

OTTER POND PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP MEETING Q2 2022

Via Zoom April 7, 2022

1) Call to Order at 7:04

2) Welcome and Introductions

Roll conducted. 23 members were in attendance via Zoom.

3) OPPA mission: The improvement of Otter Pond and its watershed, promotion of proper shoreline practices, avoidance of the introduction of invasive species of vegetation and predatory fish, and improvement of the quality of Otter Pond.

Stu read the updated Mission Statement, which removed some redundancy and added clarity. See Item 4.

4) Bylaw update – OPPA Organizational Purpose

The Otter Pond Protective Association serves to improve and preserve the quality of Otter Pond, through the promotion of proper water, shoreline and watershed practices, avoidance of invasive species and pollution, and collaboration on protective efforts, all to ensure the value, enjoyment and longevity of Otter Pond for current and future Generations.

No questions about the change. Mission statement approved by vote of the membership. Stu will send the revised bylaws to membership and the attorney general's office.

5) 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes and Treasurer's Report approvals

No questions about the meeting minutes or treasurer's report. Membership Meeting Minutes were approved by vote of the membership. Treasurer's Report was approved by vote of the membership.

6) Membership development - Local residents and Businesses

Board of Directors would like to increase involvement through increased membership from the local area as well as a business membership.

Stu and David Erickson are obtaining additional resident names. There is a list of businesses being created for membership invitations. Eric Rieders asked about adding a question about membership in OPPA to the sign at the Otter Pond Beach. Stu mentioned that advertisement was prohibited by the deed. Hugh McCann volunteered to help recruit members. He suggested a free OPPA decal with membership so businesses can advertise their affiliation as a business member.

7) Georges Mills stormwater infrastructure upgrade

The state is not maintaining the catch basin at the bottom of Otter Hill Road. A private citizen is currently cleaning out the sediment from it, which is not an acceptable solution. The Town of Sunapee will install a swirler tank to catch sediment, and ask the DOT to improve another nearby catch basin. Doug Peel updated the membership on the culvert maintenance near Palazzi Pond Road, which is also supposed to be maintained by the state.

8) Protecting the Watershed

The water quality report for Otter Pond was sent in early April, and shared with membership. Salt is the current biggest problem. The Watershed Committee of LSPA (which Stu co-chairs) is focusing on public education and lobbying for a code enforcer (CEO) to be more active in each watershed town. Direct mail info went out to New London residents and will go out to Sunapee, Newbury and Springfield residents. There will be an LSPA press release on Earth Day (4/21) to launch the Let's Be Clear awareness initiative.

Bill reminded residents that one of the key points to bring up is to reduce the use of fertilizer around the pond. Stu also mentioned the NH LAKES Lake Smart program and the LSPA Watershed Wise program, both of which are free and discrete. Brian McAllister suggested members question the use of TSP (trisodium phosphate) for dock cleaning and power washing.

9) Working Group Updates

- Renters & Guests Communication

Tent card text was sent by email earlier in April and shown by Stu to the group. The cards will be distributed for use by owners who have guests or who rent their homes to inform them of things to be aware of.

Bill asked for a volunteer to put a sign on/near their property about dog waste. We would like two signs, one of which may go on OPPA land.

- Weeds

Ruth needs a few more volunteers to watch and report weeds and invasive species. The duties are: From May to September, perform a monthly survey to look for five weeds, get used to what "should" be there in the pond and get to know when there is a growth of what "shouldn't" be there. Volunteers would report findings to the Weed group, which will get DES assistance to identify weeds. Jane Peel volunteered for the inlet part of the lake. Eric Rieders suggested using the free app iNaturalist for plant identification.

- Watercraft and Water Safety

If anyone sees logs floating (from a hurricane in the 1930's) please report them to Doug Peel or Jeff Knapp and they will remove them. Doug found two logs last year. Bill reminded everyone that jet skis are not allowed on Otter Pond.

- Website development

Francisco San Emeterio shared the upgraded website, which is still in development. It needs copy to be fully ready to launch. Members who have photos of the pond should send them to Bill or Stu. Brian McAllister suggested we post activities and volunteering on the site.

- Beach

Beach clean-up day on April 30th. New London has a clean-up day and will assist in the removal of waste we gather. Brian McAllister asked about photographing the trash for a record of it. This was done last year.

- ii) Weekly upkeep

Doug Peel will oversee the weekly cleaning schedule, and may start a Google Doc for sign up.

10) Community - Otter Pond Swag update

Nancy Dickgiesser provided an update on Otter Pond gear that can be obtained from a wholesaler. Men's and Women's t-shirts and zip-up hoodies plus children's t-shirts. She asked the membership if they would want to use this as a fundraiser. Hugh McCann suggested we get a sample shirt and see if it shrinks, and he also suggested UV-resistant long-sleeved shirts. Eric Rieders suggested we pre-buy some of every size and sell them. Stu reminded the membership that we have to bear in mind the effort and cost required to ship shirts everywhere

11) Unencapsulated "blue" foam

This type of blue foam never degrades and is polluting Otter Pond. On beach clean-up days this foam in large and small form was picked up in large volume. Animals consume it, and it is toxic. Stu suggested we have a dialogue with any owners about how to get rid of it. Lynn Snow said the otters in the pond push up on the blue foam to break up their mussel shells. A replacement material is encapsulated foam. It is foam in a hard plastic shell that floats. Dale stated we should provide information on alternative float material to blue foam owners.

Stu suggested taking photos of the waste picked up at the beach and sharing them with anyone interested or currently owning a dock or float with unencapsulated blue foam.

Patty Freeman offered the four blue barrels behind her garage for blue foam replacement.

12) Annual Membership Meeting

Suggested membership meeting date of August 28, 2022, with a hybrid model for the meeting (with Zoom) and a community event on Oak Ridge Road (possibly pot luck style) afterward. Alternative would be August 27.

13) New Business and News to Share

No new business or questions.

14) Adjournment at 8:18pm