



# Big Alum Lake Association, ALL BALA Meeting

MINUTES

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 2019

10 AM TO 12 PM.

ST. ANNES' PARISH MEETING ROOM

<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<p><b>Officers of BALA</b>                  Chuck Roy (President)                  Mark Minnucci (Vice President)                  Debbie Gran (Treasurer)                  Jennifer Bailey (Recording Clerk)                  Lisa Sanderson (Corresponding Secretary) present via phone                  Jeff Buchanan (BALA Board Member at large)</p> <p><b>Committee Chairs and Member(s) – At- Large</b>                  A. Membership Committee – Jill Roy                  B. Recreational Committee – Mari Roy                  C. Dam/Drainage – Ken Gajewski                  D. Environmental Committee- Bruce Gran                  E. Boating Committee – Matt Kibbe                  F. History Committee – John Puffer                  G. Fishing Committee – Robert Scobel                  H. Nominating Committee – Tracy Murphy                  I. Engineering Committee – Tom Clark</p> <p><b>Big Alum Membership At Large</b></p>
<b>CALLED TO ORDER</b>	10:02 AM
<b>MATERIALS</b>	Agenda; Meeting Minutes from 08/16/18 Meeting; Treasurer's Report; By-Laws of Big Alum Lake Association; SLAC Information; Watershed Information
<b>RECORDING CLERK</b>	Jennifer C. Bernardo-Bailey

Meeting Called to Order

**1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

C. ROY

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Quorum determination.	Chuck Roy
A. BALA President Chuck Roy determined a Quorum was present. By bylaws, 1 officer and 15 members are considered a quorum. There were 50 members present, representing 30 properties according to registration figures.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None	C. Roy, BALA President	

**2. REVIEW OF AGENDA**

C. ROY

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Agenda Presented.	Chuck Roy
Chuck Roy reviewed the agenda items, and stated it was a rather lengthy agenda, and that he expected the meeting to last for 2 hours. He felt the issues being presented were important, and that the Membership needed the information to be presented in order to vote intelligently. He asked the various Chairs to be as brief as possible while still getting their message across.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Move forward through the Agenda items.	C. Roy, President	N/A

**3. REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM 08/16/2019**

C. ROY

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Meeting Minute Review from 08/16//2019	Chuck
The Meeting Minutes from the 08/16/2019 meeting had been posted on the web site prior to the meeting, and hard copies were available at the meeting. Chuck asked if there were any changes that needed to be made from the Membership's perspective. Tom Clark made the motion to approve minutes as presented, and Barbara Hitchcock seconded. There was no further discussion, and all in attendance unanimously approved the minutes.		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Completed and minutes will be uploaded to website.	Lisa Sanderson for uploading to website	Not determined at this time

**4. REVIEW OF TREASURER REPORT**

DEBBIE GRAN/C. ROY

DISCUSSION	Treasures Report and Financial Review	Debbie Gran/Chuck
A.	Debbie Gran presented the financials to the Membership in the <b>income statement/ balance sheet</b> format of bookkeeping that the Board of Directors had previously accepted, and voted into use. Deb thanked Janet Garon for all her help in transitioning the books. Debbie reviewed recent income from dues, and expenses through the end of June. She reported that the bulk of membership dues had been paid, and that some are still trickling in. Total income from dues to date was \$3250. A balance sheet was provided on site in a printed version, and projected on a monitor at the meeting for review.	
B.	Debbie Gran discussed the amounts in the savings and checking accounts shown on the balance sheet. Debbie, reviewed the CD's currently maturing in the reserve fund and discussed the need to move some of the funds into cash to be prepared for some of the upcoming projects involving the lake watershed. Others will be reinvested as they mature. Chuck Roy reported that the fiscal year of BALA has been changed to align with the calendar year to simplify reporting and keeping track of yearly dues payments. The BOD approved this change in a prior BOD meeting.	
C.	Rick Predella made a motion to approve the financial report as presented, and Bruce Gran seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the vote was called. The motion was unanimous in favor of accepting the report.	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Reviewed and accepted Treasury Report	Debbie Gran	Completed

