



Big Alum Lake Association

Fiskdale, MA

Big Alum Lake Association, BALA Full Board Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2021

@ 6:57 PM

HELD VIA ZOOM

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. Recreational Committee – Marion Reilly C. Dam Committee – 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 – Mark Smith I. Watershed Drainage Committee – Tom Clark J. Dave Bellerose- MAL K. Lisa Dalberth-MAL</p>
	6:57 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

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 November meeting.	Chuck Roy, President	N/A

2. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

CHUCK ROY

DISCUSSION	Quorum determination.	Chuck Roy
A. Quorum was determined. 12/14, Executive and Full Board Members present.		
B. Chuck Roy reported that 8/14 is needed for a Quorum. Quorum present for this meeting, Feb, 9th, 2021.		
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. November 2020, meeting minutes were provided for all to review. Bruce mentioned he reviewed the minutes and approved details about weeds that were reported in the minutes from last year. Lisa Sanderson made a motion to approve minutes with Tom Clarke seconding the motion. Minutes approved unanimously.

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

4. REVIEW OF TREASURY REPORT

D. GRAN

DISCUSSION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Review of Treasury Report	Debbie Gran

Debbie Gran, BALA Treasurer, presented the financial report, which included year end for 2020 and YTD 2021. Deb reported for 2020, we had \$6,800.00 in membership dues and another \$1150.00 in donations from various members to help keep the lake clean. In addition, the Sturbridge betterment fund contribution was \$2550.00. This amount included the reimbursement for the prior year's weed treatment that, due to timing of the treatment, missed the Town's deadline last year. We had expenses of \$13,541.11 and had to take \$3,041.11 from savings to break even. Considering the CoVid year we experienced, without the Gala and other fundraisers, we had a good year. For Jan 2021, we had our first bills come in for pretreatment weed visit, and for the website management payment. We are in good shape; the account balance is \$66,460.49 between checking and all savings and cds. Chuck asked everyone to review the balance sheet and P&L for January. A question was raised in regard to an expense in the budget of the Rec. Committee for the welcoming of new members. Deb said that this will be an event to welcome new members to the Association sometime in the future when socializing is again possible. Other expenses included reimbursement for the purchase of the Zoom Pro plan used for Board meetings and BALA meetings, and the expense of the Burton Engineering study fees for the north end watershed drainage project. Chuck thanked Deb for all her hard work. Chuck asked for motion to approve financials. Deve Belrose made a motion to accept the financials as presented, Tom Clark 2nd the motion, and all members accepted the financials with no abstains.

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	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Membership Committee Update.	Mari Roy

Mari Roy discussed updates in regards to the Membership Committee. Mari put together a letter and information form for this year's dues. She asked Deb Gran to mailed this package to all the members. It was pointed out that the first dues notification was to be by email, followed up by a mailed hard copy in April. Mari, being new to the chair, got it mixed up and did it in reverse. Chuck said it was no big deal, that we will just do it in reverse order this year. Lisa said we will need to keep track of the dues as they come in to determine when the email reminder should go out. Deb said she would handle this task. Marion Reilly stepped in as the representative of the Membership Committee from the Trail side of the lake, as Mary Kibbe stepped down from that position. Mari reported that she has 7 members to help increase awareness of the Association to homeowners around the lake. Mari reported that she has 162 members on the lake and 13 on the trail and an honorary member that puts the association at 176. Lisa Dalberth asked how many are living on the lake that are not members. She said she believes that about 28 people living on the Lake are not paying members. She will focus on this and meet with the committee to try get more of the people living on the lake to be members. She would like to have a fund raising barometer on the website to help members visualize our yearly goals. Jeff Buchanan mentioned that we should wait until 501C3 is discussed at the next Membership meeting. Deb mentioned there are 141 properties who paid last year including one person who is an associate member. Chuck asked how many envelopes went out this year. Deb mentioned that 171 went out. Chuck thanked Mari and Deb for their hard work and Mari for the report.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Awaiting on responses for paper mailings with follow up via electronic, Mari Roy	Mari Roy	Continual

6. RECREATION COMMITTEE

MARION REILLY

REIDISCUSSION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Marion reported on Recreation Committee	

