

LAKE WYOLA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
-Minutes-

February 18, 2023 at 9:00 AM
Hybrid Meeting

Members present: Catherine Hilton, Mary David, David Green, Terry Smith, Walter Tibbetts, Howard Kinder, John Gorey and Mark Rivers

Guests: John Kinder, Miriam DeFant, Bob Douglas, Tom Siefert, Tracy McNaughton and Frank McGinn

1. The minutes from the January 21, 2023, meeting were approved.

2. Storm Water Runoff and Watershed Erosion Mitigation

FRCOG's contract with MA DEP has been extended, but DEP's initial comments have not yet been incorporated into the draft of the Lake Wyola Watershed Based Plan. A public comment period is envisaged for April, and public meetings thereafter. More details should be available in March.

Miriam suggested that when the draft watershed base plan becomes available, a second field trip to the beaver dams on Fiske Pond and Fiske Brook be scheduled and the Wendell Conservation Commission be invited.

3. Notice of Intent for the Annual Winter Lake Lowering

Miriam reviewed the ConCom's discussion regarding the NOI. They are recommending that the town file a new NOI that includes both the annual winter drawdown and the Chapter 91 permit for year-round dam operations and management. The NOI and Orders of Conditions could be used to obtain the Chapter 91 permit.

Given the upcoming retirement of Morris Root, who has been the dam's inspecting engineer for many years, Terry recommended that the first task of the new dam safety engineering company be to develop the NOI and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation so that the 2023 drawdown can be performed as usual.

A motion was made and unanimously approved as followed:

That LWAC advise the Select Board to review the list of dam safety engineering companies that Morris Root recommended; that they put out an RFP as soon as possible; and that they hire a consulting company who can write the NOI and perform a Wildlife Habitat Evaluation by early summer so that the annual drawdown can be performed as usual. The selected company should also be able to familiarize themselves with the historical dam records, perform the biennial dam inspection and a structural analysis, and apply for the Chapter 91 permit.

There is a question of where the 2018 dam inspection is located. It is hoped that Morris Root can do the 2023 report and then in 2025 the new consultant could perform the inspection.

4. Boating Safety Signage at the Boat Ramp

Miriam reported that ConCom wants to meet with the Open Space and Recreation Committees. The subject will be on ConCom's next meeting agenda and other committees will be invited to participate.

5. Lake Wyola Dam Study Group

John Kinder summarized the recommendations of the Dam Study Group. Concern for public safety led to a recommendation to completely eliminate public access to the dam, with these provisions:

- Install “No Parking” signs on both sides of Locks Pond Rd in the dam area.
- Replace the existing chain with a gate at the southern access to the dam.
- Install a gate on the north side of the dam.
- Install signage stating “No Trespassing, No Public Access, Subject to Fines” to replace the existing “Use at Your Own Risk” sign.

To provide official access for operation and maintenance by the dam keeper, there are two possibilities to be considered: either purchase the privately-owned land where the current damkeeper’s parking space is located, or secure an easement from the landowner.

6. Dam Inspection, Maintenance, and Repairs

We are still awaiting the report from the September 2021 inspection.

The meeting ended at 10:46

The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2023.