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City of Amesbury
Lakes and Waterways Commission
Meeting Minutes for May 18, 2023
7:00 PM
Location: Virtual Webcast Meeting

Attendees: Tom Murphy - Acting Chair, Cindy Roberts, Tom Volper, and Art O'Dea

Completing Minutes: Tom Volper

I. Administrative Business

A. Call to Order

- This meeting is being conducted under the Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on June 16, 2021, by Governor Baker. Public access to participate has been made available.
- Tom Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM and stated a quorum had been met.

B. Review of Past Minutes

- A draft of the minutes of the meeting of April 20, 2023 were previously distributed and no comments were received. Cindy Roberts moved to accept the minutes and Tom Murphy seconded the motion with all in favor.

C. Membership Status

- Tom Murphy, as Assistant Chair, offered the position of Chair to the group; no one was interested at this time.

D. Minutes

- Tom M. moved to accept the previous meeting's minutes and Cindy seconded. All voted in favor.

II. Engineer's Update

A. Engineer's Report

- Tom Murphy noted Joseph Buckley is the new director of DPW, but there is no new engineer yet—Tom Rogers is handling these duties. Tom R. had sent a written engineer's report to Tom M., who presented it verbally to those present.
 - a) It was noted there may be a problem at Arch Brook Culvert, perhaps a blockage. There was also debris buildup at Stateline Dam that will need mechanical removal.
- Cindy mentioned asking Tom R. if it was possible to keep water from backflowing from Meadowbrook Pond into Lake Attitash, and checking the DPW's plan on this.

III. Current Business

A. Open Spaces

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- Tom V. discussed the “Principles and Policies” draft document created by Bill Giezentanner of Mass Audubon, focusing on the areas of the document touching on waterbodies.
- Cindy and Tom M. suggested several edits to the document to forward to Bill.
- Tom M. opined that our lakes and waterways need to be managed with comprehensive vision, and that you can’t manage water without managing the land. He further opined that Con Com is not best suited to provide this management role.

B. 604(b) Grant

- Cindy noted that the main interest of Stephanie Hanson of CEI for the 604(b) grant is creating best management practices for storm water runoff.
- Tom M. spoke about asking those with knowledge, or finding out who has knowledge, of runoff locations for the different waterbodies, so as to share this information with Stephanie prior to her sampling at different local sites. The city will pick up to five locations for which CEI consultants can design solutions, which may be used for a future 319 grant.
- Cindy suggested Tom R. might have knowledge on the runoff situation at Meadowbrook and Tuxbury Ponds and the Upper Powow River.
- There was a discussion of obtaining a copy of a presentation Kate Mallory gave on the Powow River and sharing this with Stephanie.
- Relatedly, there was also discussion of what to do with the City’s Green Streets Survey for downtown Amesbury. Tom M. agreed to send the survey to Joe Buckley so that someone in the City is aware of the need to complete this work.

IV. New Business

A. Solar Farm

- Cindy presented on the planned solar farm on land neighboring Meadowbrook Pond; she had attended a community meeting.
 - a) Syncharpha has sited the solar farm to avoid Con Com jurisdiction and for connection with National Grid.
 - b) From the L&W Commission and Lake Attitash Association perspectives, the concern is stormwater runoff, including additional phosphorus and the potential for more cyanobacteria blooms.
 - c) Cindy mentioned sending her concerns on this matter to council member Peter Frey.
- Tom M. suggested authoring a letter expressing concerns over the watershed impact, focusing on increased surface water runoff with phosphorus and silt. He highlighted the importance of the project being within our drinking water supply area.
- Art moved for Tom M. and Cindy to draft and send a letter to the planning board, the council, and the Mayor. Tom V. seconded, and all voted in favor.

V. Adjournment

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- Tom V. moved to adjourn and Tom M. seconded. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.