## 5. REVIEW OF BALA COMMITTEES

DISCUSSION	Round robin to review of each committee present by their representatives.
1.	<b>Membership Committee</b> – Jill Roy, reported that membership dues forms were sent out to the Membership by mail and e-mail in January. To date, 137 out of 174 potential member have paid their dues. Jill reported that payment of memberships dues is strong, and she hopes to collect the remaining dues over the next few months. “ We are on track for this year’s budget.” Jeff Buchanan brought up the need to increase the membership dues. Chuck Roy agreed, and said that the membership fees do indeed need to be increased, as they were decreased by half a few years back. Chuck Roy said that, “at present, the Association is in the negative by around \$3000.00 a year on the operating budget under the present dues structure”. Tom Clark mentioned that BALA does have a substantial amount of money in it’s “reserve fund”, but that the “reserve fund” is earmarked for specific projects that help keep the lake clean and weed free. Chuck stated that it is essential that the Association break even on its administration functions and social functions. Chuck said he would recommend that dues go back to \$50.00 per property starting next January. This will be brought to vote later on in the agenda. Jill said she would be sending out Past Due Notices to those Members that haven’t paid yet in the upcoming weeks.
2.	<b>Recreational Committee</b> – Mari Roy thanked all the hard working members of the Recreation Committee. Mari stated the mission statement of the BALA Recreational Committee, which is to promote the social wellbeing of the Lake Community, and to do so in such a way as to break even on the operating budget whenever possible. The Recreation committee does not consider themselves a fundraiser for BALA, but they are the social arm that promotes Lake cohesiveness and sense of community. Mari explained that the feedback from the Lake survey was extremely helpful in determining the events the Committee will focus on in the future and will guide the Committee in their various sponsored events. Mari said, “at this point the BALA Gala, walk around the lake, winter meet ups, kayak meet ups, and Boat Parade were the most well received events”. Mari brought flyers to market the BALA GALA and left them to be distributed. Mari asked if anyone knows of anyone who wished to donate for the BALA GALA, and to let the Committee know. Mari said that they are excited for the year to come.
3.	<b>Dam/Drainage</b> – Ken Gajewski, reported that he opened he dam on 11/1 and it took some time for the lake to go down with all the rain we had over the past summer. The dam was closed the last week of December. Ken said the Lake is still high, and there is plenty of water going over dam. Ken stated “we’re in in good shape for summer”.
4.	<b>Environmental Committee/SLAC Update</b> - Bruce Gran reported that there has been a lot of rain and run off this season, and lakeside residents should be careful of the fertilizers they, or their landscaping companies, use on their lawns. The nutrients are washing into the Lake and these nutrients promote algae growth. Bruce stated there is no spray treatment to kill the algae. It will simply go away once the nutrients are used up, providing more nutrients are not continually added. We need to cut back on the various nutrients in our fertilizers, most notably phosphorus, if we want a clear lake. Bruce had handouts to pass out, and the information on fertilizers will be posted on the website. Bruce mentioned that he is in contact with an environmental professor, Dave Mitchel, his “go to guy”, through his association with SLAC (Sturbridge Lakes Advisory Committee) to help him give information and advice to the Membership. Bruce also reminded the Membership that algae can turn toxic and may result in the shut down of the Lake to swimming. Cedar Lake had an issue last year with Blue Green Algae that resulted in a two week shut down. Since 2012 it is against the law for any landscaping professionals or homeowners to apply any materials with phosphorous to their land unless they have submitted a soil sample to UMASS for approval. The only thing your lawns needs is nitrogen. South Pond just got approval for an alum injection treatment in the lake to help control the algae. Bruce said we are fortunate to have natural alum in our lake that helps control the algae. South Pond has to spend somewhere around 392K for this alum injection, a cost we could well do without! Weed treatment is Monday, July 8 <sup>th</sup> . Weed treatment was delayed because a previous survey of the lake in May showed no weed growth at that time due to the cold weather this spring. However, since then the weeds have become plentiful. The areas around the Hutchinsons cottage and John Puffer’s cottage have an abundance of weed growth, some of it invasive. Bruce has a list from UMASS on info to treat lawns safely on lakes. He is glad to share this information with the Membership. Bruce had a sit down with Josh, the engineer who applies the weed treatments to the lake, and they are considering a midsummer treatment to reduce invasive weeds that have been growing in some areas. This is a minimal cost to the BALA. Bruce explained that if members have the non-invasive type of weeds, and don’t like the weeds, they could always pull them out by hand. They will not spread by pulling them out and drying them out.
5.	<b>Watershed Engineering Committee</b> – Tom Clark, updated the Membership on the work of the Watershed Committee. The Committee is a new committee created to help control run off from the surrounding watershed from running into the Lake. The committee consists of 6 members from various areas around the lake, each representing a different section of the Lake. Tom Faxon, Jr. covers Mt Dan Road, Matt Kibbe covers Trail Road, Les Sargeant, a civil engineer with experience on drainage issues, is an at large member of the team, Dave Belrose represents Big Alum Road and Clarke Road Extension, and Paul Roy represents Paradise Lane area. Tom presented his agenda of his report to the Membership. Tom had three engineering firms come out to walk the Lake and bid on creating an engineering plan to rectify the drainage trouble spots based on order of priority. The Town requires this engineering plan before any actual work can be started. Tom presented a site overview starting at the Dam and

