

LMPC
<https://msuweb.montclair.edu/~lebelp/LeonardMillPondAssociation.html>

November 18, 2015

Meeting Minutes

Attending: Sally Lambert, Andrew Hobbs, Robert Sauer, Tom Mace, Jerry Raimo, Ray Brodie, Mike and Mary Henderson, Bill and Cindy Nelson, Marilyn and Andy Booth, Al and Yvonne Matthews, Connie and John Rue, Craig and Melissa Mast, Dennis Callaghan.

The meeting began promptly at 7:00 P.M. Following brief introductions, Chuck Poole, Parks Superintendent, Wicomico County Recreation, Parks and Tourism, provided a recap of the chemical treatment program undertaken in sequential steps in June (Rodeo) and August (Sonar). The health of the pond appears to be quite good. With selected treatment, efforts are being directed toward weed concentrations in the eastern prong, along with targeted areas of infestation elsewhere, as needed. Chuck noted that if homeowners vote to continue the treatment program, he would proceed with obtaining the necessary environmental permitting, which expires this year, for another multi-year cycle.

Further in his report, Chuck noted that the City of Salisbury is considering purchase of a weed harvester boat for use on Schumaker Pond and other fresh water ponds in the area. Chuck said that the earliest date for a prospective purchase would be for 2017 and that he would keep us informed as to the status. What a weed harvester boat could do would be to reduce or even obviate the use of chemicals in weed management programs, even though there would be a leasing fee charged to the County to cover the cost of acquisition.

In the discussion that followed, Chuck responded to questions regarding the pond lowering that took place in 2015, initially in response to a request by homeowners for periodic maintenance of docks and waterfront bulkheading and then the lowering in anticipation of a hurricane threat in September. Chuck pointed out that decisions to lower to pond are handled by the Maryland State Highway Authority, for whom the relevant contact person continues to be Lee Outen (410) 548-4871 (louten@wicomicocounty.org). Ray Brodie indicated that he found Lee Outen to be quite responsive to information requests and took appropriate action when needed, which Chuck said he would convey to Lee when they next meet.

Following Chuck's presentation, homeowners voted to approve the continuing volunteer work of Phillip LeBel as neighborhood coordinator and Marilyn Booth as treasurer on behalf of the LMPC. Approval was unanimous, with none against and no abstentions.

Marilyn then read out the treasury report, which is summarized below.

LMPC Treasury Report	
Balance on hand, November 5, 2014	\$6,960.45
Contribution deposits by 47 neighbors	\$3,550.00
Expenses	
Wicomico County (Rodeo)	\$3,688.80
Wicomico County (Sonar)	\$129.60
Bank Service Charge	\$8.00
Total Expenses	\$3,826.40
Balance on hand November 18, 2015	\$6,684.05

Next, a vote was taken to approve continuation of the self-assessment contribution on behalf of the ongoing treatment program on the pond at \$75.00 per household. The vote in favor carried unanimously, with no against and no abstentions. Accordingly, homeowners are requested to make their contributions beginning in January 2, 2016 and to do so no later than May 1, 2016, with checks payable to "LMPC", c/o Marilyn Booth, 8402 Hilda Drive, Salisbury, Maryland 21804.

On pond lowering, as precedent did not require a vote to do so for 2016, a vote was taken regarding future possible lowering. Chuck had indicated that the State Highway Authority is considering a gradual phasing down, if not altogether, of periodic pond lowering except in cases of extreme hurricane flood threats, and that it would then act unilaterally at its own discretion in the event of the latter on as needed basis. Homeowners then agreed that as no request to lower the pond would apply for 2016, for the fall 2016 meeting a resolution would be submitted for approval indicating as to whether a request to lower the pond for the winter of 2017 would be submitted, for what duration, and that the voting by the LMPC should be considered binding on all homeowners as per a request to the State Highway Authority for this purpose.

Homeowners expressed a wish to understand how the SHA sets pond lowering levels, whether they would continue if so requested by homeowners on a staggered schedule, and how a timely notification could be assured. The sense of homeowners present was that the winter lowering level was significant and posed a threat to environmental species hibernating in winter. In response to the question of why the periodic lowering had taken place in winter, the answer is that there is a smaller environmental threat than during warmer months. We agreed to seek clarification on the position of the SHA on neighborhood requests for pond lowering decisions.

A general discussion ensued on the question of environmental stewardship of the pond. As the pond is owned by Wicomico County and as homeowners serve as stewards, we decided to look to various agencies as to guidance on best practices for maintaining the health of the pond. This includes any written standards and regulations regarding the dumping of lawn debris into the pond, the cutting of trees and protective brush growth on pond waterfront edge areas, as well as general regulations regarding fishing, boating, and general use of the pond. We agreed that we would inquire with the Department of Natural Resources, and the State Forestry Service to see if any such standards and practices apply that could be of benefit in preserving the health of the pond. Any such documentation will be shared with homeowners via email and by posting on the web. As part of this discussion, Ray Brodie noted that he had occasion to contact the DNR regarding safety conditions on the pond and listed Tony Eppree, a local police officer with DNR, who can be reached at (410)-548-7070, or at (877)-224-7229.

Further to our discussions, Ray Brodie noted the passing last summer of Leslie Payne, former Chief of Police in Salisbury and a long-time waterfront resident in Holly Lakes Estates.

A vote to close the meeting at 8:00 P.M. was approved unanimously.

Phillip LeBel
30408 Mallard Drive
(410) 546-4931
lebelp@mail.montclair.edu