

ROGERS LAKE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF April 19, 2022

A meeting of the Rogers Lake Authority (RLA) was convened at Old Lyme Town Hall, 7:30 PM on April 19, 2022. The following members were present: Dennis Overfield, Toni Phillips, Maneesha Joshi, Jenell Janes and Mark Hastings. There were a number of local attendees, an estimate of 75, joined the meeting as well. The minutes were recorded by Nicole Krol.

The meeting of the Rogers Lake Authority was called to order at 7:30 pm by Dennis Overfield.

Announcement from Dennis: The RLA will conduct it's normal meeting which lasts around 90 minutes, 30 minutes public comment prior to the adjournment of the meeting, each person who wishes to speak will be given 3 minutes, speakers should provide their name and address. RLA will not be responding to questions, the RLA has published an update regarding the No Wake Buoys which is available on the town website as well as printed copies provided at this meeting.

The minutes from March were read aloud. A motion to accept the minutes from March was made by Toni, Mark second, Jenell obtained, motion passed unanimously.

Lake Patrol

None

Weeds

None

Budget

The board reviewed the current budget through the end of March. The budget is sufficient for employee salaries through the current fiscal year. A new sand bar buoy, boat maintenance expenses, and gas are expected expenditures to be covered in this fiscal year.

Old Business

Pond and Lake's treatment should be done by the end of June, with a cost of \$9,008. SWCA should have the clam harvesting complete by the end of July. SWCA said it was not possible to harvest the clams before the water temperature reached 60 degrees. Remaining training money budgeted will be allocated to hiring DEEP or town employees with marine experience to patrol the lake this season. Mark, Dick, and Dennis met with Lyme's selectman about insurance coverage for the RLA boat. Lyme will be responsible for the insurance coverage on the boat and the paperwork is being processed.

Last year's boat launch attendants were complemented by a DEEP employee, Yolanda, she stated the launch attendant was personable and only checked for horsepower which is what is expected. DEEP may have launch attendant training in May or June. Jenell made a motion to take advantage of the potential DEEP training if it becomes available in May/June, Maneesha second, motion passed unanimously. The board discussed pros and cons of having a boat launch

attendant. John voiced that having a launch attendant can be beneficial especially for those visiting from other towns.

DEEP will be reviewing the proposed revised ordinances made by the RLA and have major input. Maneesha read through the updated rough draft which included current ordinances and suggested changes. The section which addressed the no wake buoys was incomplete therefore Maneesha will send a draft to RLA members by April 22nd, the board will review and comment by April 27th. The goal is to send the revised ordinances to DEEP by May 2nd, a quick turn around is not expected.

New Business

The RLA patrol boat position was posted on Indeed and the board has received 9 applications. John is screening the applicants, three which he described have maritime experience. Four employees would be ideal to ensure there is adequate coverage throughout the summer. John would like to start training a week or two prior to Memorial Day weekend. All Indeed applicants will need to fill out applications from the town of Old Lyme to be considered for employment. Since the next meeting is scheduled for May 13th, Jenell made a motion for Dennis to circulate the applications via email to all board members and for Mark and John to conduct interviews and make final decisions, Maneesha second, motion passed unanimously.

The RLA boat dock contract was signed by all parties. The weed contracts were also signed by the selectmen and were filtered through finance.

Mark talked with Trooper Weber about having Old Lyme police ride along on the RLA boat. One of his officers is willing to do that but RLA needs to provide dates. DEEP Econ will be contacted to have local officers on the patrol boat as well.

The RLA boat will be serviced prior to launching for the season, John will schedule and take the boat in for service. May 5th, Dennis will get the boat from the public works garage. The goal is to have it ready by May 14th. Toni will order more shirts for lake patrol employees if needed.

Dennis postponed the presentation from UConn alewives' study and Connecticut Experimental Station.

SWCA has been doing the water quality testing, they have submitted a proposal for the next round of water quality testing; a cost of \$8,725 for two tests and a report. Their first sampling date would be in June. Dennis approached Yale, received a tentative draft, it includes testing twice a month, 15 samples, and testing has already started and will continue through October. Sampling will be conducted in one spot, the deep part of the lake, they do not test alkalinity (but other tests will identify a problem), a yearend report will be included. They have two decades of data and will graph it as well as give a presentation. The cost is \$8,000, the contract is being finalized, it will be reviewed at the next meeting.

E.coli is tested by Ledge Light at Hains park throughout the summer.

Yolanda from DEEP will be checking to see if the sign at the boat launch needs to be updated. The sand bar buoy needs to be replaced, a quote for \$450 was received, in addition to that there

will be a chain which needs to be purchased. Mark made a motion to purchase a new sand bar buoy, Toni second, motion passed unanimously.

The spring newsletter will be sent out before Memorial Day, lead time is about a week and a half once submitted. Jenell will have the newsletter drafted and a vote will take place at the next meeting. Weed treatment, new kayak assist bar at Hains Park, buoy information, and Asian clams are topics to be included.

A fishing tournament was held this past weekend, fisherman said it was slow, weigh ins were impressive, and a rare blue pickerel was caught. Alewives are almost nonexistent in the northeast end of the lake. 1,000 alewives were released into the lake. There was a change in offshore fishing disposal of small fish which may have had an impact.

Open for public comment:

Each board member introduced themselves:

Dennis Overfield, 119 Shore Drive, Lyme
Mark Hastings, 145 Blood Street
Toni Phillips, 165 Blood Street, Lyme
Jenell Janes 60 Grassy Hill Rd, Old Lyme
Maneesha Joshi, 15-1 Grassy Hill

Noted: John is an RLA employee and supervisor of the patrol boat.

