

**ASSOCIATION OF OWNERS OF LOWLANDS AND
MEADOWS AROUND CHILMARK POND
ANNUAL MEETING
August 12, 2017**

Officers Present:

Walter (Terry) Meinelt, President
Andria Jason, Vice President
Amelia Salzman, Clerk
Stephen Lewenberg, Treasurer and Commissioner
Martha Cottle, Commissioner

Call to Order

President Terry Meinelt declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at approximately 5 pm.

Minutes

The Minutes of the 2016 annual meeting being duly moved by Mr. Alan Parkes and seconded were approved as submitted to members with the Notice of Annual Meeting, the President's Report and the Commissioners' Report.

Annual administrative agenda

Mr. Meinelt explained that on occasion emergency work may be required to properly drain Chilmark Pond and asked the members to renew the Executive Committee's authority to borrow up to \$25,000 for emergency purposes. He further stated that the Executive Committee has recommended re-election of all three Commissioners as well as the re-election of Terry Meinelt as President, Andria Jason as Vice-President, Stephen Lewenberg as Treasurer and Amelia Salzman as Clerk of the Association of Owners of Lowlands and Meadows around Chilmark Pond—commonly known as the Chilmark Pond Association (CPA). Mr. Meinelt also reported the Executive Committee's recommendation to name Joan Malkin and Peter Bruce as Presidents Emeritus, a new category of Executive Committee membership. He then sought additional nominations from the floor. No additional nominations were made by the members. Therefore upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: That Martha Cottle, Stephen Lewenberg, and William Randol be and each hereby is elected as a Commissioner of the CPA.

VOTED: That each of the following persons be and hereby is elected to the office set forth beside his or her name:

Walter (Terry) Meinelt, President
Andria Jason, Vice-President
Stephen Lewenberg, Treasurer
Amelia Salzman, Clerk

VOTED: Joan Malkin and Peter Bruce, Presidents Emeritus

VOTED: To authorize the Executive Committee to borrow up to \$25,000 for emergency purposes.

President's report (written report attached)

Mr. Meinelt reported that there were three successful pond openings with good drainage between January and May 2017. During the winter, the CPA had planned to perform an "extended cut" that has been done in prior years to remove the sand that washes in from the ocean and creates shoals near the opening. This shoaling makes opening the cut less successful at draining Chilmark Pond. However, Mr. Meinelt received a call from the Chilmark Conservation Commission agent requesting that he call off the extended cut, which Mr. Meinelt did. There was some discussion about the difficulty of achieving proper pond drainage by opening only a narrow cut and about how other Great Ponds address this challenge.

Mr. Meinelt reported that the CPA continues to work with the MV Shellfish Group and also with the Edgartown Great Pond Foundation to learn more and to test water quality in Chilmark. He noted that the Commissioners coordinate with representatives of Biodiversity Works prior to opening the cut during protected bird nesting season.

Mr. Meinelt asked attendees to send Ms. Salzman information about people or organizations that should be included on our taxpayer list or that would like to receive information about the CPA.

Mr. Meinelt thanked Vice President Andria Jason for her great work updating the CPA website and invited everyone to visit the site.

Commissioners' Report

Ms. Cottle reported on behalf of the Commissioners that there were three successful pond openings in 2017. These were January 12-February 3; March 17-April 4; and May 16-June 3. There were no fall openings in 2016. Prior to the May opening, Ms. Cottle coordinated with Biodiversity Works because it would occur during the nesting season for protected birds, and was advised that there were no nests near the cut. She reported further that the Commissioners had arranged for an extended cut to occur after the March opening, but stopped the work because of concerns raised by the Chilmark Conservation Commission.

In response to a question about what constitutes successful pond drainage, Ms. Cottle responded that a big drop of pond depth and exchange of pond and ocean water are characteristics of good drainage. All of the 2017 openings resulted in drops in depth of about 50 inches, which is a lot.

Ms. Cottle echoed Mr. Meinelt's concern about shoaling around the cut and noted that without extended cut work we may not be achieving successful drainage even though the Pond is staying open for a long time. She noted that Gilbert's Cove is filling in.

Treasurer's Report (written report attached)

Mr. Lewenberg presented the Treasurer's Report. He noted that the CPA has approximately \$148,00 on hand and that 80 out of 115 taxpayers have paid their assessments. The only expense since June 2016 have related to sending out annual tax notices. The cost of opening the cut is less than the annual tax receipts, so we are building a solid cushion for an emergency. He asked for anyone who learns about land transfers to let us know so we can

update our tax roster. Many deeds are now held by trusts and this complicates tracking down the responsible taxpayers.

