

WOPWA Board Meeting Minutes, August 19, 2009
Home of Anne Knight, White Oak Pond Rd.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by President Anne Knight.

Board members present were: Anne Knight, Roger Uhler, Chuck Vicinus, Nancy MacDonald, Ted Van Sant, Will Stratton, Kevin Frank, Galen Beach, Lois Stratton, Anne Ireland, Mimzie Uhler. Bob Rothschild

Approval of Board meeting Minutes. The minutes of the Board meeting of June 14, 2009 were approved. Note: minutes of the Annual Meeting of July 18, 2009 are not subject to approval until the annual meeting on July 17, 2010.

It was decided unanimously that there is no need to include in the Board minutes who moved and seconded a motion unless the issue is deemed an important one.

Several corrections were made to the minutes of the Annual Meeting. ←

Miscellaneous notes

The Mary H. Perry Conservation Fund received some nice publicity with an article published in the *Plymouth Record Enterprise* by Marcia Morris.

A thank you letter from Larry and Clare Mowbray was read.

Treasurer's Report. As of this date, \$1105 in dues has been received from 34 people for the current year. It is anticipated that a total of about \$1300 (an additional ~\$200) will be collected. New Hampshire Lakes Association dues of \$300 was paid, and other bills, including water testing costs, were paid for a total of approximately \$825.00 thus far this year.

In a discussion of who keeps the membership forms, they are received by the treasurer. Will asked that the form be revised for next year, to include a box for "no change", referring to addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers. While discussing the value of collecting and keeping the information, it was decided that Will will screen the forms and forward pertinent ones to the president for follow-up: i.e., if someone expresses interest in helping on a committee, serving on the Board, etc. He will then pass them on to Nancy Voorhis for use in updating the address files.

Dues Collection. A strategy for collecting dues from those who do not join at the Annual Meeting and those who do not attend the meeting was discussed. A plan is needed for follow-up after the annual meeting, because the minutes are now posted on the website rather than being mailed. Technically, only those who pay dues are members. Following the annual meeting there were 34 on the membership list. The highest number on record is 47. It was decided that Will Stratton will send a list of people who normally join to Nancy Voorhis (keeper of the database) and vice-president, Ted Van Sant, will help compose a reminder to be sent to those people as soon as possible.

Membership Issues and Website Updates. At present we do not know how many people live in the Watershed who are potential members of WOPWA. The list of Watershed residents is periodically verified so that the database becomes the foundation for any general mailings in advance of the Annual Meeting. Lois asked that anyone who knows persons who are in the Watershed who are not members, please tell her so she can pursue membership with them. Several names were provided.

It was reiterated that Nancy Voorhis will maintain the database and Mimzie Uhler will check the Town tax list online every 6 months and pass on changes to Nancy so the database will be current.

It was noted that some changes have been made and are still being made to the website since the Annual Meeting, especially in the member's area, where the information from the CDs of historical records that Galen has worked on will be available.

Water Quality Update. Galen Beach reported that conductivity has been rising steadily, probably from particulate matter in the water, especially in the transfer station area and the Cocchiario inlet; the rest of lake is doing very well. Sampling has been done twice this summer and a third one will be done in September,

The President read a letter to the organization from the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) asking for help in saving loons. Loons still remain threatened, as 2008 research indicates that contaminants in eggs result in failure to hatch. Loons are indicators of threats to the environment in general. At the Annual Meeting we had encouraged joining the LPC as individuals. While it is more beneficial, tax-wise, to join as individuals, the organization doesn't pay taxes if we spend all our income. Tax laws limit our deductions to charitable organizations to 10% of income. We pay taxes on most of what we donate, after expenses. The NH Lakes Association membership can be deducted because it is a lobbying organization. Chuck Vicinus moved, Lois Stratton seconded and the Board voted to join the LPC at the \$50 annual membership rate as a statement of our interest in LPC.

In an unofficial response to an inquiry about a loon raft for White Oak Pond, Ted Van Sant reported that White Oak Pond is a viable place for a natural loon nest, so it is unlikely that we could get an artificial one. The LPC doesn't want to overload the lakes with loon rafts.

