

WOPWA Board Meeting Minutes, June 14, 2009
Home of Lois and Will Stratton

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by President Anne Knight.

Board members present were: Janet Cocchiaro, Sarah Young, Will Stratton, Lois Stratton, Galen Beach, Mimzie Uhler, Roger Uhler, Anne Ireland, Chuck Vicinus, and Bob Maloney. Kevin Frank attended as a representative of the Mary Perry Fund.

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of July 19, 2008 are not subject to approval until the annual meeting on July 18, 2009.

The minutes of the Board meeting of August 24, 2008 had been reviewed by all via email, so it was moved by Galen Beach, and seconded by Anne Ireland that they be accepted. The motion was approved.

Items to be added to the meeting agenda were noted: Continuing our annual membership/contribution to the New Hampshire Lakes Association and inviting Harry Vogel of the Loon Preservation Committee as guest speaker at the Annual Meeting.

Treasurer's Report Will Stratton reported the balance at the beginning of the WOPWA year was \$3256.94. Revenue to date is \$1737.43 and expenses thus far are \$1471.45. A transfer of \$1250 was made to the Mary H Perry Conservation Fund. Current balance is \$2272.96. The total cost of the plaque for the dam was \$740.28, of which \$400 was reimbursed to WOPWA by the Town of Holderness. The Mary H Perry Conservation Fund stands at \$9000 plus a small amount of interest, representing contributions from about 25 donors. Bob Maloney moved, Chuck Vicinus seconded and the board voted to approve the treasurer's report.

Dues Collection. We discussed a strategy for collecting dues from those who do not join at the Annual Meeting and those who do not attend the meeting. After the annual meeting, people generally forget and it might be wise to remind them in some way. Since the minutes are no longer sent out but are posted on the website, we need a plan. Only those who pay dues are technically members. This year there are 39 members. The highest number on record is 47. It was decided that we will not post any list on the website, and that we will send a brief dues reminder only. Will Stratton will follow up with a reminder when he feels it is appropriate for people who have usually joined.

Membership Lois Stratton, Membership Chairperson, drafted a letter to people in the Watershed who are not currently members. Until we resolve who are members, and who are people who live in the Watershed, we have no real idea of how many potential members there are. Currently we have two lists. One is of those who have paid dues this year and some who have paid in the past, and another much larger (over 100) and more ambiguous list of all residents in the Watershed, which needs some corrections. This list is supposedly a compilation of all those in the watershed and will be the foundation of a database. It incorporates work done over time by Doug DeCluett, Joan Vicinus, Nancy Voorhis and the list compiled for the Mary H Perry Conservation Fund mailing. Two lists were passed around for the Board to make corrections. As soon as the list is clarified, and

the letter amended slightly, Lois Startton will send the letter, encouraging membership, with Anne Knight's signature to non-members with property in the watershed. This should be done before July 1 and will include an invitation to the annual meeting as well as a membership form.

It was recommended that copies of the current membership list be made available at the Annual Meeting – names, address in the Watershed, winter address (if different), phone number(s), and email address

Nancy Voorhis will maintain the database and Mimzie Uhler has agreed to check the Town tax list online every 6 months and pass on changes to Nancy to keep the database current.

A slightly different mailing will go to the current membership list. That one will include the annual meeting invitation, the agenda and a membership form.

Website The website has been updated by Nancy Voorhis. The web address is now www.wopwa.org. A few board members have experienced problems getting to the website or to parts of it while others have not. To get to the more private part of the website, a user name, comprised of first initial and last name, and a password which is their email address must be entered. This part of the website is to function like a bulletin board for members to share notices, information, and items for sale. No mailing list will be put on the website. We need to encourage use of the website. Public notices should go on the general part of the site. The Board complimented Nancy on the quality of the website.

Water quality Galen Beach reported on water quality in the Pond. There have been no noticeable changes in the last year although the annual sampling has not yet been done. The latest news from the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) is the high content of PCB and other contaminants in loon egg shells from Squam Lake, which may be preventing them from hatching. The loon population on Squam has not increased, but the LPC has not completed water testing to determine where the contaminants are coming from. They are ubiquitous in low concentrations, and could be coming from anywhere, including the Holderness transfer station area and migrating to Squam. PCB's can also become airborne and could be conveyed through rain. The Board decided to add testing for PCB's to our annual water testing and authorized up to \$50 additional expenditure for this. If the cost will exceed that, the Board will confer by email and decide how much additional expense to approve. Cyanobacteria have been found in the loons, but since there is no previous data on this, it is not known if it is a factor in the loon population decrease on Squam. (See www.loon.org/squam-lake-study.php)

Another issue of concern is that cyanobacteria, have been linked to an unusual number of cases of ALS (Lou Gerhigs disease) on Mascoma Lake which is near the junction of Route 4 and I-89. Cyanobacteria is common on lakes in summer and appears as a "bloom" of bright blue-green algae that looks like paint chips. This overgrowth or bloom is caused by high lake temperatures and pollution, particularly during heat waves. Last year there was a small bloom on White Oak late in the season, but it went away quickly and was not dangerous. Cyanobacteria is part of our regular testing. If we see a bloom we should notify Galen Beach, and not swim or drink water near it. Galen is hopeful that the biologist from Plymouth State will be able to participate in one or more of our water samplings this

summer. A state limnologist comes once a year to check on each lake, and that person should be able to give us some advice on where to sample and what to look for that we may not be aware of. The State DES should be notified if we see a bloom. Alternatively, we could scoop some of it up in a glass jar, put it on ice and notify Galen, who will see that it gets to the lab in Plymouth. Galen was thanked for her work in fulfilling one of the primary purposes of WOPWA.