Mr. Lewenberg reported that his risk tolerance for investments is low and most of the CPA funds are in a nine-month CD. The CPA maintains both a checking and savings account at Martha's Vineyard Savings Bank and an investment account with Fidelity.

In response to a question about what happens when tax is not paid, Mr. Lewenberg replied that we try to track down the person and get them current. We have never brought an enforcement action though in his opinion having taxing authority technically means the CPA could bring an action against the property.

Other business

Water quality testing: Ms. Dani Cleary, a Martha's Vineyard Fellow with the Edgartown Great Pond Foundation (GPF) gave a presentation about her water sampling project. In Chilmark Pond she is both field testing and sending samples to a lab for analysis of total suspended particles, temperature, depth, pH, dissolved oxygen, salinity, conductivity, and nutrients. In the Spring, Ms. Cleary took four samples (one in the upper Pond and 3 in the lower Pond) and noted that Chilmark Pond has more freshwater than Edgartown—that the upper pond is essentially freshwater. She will conduct more samples in August and October. Ms. Cleary is specifically interested in human impacts on the natural environment and asked for people who have information about historic shellfish in the Pond to contact her. She will likely publish her findings on the GPF website in November. According to Ms. Emily Reddington, director of Science for the GPF, one goal of the project is to bring GPF water sampling protocols to other Martha's Vineyard Great Ponds.

Chilmark Pond Foundation: Mr. Allan Holt gave a brief update on the effort to establish a Foundation to support the health of Chilmark Pond. They have been learning from representatives of the Edgartown Great Pond Foundation that was created by different legislation from the law that created the CPA. It is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and has an annual budget of about \$230,000/year, with a permanent staff. The town of Edgartown (not an organization like the CPA) arranges to dredge Edgartown Great Pond almost every year between November and March (due to protected birds primarily) and the GPF owns a dredger that they would rent out. Mr. Holt's group said it will be important to gather reliable baseline data on the Pond's water quality. Mr. Holt indicated that he hopes the Foundation for Chilmark Pond will take formal shape soon.

Photography exhibit of Chilmark Pond: Mr. John O'Keefe announced that the photography exhibit he is curating about Chilmark Pond will take place in the Chilmark Library starting on August 19th. Mr. O'Keefe encourage all to visit the exhibit and to share maps and photographs with him at quenomica@aol.com

MV Shellfish Group: Ms. Emma Beach from the MV Shellfish Group provided an update of activities. They continue to work on EPA funded project to determine whether harvesting phragmites at certain times of the year might reduce nitrogen loading in the Pond but that it is very complex and difficult to accurately determine the acreage of phragmites (she said a drone would surely help). Ms. Beach noted that there are definitely oysters in the Pond, but they don't grow very big probably due to low salinity and that while it has proven very difficult to propagate ridged mussels (an inedible bivalve that can thus legally be grown

unlike oysters because of the Pond's high bacteria levels) they have found some baby ribbed mussels attached to other shells and continue to try to grow them. Ms. Beach noted that if the pond might be clean enough during winter to get a conditional oyster permit.

Ms. Beach reported that she has helped raise some funding for the Martha's Vineyard Commission to install meters that log temperature, salinity and dissolved oxygen and feed the data directly to a computer and that the CPA might be interested in getting these installed in Chilmark Pond. She also said that the Massachusetts Estuary Project report has information about what it considers to be a successful great pond opening. She noted that the MVC has lots of data on Chilmark Pond and suggested we put up links between the two websites. Ms. Beach observed that there was no widgeon grass this year and wondered whether there might be a positive connection with the fewer number of swans on the Pond.

Biodiversity Works: Ms. LouAnne Johnson reported that there were nests of three plover pairs, one oystercatcher pair near the cut. The plovers did very well producing 10 chicks that survived. She said that Northeast Beach Tiger Beetles were also observed on the beach. Ms. Johnson explained that federal law establishes the April 1- September 1 season for protecting the birds and their nests and that it also protects their habitat. This is why she has raised concerns about the extended cut work, with an excavator on the beach and sand moved around even temporarily. Ms. Johnson noted that Oyster Pond openings are now officially permitted.

Other

The MV Commission is performing a three-year study on the Pond. It was suggested that the Commissioners of Chilmark Pond let them know before opening the cut so the MVC folks can take water samples before and after.

A child seems to have gotten a serious rash from swimming in the upper/middle Pond which may have been caused by parasite carried by geese in the Pond.

Mr. Meinelt adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Adjourned.

A True Record

Attest:

Amelia Salzman
Clerk