm.

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 Tuesday April 1, 2025 at 7:00 pm at the Oxford Town Hall.