



Big Alum Lake Association

Fiskdale, MA

Big Alum Lake Association, BALA Full Board Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2020 @ 6:52 PM

HELD VIA ZOOM

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| ATTENDEES | <p><u>Officers of BALA</u> Chuck Roy (President) Jeff Buchanan (Vice President) Debbie Gran (Treasurer) Jennifer Bernardo-Bailey (Recording Clerk) Lisa Sanderson (Corresponding Secretary)</p> <p><u>Committee Chairs and Member(s) – At- Large</u> A. Membership Committee – Mari Roy B. Dam Committee – Ken Gajewski C. Environmental Committee- Bruce Gran D. Boating Committee – Matt Kibbe E. Nominating Committee – Mark Smith F. Watershed Drainage Committee – Tom Clark</p> |
| | 6:52 PM |
| MATERIALS | Agenda; Membership meeting minutes from August all Membership Meeting, Treasurer's P&L Report; Boating Rules and Updates; Watershed Drainage Update |
| RECORDING CLERK | Jennifer Bailey |

1. REVIEW OF AGENDA

CHUCK ROY

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| DISCUSSION | Agenda Review. | Chuck Roy |
| | Review of agenda items and meeting minutes from last Board meeting | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| Review of Agenda items and meeting minutes from August meeting. | Chuck Roy, President | N/A |

2. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

CHUCK ROY

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| DISCUSSION | Quorum determination. | Chuck Roy |
| | A. Quorum was determined. 11/14, Executive and Full Board Members present. B. Chuck Roy reported that 8/14 is needed to obtain Quorum attained as voting members in attendance, for this meeting, Nov 10th, 2020. | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| None-completed; BALA President, Chuck Roy determined there was quorum present to proceed with voting needs for meeting. | Chuck Roy, President | N/A |

3. MEETING MINUTES

CHUCK ROY & JENNIFER BERNARDO-BAILEY

A. All Member August Meeting Minutes were provided as August Board meeting minutes and reviewed as the meeting minutes to August Board Meeting. 1st motion to accept meeting minutes by Mark Smith, 2nd by Lisa Sanderson and accepted by all members of Board Present with no abstains.

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| None- completed; Meeting minutes were approved. | Chuck Roy | N/A |

4. REVIEW OF TREASURY REPORT

D. GRAN

| DISCUSSION | Review of Treasury Report | |
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| | Debbie Gran | |
| <p>A. Debbie Gran, BALA Treasurer presented the financial report which included the reimbursement for the purchase of the zoom pro plan to be used for meetings and the Burton engineering study fees that have been paid in full. The total of all the accounts \$66,874.26. Membership dues are down by 20 members. Chuck mentioned that with doubling the fees we need to address this in membership. Mark Smith mentioned we had a net increase with fees increase. Chuck questioning if with COVID did people forget to pay as they have paid for years in past.</p> <p>B. Jeff Buchanan made a motion to accept the financials as presented, Tom Clark 2nd the motion, and all members of the Board present voted to accept the financials with no abstains.</p> | | |

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
|---|--------------------|----------------|
| Debbie Gran to update P & L and Budget as directed. | Debbie Gran | End of Meeting |

5. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

MARI ROY

| DISCUSSION | Membership Committee Update. | |
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| | Mari Roy | |
| <p>A. Mari Roy discussed updates from the Membership committee. Mari received the emails, spread sheets and files as needed from Jill Roy. Mari is in process of putting things together. Deb Gran mentioned she has simultaneous spreadsheets if Mari needs any help. Chuck asking Mari to look over lists, see if anyone has not paid that normally paid in past and approach those people in case they just forgot, or were they dissatisfied with BALA, and if so, why? Chuck would like to see more property associations members that have access to the lake join BALA as individual members. Paradise Beach Association has more members that joined individually, than does Trails Association. In the past some members of Paradise Association were under the impression that they joined as a group under an association membership. Through educational updates that made Paradise Association members aware that each member needs to join separately, (thanks to Jennifer Bernardo-Bailey, who is part of that association) we now have added members from that association. We would like to see the same effort made with the Trails Association this year. Mark Smith asked for dues to stay at \$50 at a minimum. Chuck Roy mentioned if we need to raise dues, we will have to bring that to membership meeting. Chuck mentioned if we take on port-a-potty fees or other things we may need to increase dues in the future.</p> <p>B. Holiday Newsletter sent out by Membership Committee. Well received and we are waiting for feedback from members. Thank you, Mari, for doing that newsletter.</p> <p>C. Mailings for upcoming year's dues should be going out electronically soon.</p> | | |

