



CANDLEWOOD LAKE AUTHORITY

Member Municipalities: Brookfield • Danbury • New Fairfield • New Milford • Sherman

PO BOX 37 • SHERMAN, CT 06784 • P (860) 354-6928 • F (860) 350-5611

Minutes of CLA Regular Meeting Wednesday, August 14, 2024 - 7:00PM via ZOOM

ATTENDING:

P. Schaer	Sherman
M. O'Connor	Sherman
B. Licht	New Fairfield
J. Main	New Fairfield
M. Gaffey	Brookfield
W. Meikle	Brookfield
D. Rosemark	Danbury
S. Kluge	New Milford
M. Toussaint	New Milford
J. Wodarski	New Milford

ABSENT:

D. Cushnie	Sherman
J. Archer	New Fairfield
B. Lohan	Brookfield
E. Siergiej	Danbury
C. Robinson	Danbury

M. Howarth, Executive Director
N. Stalter, Director of Ecology
M. Gasperino, Operations Manager

Recorder: N. Stalter

Guests: 2

Chairman, **Martin O'Connor**, called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Mark Toussaint made a motion to approve the consent agenda minus the special meeting minutes, seconded by **Will Meikle**, all voting in favor.

TREASURER (Will Meikle)

Will M. stated the 2023/24 Fiscal year performance has been finalized and we have a \$3,600 surplus. The audit review will begin shortly and the July financial report should be completed soon. Budget planning for 25/26

will begin in early September for committees. The first draft of the budgets to be completed by October 18 then to be reviewed by the Finance Committee then presented to the Board meeting in November.

Will Meikle made a motion to transfer \$100,000 from line 261 in Equipment and Facilities to the Capital Fund for future purchases, as included in our FY24 budget. Seconded by Marianne Gaffey, all voting in favor.

Will Meikle made a motion to approve the purchase of a set of Stainless Steel Dual propellers for a not to exceed \$1,750, seconded by Phyllis Schaefer, all voting in favor.

PUBLIC SAFETY (Mark Howarth)

Mark H. provided an update that all shifts have gone out as planned and it's been a busy summer with many calls. We have posted on social media recognizing some of the additional efforts the patrol has made. The Marine Patrol will begin filming their Public Safety videos on 8/15.

Michael G. provided an update on the boat count, which is higher this year at 6,650. Full results will be posted by the CLA.

EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES (Michael Gasperino)

Michael discussed that maintenance on the patrol boats has been completed. The boats are equipped with handheld radios which are securely mounted with chargers now. The boats are docked at various locations on the lake so the patrol is set up now in multiple locations. Buoys are all accounted for, The ARK has been repaired with a new engine and the new signage has been set up for the building in Sherman and for the ARK. Exclosures are holding up and doing well.

PUBLIC AWARENESS (Neil Stalter)

Neil discussed the video project and the process for the new educational video series, including the filming schedule and the posting of the first video. The first video has had a lot of positive feedback on social media. The website redesign should be completed in the fall. Phyllis provided the newly elected State Representatives our contact information

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT (Neil Stalter)

Steve mentioned we are having a great water quality season. Neil provided an update on water quality monitoring. The Lake stewards are having a positive educational impact and will be scheduled through Labor Day. There have been fewer boats noted with invasive plants this season with many boaters saying they have been through the inspections in the past with our Stewards. Neil will be presenting at NALMS this year regarding his research on the plant community and how we are managing that.

Neil introduced the intern Liam, who is studying Biology at the University of South Carolina. Liam gave a presentation on road salt pollution and how it affects the lake along with future plans to help the lake.

ADJOURN

Martin O'Connor made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mark Toussaint, all voting in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Archer ^{DW}

Joan Archer, Secretary
Dee Wright, Administrative Coordinator

These minutes are not considered official until they have been approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Candlewood Lake Authority.



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**Martin O'Connor, Chair
Candlewood Lake Authority**

August 14, 2024

DEEP - MOA

Document executed and will support the team in developing our policies in alignment with the MOA guidelines.

Municipalities

Developed a Mid-Year report to be reviewed with the respective leaders. The report provides updates regarding Public Safety, Marine Patrol, Ecology, and Public Awareness. Also included is an update regarding the Delegates' tenure and term dates. The in-person meetings are presently being scheduled and should conclude before the month's end.

Committees and Delegates

Based on the feedback received last month from the Delegate and Executive Committees, we have rebalanced the committee members this month. I am following up with those individuals impacted by the rebalancing.

