

Lake Zoar Authority

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Member Towns

Monroe-Newtown-Oxford-Southbury

The regular meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority was held Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Monroe Town Hall, 7 Fan Hill Road, Monroe, CT 06488.

Commissioners Present:

Gary Fillion, Chairman
Bill May, Treasurer
Lesley Pires, Secretary
Frank Cavallo
Jerry Kozera
Mark Saksa
Dick Speer

Absent:

Jeff Thomas
John Downs
Herbert Garber

Gary Fillion, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Secretary's Report:

A motion to accept the minutes as corrected from the May 4, 2021 minutes was made by Dick Speer, seconded by Bill May; the motion was passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

A resident from Newtown placed a concern about a black 22 foot Bennington pontoon boat bearing a large "F*** Biden" flag, boating throughout Lake Zoar on Sunday, May 23rd, 2021. The resident approached Marine Patrol regarding the profanity, and an officer on shift told him that he could not restrict the flag, as it is freedom of speech, but agreed to speak to the driver. The resident observed the officer then drive in a direction away from the pontoon boat. The Marine Patrol Coordinator reported there was no report made of the incident and agreed to speak to the patrol officers. The Marine Patrol Coordinator and Chairman agreed the driver should be made aware of how residents perceive the flag as inappropriate.

The Newtown resident also observed that throughout the weekend, no one observed the no wake zones near the construction zone under the Rochambeau Bridge. Drivers are currently speeding past the barge while construction crew are working.

Correspondence and News Clippings:

Candlewood Lake Authority minutes were made available for review.

Treasurer's Report:

Bill May, Treasurer, presented account balances, with cash on hand totaling \$110,215.90. \$94,832 has been received from all four participating towns. The total funds equal \$205,047.90. The FY 2021-2022 Budget is currently planned for \$114,831.00 in spending. There is a scheduled meeting in August to review insurance premiums.

Marine Patrol Report:

Dan Semosky reported that Newtown and Oxford patrolled the lake on May 22nd and 23rd respectively. The officers observed many boaters without personal flotation devices. There must be a wearable life jacket on board for each person aboard every vessel. PFD's must be worn by anyone operating or riding a personal watercraft, or by anyone being pulled behind a boat. In addition, anyone in a manually propelled vessel must wear a PFD from October 1 through May 31. There were 20 stops and citations regarding PFDs, with two registration offenses. Those without PFDs on board were given PFDs to return by end of day.

Marine Patrol removed a huge log from the lake by the sandbar. It was hooked and dragged to Newtown, south of the boat launch, and tied up. It was reported to FirstLight for removal.

The holiday weekend of May 28-31 was washed out due to rain and Marine Patrol did not go out on the lake. There was no boat traffic and the shift cancellations saved the LZA about \$4,000.

On Friday, May 28th, contact was made with the Rochambeau Bridge Construction Safety Officer regarding complaints that boaters are making wakes near the construction barge. Marine Patrol observed 5 boaters making wakes when in the area. This area of the lake, under the bridge, is a new no wake zone. The water is too shallow in that area, and wakes cause dangerous conditions for workers. Marine Patrol suggested larger signs to alert drivers of the new no wake zone before they approach. Commissioners discussed if the CT DOT should be obligated to provide better signage or efforts to slow boaters down before they approach the construction zone, as is done during roadway construction. The LZA cannot provide a patrol boat for this effort and can only enforce the no wake zones on weekends during patrol shifts. Chairman Gary Fillion agreed a meeting with the construction company was necessary before the next LZA meeting.

Marine Patrol will enforce the no wake zone under the Rochambeau Bridge on weekends. Under Connecticut Law Title 15 Navigation and Aeronautics, drivers are responsible for damage caused by their wake, and speeding infractions can result in an \$80 fine. Offenses involving serious damage or injury carry charges of reckless or negligent operation, which can result in a \$1,000 fine, imprisonment up to six months, or both.

Publicity/ Public Awareness:

Lesley Pires reported that water chestnut information, construction zone safety, weed control, and cyanobacteria monitoring will be updated on the LZA website.

Water Quality / Grants Report:

Chairman Gary Fillion reported that in accordance with CT DEEP, Pesticide Division notification requirements, selected areas of Lake Zoar will be chemically treated with Reward (Diquat) herbicide and and ProcellaCOR, targeting control the aquatic nuisance plants Eurasian watermilfoil and curlyleaf pondweed. The first annual treatment is scheduled for Tuesday, June 15, 2021, weather permitting. Prior to treatment, the lake shoreline (in the treatment areas and at public access sites) will be posted with printed signs in accordance with DEEP requirements. The LZA has requested that the contractor post these signs by the previous Friday.

Gary reported that he spoke to the First Selectman of Southbury, who was unaware that Southbury was not participating in supplying police officers for Marine Patrol, as do the three other participating towns. Gary advised him that the LZA would like Southbury to participate in the patrols.

Boats and Motors Report:

Dick Speer reported that the boats are in good condition. The new lights are working well. There is one floodlight on the cockpit of boat 2 that needs an adjustment, which he will perform. Dick reported that two five pound fire extinguishers on each boat need to be replaced. He also reported he also needs two shorter oars for rescue operations, that will fit in the storage area. Treasurer Bill May will work with Dick on price quotes.

Grants:

Frank Cavallo and his partner Barbara McWilliams reported that the Environmental Professionals Organization of Connecticut (EPOC) grant was denied, as they were inundated with offers. She was told to try again next year.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mark Saksa, seconded by Bill May, the motion was passed unanimously. Gary Fillion adjourned the meeting at 7:42.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lesley Pires, Secretary

The minutes are not considered official until approved at the next regular meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority to be held on Monday, July 12, 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Community Center.