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# AMESBURY

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**City of Amesbury**

**Lakes and Waterways Commission**

Meeting Minutes for September 21, 2023

7:00 PM

Location: Virtual Webcast Meeting

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

Completing Minutes: Art O'Dea

## 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 7:09 PM and stated a quorum has been met.

## II. Engineer's Update

### A. Engineer's Report

- Tom Murphy reported on a communication he received from the DPW staff managing the watershed. In that communication, it was noted the watershed levels are about at normal due to the incessant rain. Nearly every structure has boards or gates lowered to help drain levels back to normal pools. The heavy flow of water through the watershed presents challenges to the drinking water plant due to a decrease in raw water quality, resulting in higher than normal of chemical usage to treat the water. Winter drawdown has officially started.
- Tom Murphy noted that he was informed Joe Buckley, DPW Director, was planning to attend but a scheduling conflict arose. Tom expressed the importance of the participation of a representative from the DPW in future meetings.

## III. Conservation Commission

### A. Conservation Commission Activity

- No report was available

## IV. Current Business

### A. Membership Status

- Tom Murphy, as Assistant Chair, offered the position of Chair to the group; no one was interested at this time.
- Tom Murphy provided an update on the Commission member appointments that are due for re-appointment. Matt Chapin has requested to not be re-appointed thereby creating an additional vacancy, resulting in two vacant full members and one associate member. Tom offered to contact the city regarding a plan to fill the vacancies.

### B. Harbormaster

- Tom Murphy met with Chief Craig Bailey, who will act as an interim harbormaster until the position can be filled. While a job description has been refined, and job posting has been advertised, it is a challenging position to fill. Meanwhile, a framework for operation has been initiated, including establishment of fees, to fund the newly revised position.

C. Open Spaces Committee

- Tom Volper provided an update on the *ad hoc* Committee on open spaces. He noted the Conservation Commission distributed a final report on the principles and policies for stewardship of Amesbury conservation land, prepared for the City by William Giezentanner of Mass Audubon's Ecological Extension Service. The final version incorporated the recommendations of the Commission but did not fully address the concerns of the Commission to devote attention and resources towards a comprehensive management plan of the City's water resources.

D. 604(b) Grant

- Kate Mallory (by advance email) and Cindy Roberts provided an update on their interaction with consultants reviewing the City's stormwater management sites, as a part of the current phase of the 604(b) grant project. Kate assisted engineers' assessment of runoff issues along the Pow Wow River, including the Lake Gardner parking lot and various catch basins that dump straight into the river. Cindy assisted in the assessment of areas surrounding Lake Attitash, including the erosion surrounding the Archbrook culvert. The grant project is expected to locate and identify the top five opportunities for improvement of stormwater management sites. Cindy offered to inquire on the status of the project for the next meeting.

E. Solar Farm

- No further updates are available on the proposed solar farm on the Vynorious' parcel 45-4 proposed by Syncarpha Capital LLC. No follow-up has been received from Tom Murphy's communication to the Planning Board.

V. Waterbodies Status

A. Catch Basin and MS4 Issues

- No further update is available regarding the status of a review of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Stormwater Plan. As noted above, Tom Murphy has requested the DPW Director to participate in the Commission meetings to report on this, and other related matters.

B. Lake Attitash

- Cindy Roberts reported on the status of the pilot project to purchase, install, and evaluate phosphorus removal apparatus in six catch basins near and around Lake Attitash. Installation was delayed so that the DPW can first clean the storm drains as part of their periodic maintenance procedures. It is surmised the project will be postponed until next year.
- Cindy noted the annual treatment of invasive weeds on Lake Attitash did not occur because of the high water levels – treatment cannot take place unless the lake can be effectively isolated from the source of the city's water treatment plant.

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C. Clarks Pond

- Tom Murphy reported the water level to be high all season with no stormwater runoff issues observed.

VI. Adjournment

- The next meeting is planned for October 19, 2023 at 7:00 PM
- Cindy Roberts moved to adjourn, and Art O’Dea seconded with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.