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
|--|--------------------|-----------|
| Mailings to be sent out electronically for the upcoming year, Mari Roy | Mari Roy | Continual |

6. RECREATION COMMITTEE

MARION REILLY

| REIDISCUSSION | Marion reported on Recreation Committee | |
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| <p>A. Marion Reilly was not able to be present at this meeting but sent in email with informational update. She reported that the Recreation Committee has been on hold with Covid. They have not held a meeting given the guideline restriction. She is hopeful they can start back up with their meetings in the near future. They will continue to try to submit ideas for the future taking Covid in mind.</p> | | |

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| Planning of events on hold at this time, will re-visit. Marion Reilly | Marion Reilly | N/A |

7. DAM COMMITTEE

KEN GAJEWSKI

| DISCUSSION | Ken Gajewski reported from the Dam Committee | |
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- A. Ken Gajewski reported that the Dam had been open from Nov 1st to first week of December. Ken mentioned that it took a while for the lake water to go down. He cleaned out deposits in front of the dam screen and water is flowing out at a better pace now. He is waiting for the lake to draw down to 36 inches before closing the gate, but was wondering if we can revise the limit to 30 inches. He feels owners should be able to do their the projects with a 30 inches draw down. Chuck mentioned we don't have a list of projects to reach out to those people and ask them. Ken mentioned that we will go ahead with the draw down to 36 inches. Ken is concerned about drawing down to 36 inches if we have a dry winter. Chuck mentioned maybe in the future we ask for projects to be submitted in the 5th year to verify if a larger draw down is needed.
- B. Mark Smith asked about why dam opening didn't happen on Oct 15th. Chuck mentioned there were issues. It was asked if the draw down could start earlier but there was paperwork that needed to be approved for an earlier draw down which did not get approved in time as it requires going in front of Conservation.
- C. Ken mentioned it takes 90 days in advance for the paperwork to be approved and with August meeting approval, it was too late to have this entertained for this year. It would have to posted in paper, and certified letters to all abutters. Ken mentioned that he would suggest a plan to open all drawdowns as of Oct 15th with all the work it takes to change the date of draw down. Bruce Gran mentioned it just takes time to plan for this.
- D. Ken and Bruce are to draft a notice of intent to send to Conservation Committee and after their approval it will be submitted to the State. Open dam on Oct 15th, then we can control the flow of the dam draw down. We do 30 inch draw down every year for 4 years and then on the 5th year a deeper draw down to 36 inches. Every 5th year is allowed by the state for the deeper draw down. We want to be able to start drawdowns earlier on Oct 15th by having the option. Ken, Bruce and Chuck will work on the ability to have the draw down starting on Oct 15th versus Nov 1st.

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
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| No further action is required at this point. | Ken Gajewski | NONE |

8. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

BRUCE GRAN

- | DISCUSSION | Bruce Gran discussed environmental status of Lake. |
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| A. | Bruce Gran reported that the environmental status of the lake from a weed perspective was worse this year than last year. The number of people using the lake, probably getting away from being stuck at home with Covid quarantining, was a probable contributing factor to more weed growth. Most invasive weeds are transported to the lake via boats putting in at the public landing. Weeds were popping up in areas that we have never had weeds in the past. Some areas have a growth of pond weed, and curly leaf weed surrounding the shoreline. The island saw a huge increase in use this summer and took some abuse from visitors using it as a bathroom. Boats pulling up and anchoring off the island may have transported invasive weeds. I am working with Solitude to look into the increased weed growth and give us a report. We are looking at doing a two treatment plan this summer. Chuck asked when the treatments would happen. Bruce mentioned May or June with a second spot treatment in July. Chuck asked if Bruce had any idea of the cost? Bruce said he would get back to the Board with additional cost figures if it is deemed necessary to have two treatments Tom Clark asked if this year's larger draw down will kill off some of these new weed growths? Lisa Sanderson asked what is the evidence that this is an invasive weed. Bruce mentioned that the curly leaf is mostly around the boat ramp and its invasive which we have never had in past. Mark Smith mentioned he has tons of coral weeds in large football sized patches. This was much more than he ever saw in past. Bruce said the corals are not invasive and are friendly to the lake's Bio health. |
| B. | Bruce mentioned we need to wait for the evaluation by Solitude and go over their report. Chuck mentioned that a voluntary cleaning station might help and could possibly be a project in the future if the State would agree to it. |
| C. | Chuck mentioned the human waste on the island and said Matt and he we will go out in spring with rubber gloves to clean up whatever hasn't degraded. Chuck mentioned having signs printed asking folks to please not use the island as a toilet facility and use the porta potty at the landing when in need. |