going clockwise for identifying the areas of concern, Area #1 is the grade up from dam which shows erosion after storm, but there is a swamp area on opposite side of road that is collecting a lot of that drainage, Area #2 is existing drainage on Mt Dan Road that was put in place in 2003. This work was done in the past, and paid for by the Mt. Dan Rd. Association with help from the Town on materials and from BALA funding. The new Town Engineer, Butch Jackson, has promised to re-grade the road away from the lake so that water runs into catch basins. Mt. Dan Rd. Association is also funding the repair and cleaning out of some of the old drainage culverts this coming summer. Area #3 is the pumping station for sewers building. Tom has been working with Butch on grading the road to funnel run off water into the existing drainage ditch that de-silts the run off before it goes into the lake. Area #4 is a small culvert at end of Paradise Lane gate where water drains from mountain. This is functional at this time, but filled with muck, so it will need to be cleaned out. Area #5 is similar to #4, a culvert under road that goes into a brook and drains to lily pond area of lake. This area too needs to be cleaned out to be functional. #6 is also on Paradise Road. It is a leaching area, and is kept functional by the Paradise Road Association. Area #7 is the swamp at north end of lake, which takes all drainage from the hill behind it and settles it. There is an underground drain through Joe Morin Property, which flows into lake from there. Bruce Gran mentioned we have the slowest refill regeneration rate of lake water of all lakes in Massachusetts. Spring feedings through clay soil filters cleans water, but is slow to regenerate. Mari Roy mentioned that there is a presentation on the web site, prepared by Tom that shows most of these areas. Tom mentioned areas #6 and #7 are both functional and working. Area #8 is the bottom of the hill at North End. BALA appropriated 6K in 2003 and again in 2005 for work to be done. However, the work was never done because all the landowners could not agree on the project. This has changed according to Tom, and all the landowners are on board with the newly proposed project. The area at the bottom of the hill at the north end is the worst area of the lake for runoff. The lake actually gets cloudy over the entire north end cove after a large rainstorm. Area #9 is repair of swamp drainage on Lake Road. The Town repaired the drain culvert that drains the swamp by Roy Road 4-5 years ago, but this needs to be look at. Last area is area #10, the road and beach area of the Italian Club. The drainage from the hill behind the road washes the road out and into the lake. Some work has been done in the past, but this area needs to be relooked at to prevent drainage into the Lake. Berton, Meclure and Jalbert engineering were all asked to provide a bid for an engineering study. Jalbert chose to not bid. Berton and Meclure came in with strong proposals and recommendation. Berton came into quote for \$7k and \$5k for areas #8 and #10 respectively, while Meclure was \$16 and \$12k for same areas. Lisa Sanderson asked if these quotes were the cost of the repair itself? Tom and Chuck both stated that these are just for the engineering studies. Chuck than mentioned that he feels that members should not vote for the engineering studies to be done if they are not committed to having the follow up work done. Chuck said we need the engineering studies in order to entertain bids for the actual construction. Chuck reminded the members this is not a one-year effort; it is part of our commitment to an ongoing effort to keep the lake clean and algae free. Question by Anne Puffer on Mt Dan Road, stating they have issues on Mt Dan road so will the funds be allocated to these other areas? Tom mentioned that Mt. Dan Rd. is already under current contract for repairs, and the road drainage will need continual upkeep. That area doesn't need an engineering plan but a repair plan at present. Obviously, road repair and lake drainage are closely related. BALA's mandate is to keep the lake clean but we will look at each of these projects on a case-by-case basis and will consider funding on lake impact areas. Tom Faxon, Jr. is working on that repair plan and is working on a 5-year plan looking for grants. This can take 2-3 years to pursue. Tom Clark's recommendations is to move forward with engineering studies for areas #8 and #10, and to start the land owner approval process on the south end. These are the areas that are impacting the lake the most from a drainage perspective.