Mary H. Perry Conservation Fund (MHPCF) Kevin Frank reported, with verification from the treasurer, that the MHPCF is up \$550 since the Annual Meeting, and stands at about \$9500 now. The MHPCF committee plans to send another letter to solicit donations. It will include the map provided at no cost to us by the Squam Lakes Conservation Society (SLCS). The letter, which goes out with the signature of the WOPWA President, will suggest that donors add to the Fund each year. Kevin will verify that Roger LaRochelle is the designated contact person at SLCS for purposes of the letter. The address list should be more accurate this year. Kevin asked for an allowance of up to

\$200 for expenses for the letter and mailing, which was approved. Will Stratton suggested an email appeal but after discussion it was decided that a mailing will get a better response. It was noted that no one who is not a dues paying member has yet to contribute to the MHPCF. Kevin indicated that another person is considering a conservation easement, and the publicity about the Haskell easement has generated some additional interest. There is a long process for people to go through, so one of the missions of the Fund is to maintain an awareness of the Fund and to keep the possibility of such a donation and conservation easement in people's minds.

The payout from the Fund this year as a result of the Haskell easement will be 20 % of the balance in the Fund at the end of last year (2008). Once an application has been submitted, a note of appreciation from WOPWA and the MHPCF is sent. The MHPCF Committee tells SLCS to make the reimbursement to the owner of the property placed in conservation. A system is in place to assure that the conservator will get reimbursement from SLCS for some expenses in addition to the outlay from the Fund. The money goes directly to the vendors involved in creating the easement, reducing the conservator's expenses. The party creating the easement might make this reduction in expenses as a donation back into the Fund.

Dam Access/George Levin Recognition. Bob Rothschild reported that he plans to install a chain between two posts with a lock at the access area to discourage boats larger than kayaks and canoes. There will be a carry-in slot, and instructions on the sign will describe a procedure for arranging to have the chain unlocked for a larger boat, up to 7 ½ hp. WOPWA members will have access to the key from Bob and the fire department will have a key. Part of the gravel area near the Rothschild property is included in the right of way for the access point. No commercial use of the lake is permitted by the terms of the sign. It was noted that an Appalachian Mountain Club group comes a couple of times a year to teach kayaking, which would not be permissible. Bob plans to add a note to the sign that contributions to WOPWA by those who use the lake would be welcome. We cannot seem too restrictive or there could be backlash.

The flowers planted by Janet at the dam are crane-billed geraniums and are perennials. In response to an inquiry about a local memorial service at the dam for George Levin, Anne said that the family feels that the event last August for dedicating the sign served the purpose of a service for George. It was suggested that a few words could be said at the next annual meeting about George's contribution to WOPWA.

Other Business. The White Oak Motel is still for sale but not very actively. Bob Rothschild suggested that as an organization, it might be advantageous to pay for and plant some trees or shrubs to filter the view since it impacts the beauty of the lake. It is unlikely that WOPWA would be able to buy the property to put it in conservation. The price is now between 1½ and 2 million dollars. An investment in trees or shrubs could be presented to the owners as something that would enhance the value of the property. Some Board members questioned whether this is a Board matter or should be a private initiative. Trees are not allowed to be cut by state law, but when violated, there is no follow up. It was decided that Anne Knight would be the right person to approach the

motel owners to try to determine if they might be open to such an offer without being intimidating. Chuck Vicinus moved, it was seconded by Ted Van Sant and approved that Anne follow up in whatever manner she feels appropriate, and if Board approval is needed for some additional step, we will do a phone or email conference call. No commitment will be made at this time. If this goes forward in some form, there would probably be a fund drive among a restricted group to raise money for the project.

Annual Meeting Plans. Anne asked for the Board's suggestions for next year's meeting. Ideas were to have a shorter social time before the meeting, that we plan better for the amount of food, and include decaf coffee, perhaps from Dunkin Donuts. While the invitation was explicit about the times for socializing and for the meeting, those need to be even clearer. Start the social time at 9 a.m., the meeting at 9:30, allow 2 hours for the meeting and have the lunch pot-luck at 11:30.

Anne Ireland reported that Roger La Rochelle was pleased that so many people from WOPWA came to the SLCS annual meeting and that two other families have expressed interest in conservation of their property. Kevin pointed out that while many of the people who might put their land into a conservation trust do not need the money, there is a psychological value in helping them get to "yes."

Anne Knight was thanked for hosting the meeting, which was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mimzie Uhler, Secretary