

Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission

Minutes

Wednesday November 28, 2012

Location: Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), Auburn, Maine

Time: Meeting began at 3:30 PM

Commissioners Present: Bruce Rioux (arrived at 3:35PM), Dave Jones, Bethel Shields, Dick Thibodeau, Joe Grube, John Bonneau, Bob Thompson, Steve French

Commissioners Absent: John Butler

Others Present:

Kevin Gagne, Richard Burnham, Mary Jane Dillingham, John Storer, Sid Hazelton, Dan Bilodeau, K.C. Geiger, Tizz Crowley, Heather Hunter, Howard Kroll

Commissioner Grube called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM

Agenda Item 1: Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 26, 2012

There was one revision to the minutes of the September 26, 2012 meeting:

Under New Business – “Swimmability” Study on page 4 of 6 the sentence:

Since swimming is not allowed on the Lake, Mr. Deschene asked if the Commission would fund a one- time study to investigate the feasibility of keeping the beach clean enough for swimming.

Was changed to read:

Since swimming is not allowed on the Lake, Mr. Deschene asked if the Commission would fund a one- time study to investigate the feasibility of keeping the water clean enough for swimming.

Vote 1– Motion by Commissioner Bonneau and seconded by Commissioner Shields to accept the minutes of September 26, 2012, with revision, and place on file.

Passed 7 -0 (Commissioner Rioux absent)

Agenda Item 2: Approve Minutes of Special Meeting of October 11, 2012

Vote 2– Motion by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner French to accept the minutes of Special Meeting of October 11, 2012, and place on file.

Passed 7 -0 (Commissioner Rioux absent)

Agenda Item 3: Approve Order Delegating Authority to Clerks – Dave Jones

- Public Hearing for Comments on the Order

Commissioner Jones opened the floor for public comments.

Tizz Crowley asked if the two assigned Clerks had to be the Superintendents of both Water Utilities. John Storer explained that it historically had been done that way, but not necessarily a requirement. He thought it would be a good idea on an annual basis to appoint or re-confirm a chair, co-chair, treasurer, and both secretaries.

Vote 3– Motion by Commissioner Bonneau and seconded by Commissioner Jones to close open session.

Passed 8 -0

Vote 4– Motion by Commissioner Bonneau and seconded by Commissioner Shields to approve an order Delegating Authority to Clerks to Act for the Commission .

Passed 8 -0

Agenda Item 4: Approve Second Amendment to Central Maine Community College Conservation Easement – Mary Jane Dillingham & John Storer

Mary Jane explained that this amendment simplifies the easement language, and makes it easier to identify boundaries when field investigations are done. This amendment has been reviewed by Bryan Dench, and Attorneys for the College, and it has been agreed upon. We now need signatures so a Land Surveyor can mark boundaries in the field.

Vote 5 – Motion by Commissioner Bonneau and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve a second amendment to the Central Maine Community College Conservation Easement upon verifying the proper book and page number, correction of typos, agreement date, and inclusion of attachments.

Passed 8-0

Agenda Item 5: Water Quality Update & Activity Report – Mary Jane Dillingham

- **Forestry**

There are no forestry projects occurring at this time. The Spring Road forestry has been completed. A skid trail allowed us to access and repair a large washout that occurred from previous years rain events. The Lewiston Water Division repaired the eroded area with a \$10,000 grant that was obtained from the Maine Drinking Water Program.

The Johnson Road harvest has been completed as well.

The next planned harvest will be on the 25 acre parcel that was acquired from the Gendrons off Rt. 4 near their gravel pit. The trees have been marked, and the work will take place this winter, weather permitting.

- **Project Canopy Grant**

A \$10,000 grant to update our 10 yr. old forestry management plan has been submitted to Project Canopy. Grant recipients will be announced next week.

- **Boat Launch**

The boat launch will be closed this week.

- **Invasive Plants**

Invasive plants continue to be a challenge on the Lake. An invasive plant harvester is being requested in the budget.

- **Volunteer**

Robert Crosby has been volunteering time in the watershed. In order to avoid the issue of birds becoming ensnared in discarded fishing line, he has constructed and installed a fishing line recycling bin. Photos were distributed to Commissioners. We will supply materials to him so more of them can be installed around The Basin, and Lake Auburn. Mary Jane will do a press release in the Spring, and the Commissioners will write a letter of appreciation for his efforts.

- **Lake Quality**

Lake turnover occurred before mid-November, which is earlier than last year.

A relatively warm November caused a bloom of Anabaena algae. The Gloeotrichia died off, but the Anabaena caused a bright green color over the surface of the lake. Currently Diatoms have come into play, which has caused some discolored water in the distribution system. MJ will be monitoring the algae much closer, and look to calculate bio-mass.

John mentioned that Auburn has also had recent issues with iron in the distribution system, which is independent of the algae issue. Through flushing mains in problem areas, and increasing flow in the bleeders, we hope to improve the situation.

MJ explained that we have given our consultants a lot of lake data for them to review. CEI has been in the field inventorying culverts throughout the watershed. We recently collected Lake sediment samples with Ken Wagner, who is a renowned algal specialist.