- A. Marion Reilly spoke for the Recreation Committee, and reported on their January meeting. They discussed having a BALA GALA again, smaller, maybe more spread out. We would like to have it, Fri, Aug 6th, as this is the weekend of PanMass Challenge. We need to see how COVID pans out and gauge our members' comfort level at that time. The event is penciled in for that date and they are holding it for us. We will need to make a decision in the not too distant future as it is wedding season for Hylands. Also, we will continue with our non-motorized events, paddleboarding/kayaking around the lake, one weekend a month. (June/July/Aug). We will be promoting the boat parade for the 4th of July as well as regular Pontoon tie-ups once a month. Pontoon tie-ups will be tentatively scheduled for Fridays on Fridays, as opposed to Saturdays, once a month, at 7 pm. Hopefully more people will be able to attend these tie-ups on Fridays at a little later hour. Marion mentioned that everyone liked the bands on the shore line last summer, and the Committee plans to schedule 1 to 2 this summer. Marion feels they are a good way to socially distance while enjoying an afternoon or evening together. Another similar idea is for a movie night boat drive-in. Scott Sanderson purchased a projector that can be used to project movies from his cove. Sounds fun! Marion, mentioned they didn't discuss the "welcome new members greets" at their meeting. When Covid allows for in person meetings the Committee will put together plans for these greets. Marion said the Committee will continue to come up with new ideas. Lisa Sanderson mentioned this is a full roster of events and the largest schedule ever. Hopefully people will enjoy these events and attend.
- B. Lisa Dalberth mentioned that Colleen and Dan are having a band on the shoreline for Memorial Weekend. Lisa asked if the Association would like to include that as an event. Marion said that would be great to include and Lisa will facilitate this.
- C. Chuck mentioned he doesn't know if Aug 6th is realistic to have an event given Covid and the vaccine roll out, but we will see. Chuck thanked Marion for her report.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Planning of events is being penciled in at this time. Marion Reilly	Marion Reilly	N/A

7. DAM COMMITTEE

KEN GAJEWSKI

- | DISCUSSION | Ken Gajewski reported from the Dam Committee |
|------------|---|
| A. | Ken Gajewski reported that the Dam had been open from Nov 1 st to first week of December. The damn is closed, we have been collecting water. We will have plenty of water by Memorial Day. Chuck mentioned further in adgenda we will discuss dates of opening and closing the damn. |
| B. | down starting on Oct 15 th versus Nov 1 st . |

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

8. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

BRUCE GRAN

- | DISCUSSION | Bruce Gran discussed environmental status of Lake. |
|------------|--|
| A. | Bruce Gran reported that environmentally it was a stressful summer for the Lake. With the increase of use from outside boaters due to CoVid, we saw an increase in invasive weed growth. A lot of this weed growth was at the island and the cove where Janet Garon's home is located. Invasive nusiance weeds ""turned the sandy beach into a vegetable garden" Bruce said. The increased boating around the island resulted in the weeds being chopped up more, and consequently spreading more rapidly. Some curly leaf pond weed was noted. These weeds flower and create new weed growth. Bruce said he has met with Soitude to create a more detailed plan for controlling weed growth this season and that we will have to keep a close watch on the situation. Bruce said we will most likely need a second weed treatment this year and has planned for that in his budget. Of course this will require a second notification to members about not swimming for 12 hours after the treatment. There was some discussion as to the reasons for increased boating on the lake and the general conclusion was it was due to CoVid. |
| B. | No updates from SLAC at this time. |

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
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 |
|------------|---|
|------------|---|

A. Tom Clark spoke about the lake watershed drainage areas. He stated it was a relatively good year for erosion as we did not get hit with many large storms like we usually do in the summer. Very light year. In regards to the project for North End, a swail was created near 137/138 Lake Road by the construction company doing the project, and they removed 3-4 large trees. They completed the fences and hay bales required by conservation and plan to restart the construction in late March or April after the frost stops. The project is little behind schedule, but we are on the path to finishing the project by May. In regard to the rest of the lake, I continued to monitor all the drainage sites around the lake in my daily walk arounds. The rest of the drainage areas are open and doing ok. Tom mentioned he is looking to put together a maintenance plan for all the sites and will have more on that plan in the future.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Tom Clark to continue going forward. Ongoing.	Tom Clark	Ongoing

10. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION	Mark Smith was not able to be on but nothing to be reported on the nominating committee
------------	---

A. Mark Smith was not able to be present for the meeting but no updates to report.

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
------------	--

A. Matt Kibbe reported that he would like to pass out more flyers and need to have more printed. Nothing new to report.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Matt Kibbe to get flyers printed and hand out.	Matt Kibbe	None

12. FISHING COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION	Roe Scoble was not present to report on the fishing committee but there is nothing new to report.
------------	---

