

Lake Zoar Authority

P.O. Box 931
Southbury, CT 06488
Email: info@lakezoarauthority.org

Member Towns

Monroe-Newtown-Oxford-Southbury

The regular meeting of the Lake Zoar Authority was held on Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 7:00 pm at the Monroe Town Hall.

Commissioners Present:

Barbara McWilliams
John Downs
James Galarneau
Tim Glover
Tony Fischetti
Bruce Lafky
John Morin
Lesley Pires
Dick Speer
Avi Veeraraghav

Absent:

Call to Order

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Secretary's Report:

A motion to accept the minutes from both the December 03, 2024 meeting and the December 13, 2025 special meeting was made by Tim Glover seconded by Tony Fischetti; the motion was passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

Resident from Sandy Hook was in attendance.

Treasurer's Report:

Chairwoman Barbara McWilliams reported current treasury balances with cash on hand equaling \$83,847.89, with invoices paid for insurance, Lakeside Marina, and New England Aquatic. A motion to pass the treasurer's report was made by John Morin, seconded by Dick Speer, the motion was passed unanimously.

Marine Patrol Report:

Nothing to report.

Publicity/ Public Awareness:

Avi Veeraraghav is currently managing IT systems. James Galarneau is fielding info box questions and managing all websites. There has been one info box question in favor of restricting wake boats on the lake.

Water Quality

Weed Treatment Committee:

Barbara McWilliams reported that this year's annual weed treatment plan will be to treat in April with early permits. Commissioners reiterated the importance of treating prior to May 15 to prevent massive algae blooms with potential for harmful human and animal exposure to microcystin toxins. Commissioners expressed frustration with the historical lack of FirstLight's cooperation in mutually agreed upon weed treatment plans. Tony Fischetti shared frustrations of Newtown lakeside residents with poor recreational access due to weed overgrowth. Tony volunteered to manage the Weed Treatment Committee in efforts to make this year's treatment plan most effective.

Water Quality Monitoring Committee:

John Morin reported interest in the possibility of a purposeful draw down over the winter. Exposure of root systems can naturally reduce invasive species in the lake. John has contacted FirstLight to investigate this possibility and hopes to explore its applicability for next season.

John also attended the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) periodic review meeting with FirstLight on January 23, 2025. During the meeting John expressed the following concerns;

1. The SMP modification term is at risk of being updated to 10 years instead of 6, and the public notice requirement before updates are made may be eliminated.
2. FirstLight permit application reviews are incomplete and ineffective as they do not include application steps or response time expectations from FirstLight.
3. FirstLight reserves the right to revise all changes to the plan without review or input, but states the plan is a collaborative effort among relevant municipalities, federal, and state agencies.
4. Derelict dock removal requirements are incomplete and ineffective and lack definitive removal processes.
5. Land control requirements for the developed recreational lands parcel 20C-9-CL-P 3.36 Ac / the Southbury beach at the Pomperaug River entry into Lake Zoar are not sufficiently defined. There is issue with who is responsible for maintaining the land and safe usage.
6. There is no Lake Zoar overcrowding plan and one must be implemented due to the constrictive narrow shape of the lake. The current number of boats moored at residential and marina locations combined with ramp access exceeds the USCG 2009 recommendations for Candlewood Lake and FirstLight's 2014 recommendations for Candlewood Lake.

FirstLight will update the SMP with its proposed modifications. A Public hearing is planned for February 26, 2025, from 6-9 pm at the Heritage Hotel in Southbury, CT. Members of the public can attend the meeting and speak for three minutes.

Commissioner Tony Fischetti exited the meeting early due to a previously scheduled engagement.

Boats and Motors Report:

None.

Grants:

None.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

Chairperson Barbara McWilliams visited the LZA records office in Monroe and found it in disarray. John Morin suggested a records retention schedule. John and Lesley will verify state and federal regulations before presenting a schedule.

By-Laws Review:

Lesley Pires presented a change to the by-laws in accordance with a recent FOIA regulation regarding the recordings of electronic meetings. Commissioners agreed the by-laws should be amended to state, "meetings held in electronic attendance only will be recorded and uploaded to the LZA website for 45 days, in compliance with FOIA regulations." A two third vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting will authorize a published amendment.

Election of Officers:

Barbara McWilliams nominated John Morin for Vice Chairman, seconded by Dick Speer, the motion was passed unanimously.

Tim Glover nominated Avi Veeraraghav for Treasurer, seconded by Lesley Pires, the motion was passed unanimously.

James Galarneau nominated Lesley Pires for Secretary, seconded by John Morin, the motion was passed unanimously.

Lesley Pires nominated Barbara McWilliams for Chairperson, seconded by Dick Speer, the motion was passed unanimously.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Dick Speer, seconded by Tim Glover, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned 8:17pm.

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 Tuesday March 4, 2025 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Community Center.