6. **Nominating Election and Bylaws Committee** – Tracy Murphy said the Nominating Committee has nothing to report this year, but the Bylaws Committee has a couple of small recommended changes. He reported that he and Jeff Buchanan modernized the bylaws. They provided a succession plan for officers should that ever become necessary. That option states that the majority of the Board could appoint a new president, or any one of the officers, or board members at large, as needed at any point that one of those positions become vacant. The term of the successor will be until the next Membership meeting, when an election will be held to fill the vacancy position. Dues are Payable in March/April versus July per the by-laws. Changed the specification of the meeting dates. Tracy Murphy asked if all Board Members are willing to stay on and fill the rest of their term and all members said yes. Motion to accept changes to the by-laws was made by Tom Clark, and seconded by Deb Gran. There was no further discussion, and the motion was moved to vote. The Membership unanimously accepted the changes.
7. **Boating Committee** – Matt Kibbe, put in the buoys. Matt reported that he had to clean up the island. That someone made a make shift seat and they used it for toileting. It was discussed that this is public state owned property but we would like people to treat the island with respect. We can't police it officially, but we will continue to provide oversight of the island.
8. **History Committee** – John Puffer spoke about soliciting more Historical information on lake for the lake history page. He would like Members to submit interesting stories of their lake history. They can be recent stories from current lake life or stories from our youth, and growing up on the lake. Lisa reported they hand picked 10-12 families to write about how they came to Big Alum and their history here. Lisa stated that no one has responded to this request yet to date, and she will reconnect with these families to retry to ask them to do this.
9. **Fishing Committee** – Robert Scobel –reported fishing is good and fish are doing swimmingly.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Meeting Packet to be put on website and email follow up.	Lisa Sanderson	ASAP

## 6. OLD BUSINESS AND NEW BUSINESS COMBINED

C. ROY

DISCUSSION	Chuck Roy to review any old business.
A.	By-law changes were already presented during the committee reports and the changes were voted on at that time and approved.
B.	Chuck Roy presented the Rec. Committee budget, which had already been approved last August, in the new financial format. The 2020 budget will be voted on at the August meeting.
C.	The new BALA logo was presented to the Membership for review. The Membership liked the new logo in general. Chuck asked for a motion to accept the new logo as the official logo of BALA. Jeff Buchanan so moved, Mari Roy seconded, and with no further discussion, the vote was taken and the new logo passed unanimously.
D.	Chuck Roy asked the membership to raise the dues to \$50.00 per property per year. He said this would get the Association to a break-even point for social events and operating costs. He reminded the Membership that, if they wanted to proceed with some of the plans presented, there would still need to be more funds raised to replenish the reserve fund as it was spent down. Tom