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 a lot of ice fishing went on this season.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Will continue monitoring fish status of lake.	Rob Scoble	None

13. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION	BALA President, Chuck Roy discussed old/new business.
------------	---

- A. Bruce Gran with SLAC said that SLAC had not met since last March due to CoVid, but he was hopeful the Committee will start meeting again in March. Bruce said that a state-wide database is being considered by SLAC and other lake organizations to keep track of weed growth throughout the lake systems. They liked the data collection that BALA has provided for the last 50 years and would like to do the same at all the other lakes in the State. This project would prove most beneficial to controlling weed transfer from lake to lake.
- B. Old Business: Chuck Roy asked Tom Clark about forming a committee or hiring people to maintain the drains, is this moving forward. Tom Clark stated he asked about this, but the person that was doing this in the past is no longer doing this. He has been asking around for information. There are 10 drains around the lake that would cost about \$2,000.00 a year to maintain. Chuck asked if that cost could be brought down if a volunteer group could do the cleaning. Tom stated that you need certain equipment to clean them right so people could help but you will still need someone to pay to use their machine. Tom states I have been monitoring the drains, they have been doing well with draining. It might be satisfactory to clean certain sections of drains each year in rotation to keep the cost reasonable.
- C. Chuck asked Jeff about the 501C3. Jeff reported a lot of lake associations are 501C3 so should not be an issue being a 501C3 as we are not reinventing the wheel here. Jeff has been doing research online. He found a company who can do all the documentation and file with the AG for \$2,500.00. In terms of process: we file, bylaws, get an ein #, and a conflict of interest file exception with IRS. After approved, we file a fundraising registration. Most lake associations are 501C3. Activities you pursue as a 501 C3 do have to be for the benefit of

the community as a whole not private parties. The fact that the lake is open to anyone because of the public boat ramp access should help us attain 501C3 status. Chuck stated we went to the overall membership about this because there are some members on the lake that want the Association to be exclusive to homeowners regardless of having the public boat ramp. Jeff said we are not a homeowners association; we have no enforcement powers and no such declarations have ever been filed with the Town. Consequently, our dues are really voluntarily made donations by our membership. There are tax reports that need to be filed even though we are a non-profit organization. Jeff felt the most efficient way to handle our association's business is under the umbrella of a 501 C3. Chuck asked if most lake associations in the state operate as 501 C3's? Jeff said his research showed that most are 501 C3's. Jeff said he realizes some of our long time homeowners are nervous about outside people joining the lake association without having property rights on the lake. The fear here is that the non resident membership might, at some point, outnumber the resident homeowners membership and be in a position to out vote residence. Jeff stated he doesn't feel that many people outside of the lake will join the association, and that certainly hasn't proven to be the case on other lake associations that are 501 C3's. Chuck asked do we need to pay \$2,500.00 to do the research or is this to actually set up the 501 C3? . Jeff said he has done all the necessary research and just needs a yes or no to go ahead and pay the company \$2500.00 to get the 501 C3 set up. There may be a few hundred dollars in State licensing fees on top of this price. The company he spoke with will do everything to set us up as a 501 C3. Lisa Sanderson mentioned that she just wants transparency informing the membership. Chuck said, at the last membership meeting we were given the authority to spend \$1200.00 to research the setting up of a 501 C3 for BALA. We said we would get back to the Membership for a final vote before we moved forward on this. Jeff stated that we just need to lay out the entire program and associated cost to the Membership in July along with our recommendations. The benefit to the Membership, aside from the potential deductibility of their dues and donations on their personal income taxes, is that BALA will now be a legal entity with well defined rules to follow.

