

Farm Pond Advisory Committee

Minutes of January 10, 2011

Members present: Catherine Rocchio, Melinda O'Neill, Jackie Martin, Matt Neutra, Pat Cassell, Steve Scrimshaw, Bob Murchison. Associate member present: Pat LeBlanc

The meeting was called to order at: 7:40 p.m. by Chair, Catherine Rocchio.

The Minutes of November 22, 2010 were approved with the following corrections. Remove Deb Barnet from the list of members present, correct spelling of Maryellen Salamone's name, the last sentence under (a) Financial should read: January 8, 2011 is the day that the Selectmen are meeting to discuss the budget. Under (c) change to Pat will follow up. Pat Cassell requested that final minutes be disseminated to the committee.

2. Budget Process:

Jeanne Guthrie cut some money (an aide), from the budget and took some money from expenses to make the numbers work. She suggested starting Rangers later in the season and offering the out of town lottery earlier. Catherine presented the budget to the Selectman on Saturday, January 8, 2011 and it was well received. She noted that we may need to raise ticket prices next season and should discuss the metrics we could use for the process.

3. COA / DAC and disabled access:

The DAC agrees that the purchase of a golf cart is a non-starter.

DAC asked FPAC to consider:

- a. "Senior only" parking for 2 spaces along the boat ramp and adding "S" to senior stickers.
- b. Is there a logistic way people could be dropped off at the beach by their driver, who would then back out the emergency road and park in a normal space?
- c. Clear a flat path to the beach at the south end of the auxiliary lot.

Discussion followed.

b. Not an option because the emergency access road is not to be used for this purpose. It is for emergency vehicles only.

a. Seniors are age 60 and older. Not all seniors are disabled. The designated handicap spots should be sufficient to provide the access that DAC is seeking. There were concerns about management, oversight and reality of the request achieving the goal. Anyone over 60 could snag the spots. How would we keep the spots available for the folks who have difficulty?

Motion: Bob Murchison moved that FPAC not support a. (the senior parking concept) because of complexity, but if DAC feels that the existing spaces are not properly allocated, FPAC would consider moving the spaces. Matt Neutra seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

c. Discussion: FPAC considered the expense and the isolated nature of the path. FPAC would first like to see how the rehabilitated cart path works out.

4. Public Education Concerns/Outreach:

Melinda O'Neill shared her conversation with resident Artemis Joukowsky regarding the hosting of a gathering of Pond abutters to educate and work on getting them on board with Pond protection.

FPAC talked about the need to educate and try to get folks to understand the concerns about fertilizer. The Event should be focused on one area (phosphorus) for example. FPAC needs to find a person to provide the talk.

Melinda will start a draft proposal of the occasion and email it to members.

5. Pump House:

Discussion: The roof is collapsing. The building needs to be repaired or taken down. Bob Murchison suggested asking Walter Avallone (Building Inspector) to weigh in on the problem. Pat Cassell sent an email to the Historical Commission to see if the pump house has any historical significance. Pat also suggested that Robert Johnson, who is on the fire department and a civil engineer, might have some worthwhile input. Cost is an issue. FPAC thinks demolition may be more expensive. Bob suggested that getting Walter out there to look at it would force the town to make a decision because it is a structure falling apart. Bob will talk to Walter.

6. Water Testing:

Pat Cassell provided a packet of information that contained:

- a. List of Farm Pond Water Quality Tests and Results for 2010.
- b. Goose count on Farm Pond for the years 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.
- c. Attendance Activity (Numbers of cars and people) at Farm Pond in 2010 and dates when Beach Closing notices were posted.

Summary of data and discussion:

Both Beach closures followed multiple days when large numbers of people were on the beach. Bacteria levels rise with warm temperatures, lots of people, and large numbers of geese. Large numbers of people are also a safety issue. It was noted that the test results are reported to the Selectmen's office first because the Selectmen hold the contract. The Board of Health Administrator is advocating for a change in this process so that the BOH receives test results, especially failures, in a more timely manner and according to State law.

Matt Neutra cautioned how we interpret the data as presented and that a scientific conclusion cannot be drawn from the data presented. Matt also suggested that the bacteria test results should fall under the purview of the BOH. Catherine and Pat Cassell will go to the next BOH meeting to discuss testing procedures.

7. Overcrowding:

Catherine was put on the spot about this issue when she was presenting the budget to the Selectmen recently. Maryellen Salamone gave Catherine her recommendation for a pay-per-use. Town Counsel says the Town can regulate use of the reservation, as we do with the parking lot. Jeanne Guthrie received two complaints about overcrowding last season. There are concerns about pay-per-use from some residents; i.e. using beach tags. It was noted that kids are being dropped off in the street, which is a safety issue. Having people come to the reservation without paying for the service is also an issue.

Catherine talked about Singing Beach in Manchester by the Sea, and how they manage similar issues. She requested that the committee review her DRAFT plan to address overcrowding so it can be discussed at another meeting.

8. Notice:

It was noted that Maryellen Salamone, Waterfront Director, has given her notice, and has made some recommendations for her replacement.

9. Water Quality Testing:

Tom Trainor has been invited to our February meeting to talk about Water Quality Testing.

10. COLAP (Congress of Lakes and Ponds) Conference:

It was noted that this conference is scheduled for 1/29/11. Who will be attending this year? Steve Scrimshaw said it would be interesting for Farm Pond abutters to attend. Bob Murchison will pass the information along to his neighbors.

The next meeting: is scheduled for February 7, 2011. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Melinda O'Neill
Acting Secretary