Clark mentioned that the Board had discussed a volunteer "lake betterment fund" that people could contribute to help with the projects accepted by the Membership as worth pursuing. Chuck asked for a motion to increase the dues by 25.00 to a total of 50.00. Rick Predalla made the motion and Tom Clark seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

- E. Membership preference on dues was to send the first notice out by e-mail and subsequent notices would go out by mail.
- F. Tom Clark, having already made his presentation during the Committee reports, asked the chair if we could move to a vote on funding for the engineering study that had been recommended. Jennifer Bailey discussed that before the decision goes to vote that she wanted to remind everyone that both Tom and Chuck have done a tremendous job in ensuring that the watershed committee looked at the entire lake, and has the total betterment of the lake as its guiding principle. Jen said "peoples' concerns are, is my area going to be fixed"? However, the philosophy of this committee is to look at the entire lake and to prioritize which areas need to be fixed first. Eventually the committee's plan is to fix all the areas by priority. Jennifer Bailey stated that what we are discussing and voting on here is an engineering study that addresses the two worst areas of run-off into the lake. She said a good example is when building a house, are you willing to pay an architect for plans to build a solid house. Janet Garon also brought up the example Old Towne Way development and their drainage, which has had an impact on the lake. She is concerned about other new developments that could impact drainage into the lake. Chuck Roy mentioned that this is why the watershed committee has been created to work with the Town Conservation Board to look at future projects with this run off in mind. Janet Garon feels we need a show of force to prevent further development. Chuck Roy responded, stating that he doesn't think that we can stop development, but we can work with them to prevent drainage issues to protect the lake. Janet expressed concern that there are several properties, including the Italian Club that do not pay BALA dues. Janet feels they should pay. Chuck Roy mentioned that we are not a homeowners association and therefore we don't have the authority to enforce payment of dues. However, this does not change the issue of the engineering study that is on the table. Jeff Buchanan spoke in favor of having the engineering study completed to provide more information on what needs to be done and how much it will cost. This will help us to know what the costs are for future debate. Jeff made clear, he feels we have 75K dollars in reserve to be used for lake betterment. Some of those funds should be used to address the immediate issues affecting the lake's clarity. Jeff said, that as an "estimate" if your willing to spend maybe \$35k in repairs than vote for the study to be completed, but if your not willing to use \$35k of the reserve funds, than don't vote for that engineering study as it will be a waste of money. Scott Sanderson stated he would like to know the cost of the project before voting. Chuck Roy told Scott that this is exactly why we need the study; it's the only way to get accurate and competitive bids. Tom Clarke mentioned that he did pressure the engineering companies to give him a ball park estimate of what they feel the areas could cost with a ROM – Rough Order of Magnitude and for the north end it could cost \$20k, south end \$7k. Tom Clarke than stated that he is working with the town to provide materials for the repairs to help lower the costs of the project. Scott Sanderson asked what if the engineering study finds that a homeowner has created drainage issues from a construction project, or paving their driveway incorrectly, etc., who will be responsible for the repairs. Chuck said, in that case, the Committee would have to seek counsel from the appropriate Town authority. Lisa Sanderson felt some of the grey area would be taken away if we could create some guidelines for which projects BALA will undertake. Tom Clarke stated that as we gain experience in this area we can modify the decision making process in the future. Mark Smith of 186 Lake Rd spoke that there is no other issue that is more important for the Lake and BALA, as it's all about water quality when it comes to property value. Dan Molta Sr, of 2 South Paradise Lane, spoke and stated that obviously we couldn't vote on every issue that's been brought up this morning, but he felt that we do need to vote to get this engineering projects started. Chuck Roy asked if that was a motion and he said yes. Dan Molta Sr made the motion to vote to complete engineering study, and Dennis Murphy seconded the motion. Under discussion Janet Garon asked how the voting was going to occur. Chuck Roy stated that it is ONE vote per Property owned and that have paid their dues. Another question was asked that if the engineering study costs was included in the total amount of money the Association is willing to spend out of reserves. Chuck Roy stated yes. Chuck Roy clarified that we are only voting on the cost of the engineering study at this time, and in future another vote will occur on repair costs. There was no further discussion and the motion was moved to vote. The vote was unanimous in favor of the study.