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
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| Bruce Gran will meet with Solitude about weeds and plan of action. | Bruce Gran | Ongoing |

9. WATERSHED/LAKE DRAINAGE PROTECTION COMMITTEE

- | DISCUSSION | Tom Clark presented about Watershed/Lake Protection Issues and Concerns |
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| A. | Tom Clark spoke with contractor about work to start this winter on the north end project. The contractor was delayed from starting as planned in the late fall due to his prior commitments to the town of Holland. Two large |

| trees were removed, and some small pine trees still need to be pulled out, but this is being held up by Conservation until they can meet on it. The work will get done; we are in good shape. | | |
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| B. Tom said he has been walking around lake and the drainage areas around lake has been looking good. Worried about ice build ups and will need to watch when that happens. | | |
| C. Burton sent a bill \$11,500 in addition to the \$300 already paid, but Tom mentioned to Burton that he has an initial contract bid for \$7,000 for the engineering study and the owner agreed to lower the bill to the original contract price. Conservation gave us permission to drop tree in lake which saved \$1600. | | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| Tom Clark to continue going forward. Ongoing. | Tom Clark | Ongoing |

10. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

| DISCUSSION | Mark Smith reported on the nominating committee | |
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| A. Mark Smith reported everyone is presently continuing with their elected term for 2 years with the exception of Lisa Sanderson. Lisa Sanderson mentioned she would not be filling her role after this the August meeting. Lisa recommended combining the secretary roles. That will be a future discussion. Mark and Chuck will begin the search for a replacement for Lisa as we get closer to August. | | |
| B. Next meeting should be second Tuesday of February which is Feb 9 th . and second Tuesday of May is May 11 th . | | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| Mark Smith will send out an email next year to the members about roles. | Mark Smith | None |

11. BOATING COMMITTEE

| DISCUSSION | Matt Kibbe reported on the boating committee | |
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| A. Buoys removed at end of season. Will be replaced back in second week of April. | | |
| B. Flyers for boating safety flyers to be printed soon. Requisition will need to be submitted to Deb. | | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| Matt Kibbe to get flyers printed. | Matt Kibbe | None |

12. FISHING COMMITTEE

| DISCUSSION | Rob Scoble reported on the fishing committee | |
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| A. Rob Scoble couldn't be present for the meeting but sent in information that the fishing of trout has been abundant. He mentioned that these must be the stocked trout. There have been brown trout, rainbow trout. Fishing has been great. | | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| Will continue monitoring fish status of lake. | Rob Scoble | None |

13. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

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| DISCUSSION | BALA President, Chuck Roy discussed old/new business. | |
| A. Bruce Gran stated that SLAC hopes to get restarted in March if Covid subsides. No updates at this point. | | |
| B. Jeff Buchanan discussed in detail the information he obtained about 501c3. He described the differences between a 501C3 and a 501C4. He felt that the 501C3 was the way we should go in the future. Lisa Sanderson asked if BALA has any type of tax deductible standing for its members at present as an association. Jeff said no, other than being a not-for-profit corporation which keeps the association from having a tax liability. BALA will need to set up as a 501c3, which is a nonprofit which has a public purpose, if we want to be able to have contributions to BALA be tax deductible. Under this status we would need to be organized with a "good of the public" purpose, which is how we presently operate anyway, but we could not restrict membership to just property owners on the lake. We will need to change the operating structure of the association so that anyone who wants to contribute to the betterment of the lake can do so as a member. This change would open the Association up to the public. Anyone can be a member. This has been a point of contention with some members in the past as they view BALA more like a homeowner's association. It is not a homeowner's association though, because we have no enforcement authority to collect dues, etc. Jeff argued, "why do we care if other lake users, such as fisherman, and boaters, want to contribute to the lake and be part of the Association". Chuck said some owners fear that if | | |