Jeff Albert, 187 Blood Street - Will RLA be placing signage or buoys this year? 2024 would be the earliest buoys could be placed.

David Evers, - Presented the RLA board with a petition which includes almost 200 signatures. The misconception comment which was made: the March 9th meeting held about the buoys there was no misconception of what the RLA was trying to do, trying to no wake ¼ of the lake all the way through for boats and jet skis, now there has been a change. There has been a change in the original buoy permit application. Who came up with the foot figures on the buoy area? The numbers are wrong they need to be cleared up. Scenario 5: the distance between the shore and Picnic Island is 230 feet, it is not. Tim King gave his time to Dave. When heading south with a boat coming from the north, we've been able to turn off there to make it safer though the pinch zone. It has been this way for over 50 years. Shutting down the area is creating a safety issue. People bought houses on the lake where they know that there were boats and jet skis. Kids are having fun. The no wake zone is going to cause jet skiers to go in circles on each end of the lake. A proper survey should be conducted. All ordinances need to be voted on by the public.

Liz Sunshine, 121 Blood Street- Lives on the south side of the north end and will be significantly impacted by the no wake buoys. Water skiers would prefer to make a full run of the lake versus only being able to go in circles due to a no wake zone. She is concerned that there will be traffic in singled out areas causing erosion, noise pollution, increased traffic in certain areas, this will cause accidents to happen because these are area where people drop their anchors and swim. Creating a no wake zone will actually cause accidents. There are no points on the lake which are less than 200ft wide. By state law boats should be able to travel at speed. This proposal is like

making I95 a 5 mile an hour zone because of a couple of motorcycles. The statue from the Lyme town hall states RLA has authority to make recommendations for action, the town's people have the final vote. This has been a massive overstep of the RLA.

David Bourne- 31 Pin Oak Trail- Lives in the cove west of Picnic Island. 15 years ago, closest measurement he made was 245 feet, the measurement was taken when the lake was frozen. His children were disappointed with the RLA's proposed no wake zone. Weed growth may be exasperated in the areas where there is no boat traffic. The counterclockwise direction is the safest route and method for all boaters. Education is important in making sure people know the rules of the lake. Prior interactions with RLA have been good, an interaction with DEEP was unprofessional. Boaters should have respect for the RLA patrol.

Mike Swaney 14 Town Woods Rd- Has lived in Old Lyme for many years. In regard to the dimensions of the lake, an A2A survey and engineering is the only way no wake buoys will be voted on. Google Earth is not a reliable source for survey information. Water skiing at 45mph is standard, a speed limit is ridiculous. 40mph would not allow water skiing to happen and needs to be reviewed.

Robert Harris- Oak Street- Grew up skiing on the lake, there is not enough room for boaters to stay in one area without causing issues. Recommended having a representative from every association around the lake as well as the coast guard auxiliary to help with creating new ordinances. It was disappointing that the RLA put off the last meeting and expressed concern over the invasive Asian clams.

Morgan, 121 Blood Street- Concerned about the increased traffic in the northwest end will hurt the animals who utilize that area.

Roger Crampton, 6 Grassy Hill Rd- Please stop trying to pass ordinances, these are not good boating regulations you are promoting but instead against boaters. New boating traffic may cause erosion.

Laura Dean Fraser- 5 Rogers Lake Trail- All for safety on the lake, the patrol boat could be doing a better job, there is need for more training and skill so that lake patrol can better inform boaters and educate people on the lake. At one point in time there were police officers who patrolled the lake. Patrol boat operators need to be working and not sunning themselves. Boat launch staff should be educating those who are accessing the lake. Everyone should be working together to address safety issues and solve problems.

Dave Jewett, 11 Grassy Hill – The next meeting is May 11th, ordinances are being sent to DEEP May 2nd, can the public view the document before it is sent to DEEP? The section about the no wake zone was left out and this of concern.

Jinny King, 37 Rogers Lake Trail- Concerned about property values being diminished because of recreational loss due to the new proposed ordinance. Instead of the speed limit proposal it seems important to have a boat launch attendant to manage horsepower. Seawalls will chip away in certain areas if the boat traffic pattern changes. Please listen to input from the people who utilize the lake and have many years of experience on the lake.

Christena Evers- 15 Oceola Trail- There is no mention of ordinance revision on the projects and reports section of the RLA website. Safety issues which may arise from a no wake zone was highlighted. RLA needs to get the right people on patrol and at the boat launch to educate boaters in safe practices instead of changing ordinance. The boat congestion is going to make it unsafe for a skier who gets dropped, they instantly become a swimmer. With boats circling in the same direction that swimmer will be in danger. Please listen and consider the publics concerns for the no wake zone ordinance.

Mark Sentola, 70 Grassy Hill Rd- Once boats are going in a circular fashion, congestion will be an issue between boats, kayaks, row boats, and swimmers. This will make it worse than it already is.

Sue Coffee, 51 Hickory Rd- Works with DEEP, if the public is having issues on the lake or at the boat launch because someone is breaking the law, call DEEP at 860-424-3333 and they will come. Take a picture when reporting instances. Invasives are becoming an issue, boats and trailers should be checked before launching. Circular boat traffic is not going to be good for skiers or the lake shores.

Thomas Penfield, 8 Blackwell Rd – People who operate boats on the lake are responsible for their boats and do everything they can to avoid collision. The RLA was set up to give suggestions to the towns, not to legislate. The RLA has overstepped their bounds and the board members should consider putting in their resignations.

A motion to adjourn was made by Dennis, Toni second, motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting ended at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

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