- G. Chuck Roy than spoke about the old Friends of the Lake Award given to people who do nice things for the Lake Community. He asked if the Members thought this should be brought back? Comments from the floor were that, yes everyone would like this award brought back. Motion to create Friends of the Lake was made by Deb Gran and seconded by Tracey Murphy. Lisa Sanderson asked who would comprise the committee, and suggested the membership committee to manage this. Chuck Roy felt that who would manage the award should not be part of the motion and would be determined later. He called the motion to reestablish the Friends of the Lake award to a vote. Chuck Roy asked for all in favor and all present were in favor.
- H. Chuck Roy moved the agenda along to **open discussion**.
- a. First item: the role of the recreation committee. The Rec Committee has submitted its mission statement to the Board for approval, and it will be posted on the web site for all to review. Barbara Hitchcock spoke for the Committee, and felt that, in the past the Rec. Committee has been viewed as a fundraiser for BALA. With the new mandate of BALA to foster lake relation, the Rec. Committee would like to focus on putting on events that help achieve this goal. Chuck Roy said he has no problem with this new direction, as long as the Membership agrees. However, he said he would hold the Rec. Committee to a break-even budget for all their events. The Association simply cannot afford to fund these events. The BALA Gala should at least pay for itself and make the few extra dollars needed for the remaining few events. Naturally, if the Gala falls short of this goal for some reason, the money will have to come from the operating account as was done last year. But, that is not the goal. Lisa Sanderson spoke of the Gala and said they are in need of donations from members to the auction in order to increase revenues from the Gala.
  - b. Chuck Roy asked if there really was a need for two Membership meetings in the summer? Chuck recommended canceling the July meeting and making the August meeting the official meeting of BALA as is dictated in the by-laws. A special meeting could always be held in July if the need arose Chuck pointed out. Most members present want the two meetings. Mark Minnucci stated that the benefit of two meetings is if you miss one meeting you can attend the other. Janet Garon mentioned that two meetings are needed because the by-laws state election of officers occurs at the August meeting, and the July meeting is needed in case we have to table an issue in the August meeting that needs to be discussed prior to the next year August meeting. A motion was made to hold the July meeting, but move it to a weekend in July that does not interfere with the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday weekend. The motion was made by Mark Smith and seconded by Janet Garon. There was no further discussion. The motion was brought to a vote with 2 "no's" and the remaining Membership in favor.

- c. Chuck Roy mentioned that everyone is responsible for items on their docks. He found a 25 lb. light floating in lake and worried about boats and kids tubing. Chuck also mentioned that people cannot drop skis or anything else in the middle of lake, there are a lot of people on lake and these items can become a hazard
- d. Chuck Roy asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Dan Molta, and seconded by Tracy Murphy. The meeting was adjourned at 12:08pm. With all in favor.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Electronic Packet to be created and distributed.	Chuck Roy	N/A

**7. NEXT MEETING**

C. ROY

DISCUSSION	Chuck Roy discussed meeting frequency needs and next date.	
August all BALA meeting to be held on August 17 <sup>th</sup> .		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
To distribute meeting date.	Chuck Roy to gather and decide.	N/A

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

C. ROY

DISCUSSION	BALA President, Chuck Roy closed out the meeting.	
Meeting adjourned at 12:08 PM		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
None as completed	N/A	N/A