We expect some preliminary results from our consultants in January.

- **USDA**

Our USDA Wildlife Biologist continues to work on gull management of the lake. Over the Thanksgiving holiday when the lake was not monitored, we noticed an increase in fecal counts. This stresses the importance of keeping the program going.

- **Lake Lowering**

Commissioner Thibodeau noticed that the Lake level looked lower than usual. MJ explained that we lowered to the lake to flush off some of the warmer surface water to remove some algae. We should return to normal levels soon.

IFW recently did some fish netting, and discovered that some Lake Trout have survived. This is good news, as Francis Brautigam from IFW was concerned that the Togue population had been decimated.

Steve French noted that there used to be a fish dam at the outlet of Lake Auburn and asked if it was still there. Over the years it has been removed.

Agenda Item 6: Open Session – Public Comments

Tizz Crowley introduced Howard Kroll, who is the new Assistant City Manager.

Dan Bilodeau made a suggestion to update the signs that announce the boundary of the Lake Auburn Watershed on snowmobile trails.

Agenda Item 7: Old Business

Swimmability Study

We now have a signed contract. John Storer and Mary Jane met on November 14 with City Manager Clint Deschene, and Auburn Public Works Director Denis D’Auteuil, and Eileen Pannetier to develop a scope of work for the study. A report is expected by mid to late February.

Agenda Item 8: Quarterly Financial Update – Heather Hunter

The only anticipated expenditure between now and the end of the fiscal year is one quarterly billing from the Auburn Water District.

There may be small bills to accounts such as repairs to property, but she does not anticipate any major changes to the budget between now and the end of the year.

Vote 6 – Motion by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Shields to approve the Quarterly Financial Update.

Passed 8-0

Agenda Item 9: Presentation of Proposed 2013 Budget - Heather Hunter

Expenditures - Items of special note:

- There is an increase in Source Protection Management for Divers and Police Patrol
- Small increase in Outside Services for easement marking
- Public Education has increased due to the community education and outreach
- Audit/Financial Services has a small increase
- Operational Supplies is a new account. These items were previously in other accounts, which have been reduced accordingly.
- Miscellaneous has a small increase.

Commissioner French asked if the education budget is a one-time expense. Heather answered that it depends upon what the Commission wants to do; if the educational effort is to continue, it will need to be funded in future years as well.

The dock replacement and Forestry plan were both budgeted for FY12. Neither was completed this year, so the money will be carried forward, and be dedicated for those purposes.

Commissioner Thibodeau asked if the education money was going to be used to educate the adult population as well as students. John Storer explained that the person we hire can be used as needed to develop informational packets for a variety of purposes, including the education of adults.

Based upon the Portland model, Commissioner Rioux expressed his belief that if we educate sixth grade students, parents will become engaged as well. We could also use the person we hire to educate people in the watershed about land use.

John Storer added that we could use this person for website development, and educational brochures, and many related items that existing staff does not have time for.

Capital Expenditures includes a GIS Flyover, Boat Lift, and Diver Assisted Suction Harvester (DASH) boat

Total expenditures for the proposed budget (operating and capital) is \$237,417

Revenues

A \$62,558 contribution from each Utility is proposed for the operating budget. \$100,000 is being carried forward (one-time opportunity) from the fund balance to help pay for the Lake Studies.

Total contributions from each entity

A \$62,558 contribution to operations, and a \$125,000 contribution to Land Acquisition (a portion of which will pay for the Lake study) from each entity brings the total contribution to \$187,558, which is a 33.39% increase over the previous year.

Commissioner Thibodeau noted that the State funded "Lake Smart" program, which provides conservation guidance to residents with lakefront property, has been dropped, and it is now up to Lake Associations to fund. He asked if LAWPC could continue fund the "Lake Smart" efforts moving forward, and also what could be implemented now to improve the situation with the Lake.

John Storer stated that the \$200,000 contingency included in the 2013 budget for the Lake Study Implementation/Land Acquisition could be used for the Lake Smart program if it was warranted. At this time we do not know what recommendations will come forward from the consultants. Some recommendations may be very expensive, and require additional funding

which would need to come from other sources. At this point we don't know enough about the problem, and must wait for the consultants' recommendations.

Heather noted that we may be able to use the education coordinator to implement some of the recommendations that come from the CEI/CDM study.

Commissioner Shields asked if the Water Withdrawal revenue was still under the honor system. Heather said it was, and almost \$6,000 has accumulated in that account. The money was to be used to install a dry hydrant at the boat launch. She recommended waiting until the Maine Department of Transportation decides whether or not to modify Rt. 4. The money will remain in the budget for that purpose.

Vote 7 – Motion by Commissioner Bonneau and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the 2013 Budget as presented.

Passed 8-0

Agenda Item 10: Adjourn Meeting

Vote 8 - Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Shields, and seconded by Commissioner Jones to adjourn the meeting.

Passed 8 - 0

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM

A true record, Attest:

Robert Thompson,
Secretary of the LAWPC