ROGERS LAKE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF March 9, 2022

A meeting of the Rogers Lake Authority (RLA) was convened at 7:30 PM on March 9, 2022. The following members were present: Dennis Overfield joined by phone, Toni Phillips, Maneesha Joshi, and Mark Hastings. There were a number of local attendees, an estimate of 50, joined the meeting as well. The minutes were recorded by Nicole Krol.

The meeting of the Rogers Lake Authority was called to order at 7:32 pm by Mark Hastings.

The minutes from February were read aloud. A motion to accept the minutes from February was made by Toni, Maneesha second, motion passed unanimously.

Lake Patrol

None

Weeds

None

Budget

The board reviewed the current budget.

Old Business

CT Agricultural Experimental Station will present their lake study findings on April 13th during the RLA meeting. There have not been any new applications for the seasonal employment. It has been determined that the ranger program may not work well for the RLA because it is primarily for parks. A formal contract between Tom Mendelci and the town will need to be in place in order to rent dock space from Tom Mendelci this season.

New Business

Kevin Roberts, the new high school rowing coach, also from old Lyme Rowing Association attended the meeting to outline rowing activities on the lake this season. This spring rowers will primarily be out in the morning before 10am. High school rowers primarily in the afternoon from 3-5pm. Through the summer, there is a junior program available for those who wish to learn to row. Most if not all rowing will take place before 10am. The fall schedule is very similar to the spring. RLA will post a schedule of the races for those who wish to view the events. There were some concerns from the attendees, which included megaphone use early in the morning and wide breasted rowing. Are rowers required to learn the rules of boating? No, but instructors are. Are rowing safety boats exempt from traditional boat rules, they tend to go fast, are loud early in the morning and accidents may happen. Kevin expressed willingness to work on some of the concerns the public has and noted the rowing association is fully insured for any accidents which may occur.

In regard to the no wake buoys: Mark explained there is concern for safety in the narrow areas of the lake, no wake buoy placement would slow down boat traffic in those areas.

Below is a summary of the comments, concerns, opinions, and requests from local attendees about the no wake buoy permit obtained from DEEP by RLA. A recording of the public comment will be submitted along with the minutes recorded.

From the public:

- RLA does not have authority to install no wake buoys without a vote from the town of Old Lyme and the town of Lyme residents. An official town meeting should be conducted on the matter allowing residents to voice concern and have a vote on the topic.
- Creating a no wake zone in the proposed area would create safety issues. If the no wake buoys are placed, boats will only be able to tow tubes/skiers in circles in front of the dam or towards the Lyme side of the lake. This may cause boat congestion in those areas.
- Request that the permit be withdrawn immediately.
- There have not been any boating accidents or harm to anyone on the lake for generations, which indicates there is no need for a no wake zone.
- The boater volume is low and that boaters respect one another. Many felt it has been the least busy in years. The busiest time on the lake can be broken down to Saturdays and Sundays between 11-5 which indicates a no wake zone does not need to be implemented, instead RLA should patrol and educate boaters.
- Discussion should not take place on the topic until the entire public is properly notified.
- Why did Old Lyme's first selectman say he did not know anything about the no wake buoys?
- RLWSA attorney advised: the RLA does not have authority to apply for no wake buoys.
- The process in which the no wake buoys were decided on and obtained was not done properly.
- What are term limits for RLA?
- Continuous circular boat traffic may cause erosion to the islands and create sandbars.
- The RLA should improve the quality of staff which patrol the lake during the summer months.
- Request to view the approved no wake buoy permit was made, and the permit was viewed by a number of local attendees.

Responses from the RLA:

- The RLA is a board appointed by the towns of Lyme and Old Lyme.
- Notification of the no wake buoys is to be included in the RLA yearly newsletter.
- RLA is empowered by the towns of Lyme and Old Lyme to address safety and the environmental health of the lake.

- RLA will be checking with the town attorney and the selectman on the matter before proceeding with the no wake buoys. The towns of Lyme and Old Lyme were both copied in on the DEEP permit application sent via email.
- RLA board members are appointed by the town of Lyme and Old Lyme and are on three-year term, on a rotating basis.
- The permit was submitted in December of 2021, which is stated in the RLA December minutes.
- The RLA has been working on hiring qualified staff to work on the RLA boat this season.

The board reviewed quotes received in regards to the invasive Asian Clams. New England Aquatic Services proposed drawing down the lake, dredging, and mats. A quote of $7,150 for mat treatment was received. SWCA suggested hand harvesting the clams, their quote came in at $19,992. It is best to harvest the clams before the water reaches 60 degrees because that is when they start reproducing. Mark proposes the board go with SWCA to harvest the Asian Clams and go to the finance board about using funds within the RLA budget. The board will need to communicate with the Old Lyme Rowing Association to remove the docks when the clam harvesting begins. Attending a Parks and Rec meeting to explain the Asian Clam harvesting would be beneficial. The quote states all eradication efforts will take place between June 1st and July 31st. Dennis will see if the date of harvest can be moved up to when the water temperature is below 60 degrees. Toni made a motion to go with SWCA for the Asian Clam removal and for Mark to go to the town regarding the Asian clam harvesting quote, which was received on February 18, 2022, Maneesha second, motion passed unanimously.

RLA received one quote for the invasive weed treatment from Pond and Lake Connection. The quote includes three herbicides to treat the lake this season. They provided 5 different treatment times. Clipper, ProcellCOR, and Clearcast will be used during the treatments. SWCA was unable to submit a quote, if the board waits for a quote from them, there may not be enough time to finalize the treatment which needs to start in April to address the Curly Leaf plant. Dennis made a motion to approve the Pond and Lake Connection weed treatment quote provided on February 18, 2022, for $11,258, estimate #58970, Maneesha second, motion passed unanimously. Water quality testing is not due until April quotes will be received before then.

From the finance board meeting there were two variances, Asian clam treatment and an increase in the training budget line item. There was concern that the training budget would be used for just one person and if they would be a returning employee. Some of the training budget could be put to use for hiring marine trained officers to lake patrol this season.

Question: will the weed treatment require restricted use of the lake? No.

Dennis made a motion to allow Mark to go back to the finance board to reallocate training funds to hiring law enforcement to patrol this season, Maneesha second motion passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Toni, Maneesha second, motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting ended at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Krol, Secretary for RLA, nicole-krol@att.net

The next meeting of the Rogers Lake Authority will be on April 13, 2022, 7:30 PM at the Rogers Lake Clubhouse.