We have been asked by the LPC to be observers of the loons on White Oak Pond; we should note if there is one or more, and when more than one if they seem to be a pair, whether they are peaceful, confrontational, etc. We are to keep Galen apprised of what we observe about them. She will be the liaison with the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC). The last loon chick on White Oak was in 2007. Last year flooding may have caused the loss of a chick and a few years ago, an egg may have been abandoned when the lake was lowered for some dam repairs. The LPC also tests fish for PCB's. If anyone catches a fish 6 inches long or more, it can be taken to the LPC for this purpose. For more information (<http://www.theunionleader.com/article.aspx?headline=NH%20lake%20linked%20to%20ALS%20cases&articleId=9c46849c-5456-4748-8f16-823c9263aa43>)

Mary H Perry Conservation Fund (MHPCF) As reported above in the Treasurer's report the **MHPCF** has \$9000. Bob Maloney & Kevin Frank reported that they are pleased with the growth of the Fund so far. The plan is to stop soliciting contributions to the Fund when it reaches the initial goal of \$25,000. An applicant who puts land into a conservation easement can receive up to 20% of the value of the Fund at the end of the year prior to the application for expenses entailed in the process. The purpose is to provide a significant thank you to the property owner while also helping with the expenses. Rob Haskell has put a large piece of property into such an easement, and while the process is not yet complete, he will be a candidate for a disbursement from the Fund. The Board concurred that the Haskell easement is a significant event that should be publicized in the Plymouth Record Enterprise. It would help make people aware of the value of transferring land in this way, and will also publicize the Fund. We will need to determine if Rob is willing to be featured, and the timing should coincide with when Rob is here, at Annual Meeting or late in the summer. Galen Beach will contact Roger La Rochelle of the Squam Lakes Conservation Society, the Fund administrator, regarding any publicity. The news release could come from the **MHPCF**.

A new appeal for the Fund should incorporate information on the Haskell easement and about the growth of the Fund so far, which might also encourage further easements. Bob Maloney suggests that the appeal suggest a pledge, which would be fulfilled over a period of time. Additional appeals should come from the Board, not Kevin. It was decided that the appeal should be made around October 1. There should be a contact person named in the appeal letter, to be determined by the **MHPCF** Committee.

Will Stratton suggested donating a \$250 surplus from the WOPWA treasury to **MHPCF**. This will be put on the agenda for the Annual Meeting.

The George E. Levin Memorial Dam The White Oak Pond level was low after ice out, since NH Fish and Game requested that the dam be opened to allow enough water into

Mill Brook for the spawning of the common sucker fish, a beneficial scavenger which can be seen in White Oak Pond or in the brook shortly after ice out.

The Website now has photos of the Dam dedication and the Levin plaque. Other photos will be added. Mimzie Uhler volunteered to prepare a short write-up about George Levin and why the dam was named for him. It will be added to the photo display. Anyone who would like to contribute comments for the write-up should email Mimzie.

Janet Cocchiaro volunteered to plant flowers at the plaque site and will try to protect them from being mowed. Anne Knight will contact Scott King to see if he can repair the crumbled material, believed to be an adhesive, behind the plaque.

Historical Documents and Holderness Historical Society (HHS) Status Galen Beach has now completed scanning the hard copies of WOPWA history, meeting minutes, the history of dump and dam, development issues, and conservation issues onto CD's. The hard copies will be put into the HHS file reserved for us. The Board expressed its thanks to Galen for her work. Nancy Voorhis will be asked to add these documents to the website.

Nominating Committee The Nominating Committee is down to one member, Sara Rothschild. According to our By-Laws, there is no specific number of Board members, so the present number may be sufficient. Sarah Young will not continue on the Board since she has completed two two-year terms. As the Nom Com seeks new members for the Board, it was felt that we should try to get a representative from the Lovett, Wicksman, Hirsch, Gray, or Cohen families. Sara will be asked to handle the work of the Committee alone since there are so few people to contact. Of the Officers, the Secretary and Treasurer are one-year terms and must be elected every year. Mimzie Uhler & Will Stratton have each agreed to serve another year. The President and VP are both two year terms so Anne Knight and Ted Vansant will continue another year. All Board members present at the meeting agreed to continue on the Board. .

Annual Meeting Nancy McDonald will handle food again this year and will be the contact person on the flyer. Janet, Joan, Chuck and Roger will help with set up.

Postmaster Larry Mowbray is retiring in October. We agreed to invite him as a guest of honor to our Annual Meeting picnic so that we might extend a tribute. The community as a whole will honor him in the fall.

We decided to invite WOPWA artists to display their work again this year. Janet Cocchiaro will get the list of artists from Lois Stratton, contact artists, and coordinate the display.

Harry Vogel from The Loon Preservation Committee will be invited to make a 5-minute presentation about PCB's and the loon population. He will then take questions. Galen will contact him. He may be asked to speak at the time of the water quality report, which may be placed at or near the end of the meeting to coincide with his discussion.

New Hampshire Lakes Association Anne Knight brought to our attention the website of the New Hampshire Lakes Association (NHLA) which is accessible by anyone. The

website is www.nhlakes.org. The organization lobbies on behalf of the lakes and publishes an E-newsletter. We have paid the annual \$300 dues each year in the past. It was moved by Janet Cocchiaro, seconded by Galen Beach, and approved by the Board that we will continue this membership.

Lois and Will Stratton were thanked for hosting the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.