Financials

I am pleased to say that we remain in a positive Operating position, which includes our Capital Expenditures, as we approach year-end.

Martin O'Connor

August 14, 2024

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August 14, 2024
Executive Director
Mark Howarth

Monthly Report

- Neil and I attended Leadership Danbury again this year on July 24th. We spoke to the group about the CLA and the lake. We discussed some of the challenges when it comes to striking the right balance with lake management strategies as well as what our Marine Patrol does while out providing public safety for those who recreate here.

The attendees also asked us several really good questions, which we were happy to answer.

We appreciated having the opportunity to participate again this year, speaking before the Leadership Danbury group.

- We have been working with our IT company to test our systems and security at the office.
- Chief Mellas continues to make progress with the testing and eventual launch of our new on-board Patrol software. On my end, I am working on getting some hardware and wireless connectivity issues straightened out, as I have been learning of some different options that may improve our system's performance and future capabilities.
- I met with Len Greene from FirstLight for a general discussion about the lake and ways we can work together to improve different recreational and environmental challenges. I appreciate our open and frank discussions about the lake.
- We have had a busy season reviewing marker permit applications submitted to the CT DEEP, for which we are the first line of review in the process. Additionally, we are working with the CT DEEP to address the unpermitted buoys that some have placed in the water.

- Our first educational video about algae has been posted on our website and social media. We have also had it subtitled in both Spanish and Portuguese. All three language versions are available via our website. The video has been played 1,800 times via Facebook in less than a week.
- We have been working to educate the public about the great work the Marine Patrol does when out on the water. While they certainly are out there educating the public and enforcing the boating laws of the State of CT, they do so much more to assist the public. At the end of July, we did a social media post featuring one of our officers who went above and beyond that month. It received a lot of positive attention on social media, and we plan to do more of that going forward.



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J. Neil Stalter

Director of Ecology and Environmental Education

Candlewood Lake Authority

Re: August Monthly Report

Date: 8/14/2024

- We are continuing to have a generally good water quality year with higher than average clarity and few reports of algae blooms. We have successfully completed two large-scale samplings for the nutrient budget project and have one more large sampling remaining this year, along with an additional sampling site we visit monthly, and one more sampling event in November.
 - There has been more public interest in the E. Coli monitoring program this year in Candlewood as some town beaches have been closing due to high measurements/pre-emptively closing due to precipitation. There are no unusual trends in the lake this year and it seems that the public is noticing the monitoring more due to more conservative closings by town parks & rec. and public health departments after precipitation.
- All 5 exclosures have been deployed in Candlewood and are marked with hazard buoys. These were much easier to install thanks to the new design, and hopefully will be easier to remove in the late fall for the same reason.
 - We will continue to monitor these for signs of regrowth.
 - As there has been no widespread signs of plant recovery lake-wide, I expect another carp removal to be scheduled by DEEP fisheries late in the season as things begin to wind down.



- The stewards are still having a successful year with very few rained out shifts – although some shifts have seen less traffic due to weather.
 - They have yet to run into an invasive species on a boat, and as the season continues more people are expressing that they have been through an inspection before and are more aware of the problem. These are all good signs that the program is having a positive effect on educating the community, and helping prevent invasive species spread even when stewards aren't stationed at a launch.

- My abstract titled: “**Patterns of Rapid Plant Loss & Recovery After Triploid Grass Carp Stocking in Candlewood Lake, CT**” has officially been accepted and scheduled for presentation at NALMS 2024 in Lake Tahoe.
 - I'll be presenting on Wednesday Nov. 6 at 1:30pm. I look very forward to sharing some of the things we've learned about the grass carp as a management tool, and strategies on how to use them and help the plant community recover after over-grazing.

- WestConn's blue green algae testing program has been ongoing this year with some of the lowest measurements on record, including measurement of zero which (while not necessarily meaning exactly 0) indicates an exceptionally low level of microcystin toxin at the town beaches.

- Our intern Liam is continuing work on his independent research project on Salt Pollution and looks forward to sharing his findings with the board via presentation at the board meeting!

- Thankfully most reports of Zebra Mussels in Candlewood Lake have remained relatively minor, and the population has not begun to approach nuisance levels. While this doesn't mean the ecosystem won't reach that point, it does indicate that continued drawdowns will remain a critical management tool that will help manage the population annually.
 - Searches for zebra mussels in Squantz Pond have also all been negative, indicating that the low calcium concentrations there are likely preventing widespread invasion from Candlewood.