too many outsiders join the Association, they could take control of some of the rules and regulations we presently abide by. For example, if a large number of fishermen joined the Association, they could vote to curtail the hours of recreational boating more so than we presently do. However, Chuck reminded the Board, our rules have no legal authority; they are just recommended rules. The State sets the legally enforceable rules. This issue will need to be brought up and discussed with the full Membership before a final decision is made. Jeff said he saw no issues on becoming a 501C3. There are a lot of steps to the process and he would like to start down that path. Jeff suggested we might need to create a separate entity, such as the BALA Betterment Fund, that might be open to everyone, and let stand the present Association to represent the property owners. The funds from the Betterment Fund could theoretically be used to fund the Association much like the money we presently get from SLAC from the Sturbridge Betterment Fund. Lisa Sanderson mentioned that we are looking at tax status. Jeff noted, that if we stay with current organization we need to review its current tax status; some updates may be necessary-likely at a cost. Chuck felt we need to do what is right for the organization going forward. Jeff Buchanan mentioned at August meeting it was approved to spend \$1000 to start the process of forming 501c3 status for BALA. He felt this was a Board level decision to make.

- C. As we move forward on the formation of a 501C3, we will communicate and educate the membership as needed for transparency. Motion made by Jeff Buchanan to go forward with itemized list of steps to move forward with creating 501c3. Jeff Buchanan motioned and Lisa Sanderson second the motion, all rest of members present in favor. No abstains.
- D. Matt Kibbe spoke on needing to connect with the donor for update of sign at Boat Ramp. Matt will work on this, this upcoming spring.
- E. Chuck mentioned he has two members he wants to appoint as Members at Large of the Board. He appointed Dave Belrose and Lisa Dalberth subject to Board approval. Chuck asked for any discussion. Tom Clark spoke in favor of these appointments. Ken mentioned both great recommendations. Tom Clark made motion first and Ken Gajewski second, and all-in favor. Chuck will approach both and have them at the next meeting.
- F. Mark Minnucci reported to Chuck his concern about people using his property to go to the bathroom since the State's port-a-potty has been removed. Mark is putting up no trespassing signs. He said members of lake can still walk through his property, he's just trying to prevent the destruction of his property when no port-a-potty is there. Chuck mentioned it has to do with those using the boat ramp from off lake. Should BALA be concerned from a lake environmental hazardpoint of view? Tom Clark mentioned, BALA should be concerned and we should look into cost of port-a-potty use on months the state doesn't not provide it. Chuck mentioned we will look into cost of renting a port-a-potty during the months the State doesn't provide the port-a-potty. Maybe we could offer free sponsorship to a providing company for a discount on cost of a port-a-potty. Chuck just needs to know before going to State if BALA members are willing to pay for the port-a-potty through their dues? Mark Smith said it is a great idea to fund this as this protects the lake and land around the lake. Jeff Buchanan said that this is what BALA stands for. Doing what we need to do to take care of the lake. Motion presented by Mark Smith to go forward with continuing research on providing port-a-pottys during the off season, and motion seconded by Jeff Buchanan. All present for meeting in favor, no abstains.
- G. Mari Roy spoke that initial electronic mailings will be occurring soon for membership mailings with follow up with hard copies to those not paid by spring.
- H. Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 9th, 6:45 pm via zoom.

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
|--|----------------------------|----------|
| Old/New Business items to completed by each those responsible for items. | Multiple responsibilities. | Ongoing |

14. ADJOURNMENT

| DISCUSSION | BALA President, Chuck Roy closed out the meeting. | |
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| Meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM | | |
| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
| Committees each have action items listed above. Next Meeting date to be determined for Feb 9 th via zoom. | Chuck Roy for meeting date | Ongoing |