- D. Chuck Roy asked if Matt Kibbe connected with John Argits about the new updated Boat Ramp sign he is donating. Matt reported he didn't get to connect with John as of yet.
- E. Chuck Roy discussed the port-a-potty situation in regards to the boat ramp. The problem is that when the State removes their port-a-potty the fishermen have nowhere to go to the bathroom. Consequently they use the private property adjacent to the landing. Douglas Cameron told Chuck that the portable toilets are installed at the landing from May 15th to Sept 15th and then removed. The rates for this service have increased significantly from \$194 to \$298 a month he said, and it is not in the States budget to provide a year round port-a-potty. However, the State does not have an issue with the Town or the Lake Association providing the port-a-potty for longer duration beyond to what they provide. Chuck has reached out to the Board of Health to see if the town would be interested in helping, but to date has not heard back. Slims is \$115 per 28 day billing period and increases to \$120 in winter months. Jennifer Bailey stated that someone needs to make the state aware of the price difference that they are being charged from their company to the quote Chuck received from Slims as the state could pay for 8 months if not the entire year at the price quoted by Slims versus what they are being charged. Chuck said he'd be sure to mention that to Douglas next time they spoke. The concern here for the Association is this will cost \$1000 dollars that is not in the present budget. Chuck said that if we continue to add services like drain maintenance and port-a-potty service to our budget we will need to consider raising the dues to \$75 to not dip in to the reserve funds for these maintenance reoccurring bills. Jeff Buchanan feels this is something the board can vote on now as this is preventing fecal matter from running off into the lake. Jeff states this is as or more important than weed treatments in his opinion. Jeff Buchanan made a motion for BALA to pay for the port-a-potty to cover the time frame the state does not cover, February until May 15th, 2021 and that will give BALA until September 15th, 2021 to figure out what to do moving forward. Tom Clark seconded the motion, and the remaining board members present were all in favor. Vote was unanimous. Bruce Gran asked how frequently the port-a-pottys are cleaned from Slims and Chuck stated once a week, and Chuck made Deb aware that the the billing period is every 28 days.
- F. Chuck Roy brought up the discussion of the yearly draw downs. The date to start the draw down is scheduled on Nov 1st. Some members asked for an earlier draw down but there is a lot of paperwork and approval needed from the Town and the State to change the lake draw down dates. Rachel from the state told Ken that draw downs should not happen prior to Nov. due to Wetlands Protections Act and issues with aquatic weeds. There has been research done on draw downs and the effect on aquatic wildlife. That early draw downs can't happen just for wall maintenance due to the effects of aquatic life. Ken feels Nov 1st to Oct 15th isn't a huge window but the state has their rules and recommendations and ultimately it is up to their approval. Rachel told Ken the State feels we should bring in Solitude and present this to the State as to why the drawdown is needed and then apply for an early draw down permit. This whole process can take up to three months. Bruce Gran mentioned that the deeper draw down of 36 inches is only permissible every 5 years versus the regular draw down of 30 inches and the state has us on a schedule of when the deeper draw occurs. Ken stated that if we want the earlier time frame of opening the damn than we will need the approval to happen for every year going forward and Ken mentioned that

he can always crack the damn slower some years if members don't want the draw down to start so early. Mari Roy stated she likes the later date of Nov 1st as it allows more time for boating. Deb Gran feels that things should be left as is, connecting with Solitude will cost more money, and in the end this is taking up a lot of time. Chuck stated that Nov 1st is fine by him, he is getting mixed signals on what people want. Mari Roy stated that everyone just wants a consistent date for boat and dock reasons. Matt Kibbe stated that it is going to take two weeks for the water to draw down so if it starts Oct 15th the lake won't be down until Nov 1st. Ken mentioned that the state has only received the timeframe of the draw down and amount of the draw down over the last 10 years. Mari stated that people just want to know how long they can keep their boat in the water. Chuck stated we need more information as we will need to go in front of the conservation committee.

- G. Chuck brought up development of the Welcoming Committee and that there is a \$500 budget for this. Should this fall under Membership or Recreation committee. Mari and Marion both spoke and feels that this should be a dual responsibility. Lisa Sanderson mentioned that the Membership Committee should be the Welcoming Committee as the Membership Committee should take this on as they have all the information. Mari stated yes the membership committee should welcome any new lake owners but if an event occurs than she will include the recreation committee. Chuck feels we will table this issue at this point.
- H. Dave Belrose brought up cleaning up the lake roads and having a clean up day, he's been cleaning up a lot when walking. Mari stated that it didn't work to have a day because people cleaned prior to the date and we didn't have anything to clean up. It was mentioned mentioned to put out an email blast to clean up around the lake and encourage everyone to clean up as they walk around the lake. Lisa Sanderson feels anything should be timed to clean up early in the spring and late in the fall. Chuck feels that most want to do it on their own time but not plan as a group and mentioned to put out the email blasts. Mari stated Earth Day is April 9th.
- I. Mari Roy made motion to adjourn and Jennifer Bailey second the motion and rest of board members voted to adjourn. Chuck Roy closed out the meeting @8:42 PM. Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 11th, 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.	
Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Committees each have action items listed above. Next Meeting date to be determined for May 11 th via zoom.	Chuck Roy for meeting date	Ongoing