

Lake Waramaug Association, Inc.

Minutes of the End-of-Season Membership Meeting
Sunday, September 8, 2019

A meeting of the Lake Waramaug Association, Inc. ("LWA"), a non-profit organization, was held at the Lake Waramaug Country Club, New Preston, Connecticut on Sunday, September 8, 2019.

Anne Block, Co-President, called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM.

Craig Nelson, 1st Selectman of Warren, was in attendance.

Presidents' Report: Anne Block reported that we continue to work with our neighboring and partnering not-for-profit organizations who care about the lake and its watershed. The land trusts, in particular (Steep Rock, Weantinoge, Warren Land Trust.)

Catherine Rawson will illustrate the development of this partnership in a presentation later this afternoon.

An aquatic Weed Identification workshop, hosted by the Lake Waramaug Task Force, will be held on the 14th of September. The program is free of charge. They will gather at Arrow Point and will ride on the Task Force boat. RSVP at seanhayden@lakewaramaug.org or 860.868.0331. Children are welcomed and encouraged to come!

Gail Berner reported that we hope to improve our outreach with our membership, spearheaded by MaryJo Keating, Chairperson of our Communications Committee. The revamp will include an overhaul of our website, as well as social media improvements.

The Association has received many calls about large wake boats that are used for wake boarding, which have grown exponentially in this past year or so. The Task Force is looking into how this may impact the ecology of our lake as well as addressing shoreline erosion concerns. On our website we will post a comparable problem and solution in Michigan, whereas individual boat owners are responsible for damages caused by boats.

Report of the Lake Waramaug Authority: Ed Berner and Pat Kessler. Pat reported that it was a good year. The police force spent 65.5 hours on patrol. Many safety checks were made, and many verbal warnings were given. Clarke Outdoors, who rents canoes and kayaks at the State Park, was better at educating renters. There were no saves or fatalities. Area talks were given on boating safety including at the Warren and Washington beaches. There were no incidents at the regattas. Education as prevention has provided successful.

Ed reports that the police are well aware of the wake boarding problems and have been responsive, and have let them know that the wakes can be very dangerous to neighboring self-propelled crafts. There needs to be a balance between individual enjoyment and public safety.

The State Law states boaters must simply be 100 feet off the shoreline.

There seems to be less concern about pedestrians and bikers on the lake road. Speeds seems to be down.

Fireworks Report: Many thanks to the Vance Family for allowing us to use their field as launch site. The Warren Fire Department received a donation in our name in recognition for allowing us to continue this lovely tradition. \$1300 was made in flare sales. Our merchants who helped were terrific in helping with our fundraisers. The flares pre-date the fireworks and we hope to promote that tradition with enthusiasm next summer.

Picnic Report: In true New England understated sensibility: the picnic was a tad damp this year, and therefore a very intimate affair. After a morning of watching the weather, we decided to go forward with a less than 50% chance of storms, and yet we received a direct hit. We will again plan on the picnic next year and be more conservative about utilizing a rain date. We thank all who attended for doing so and look forward to getting together next year, to be held on a Saturday in mid July.

Catherine Rawson Executive Director of the Weantinoge Land Trust gave a report on the importance of land preservation. She is also an attorney. The trust was founded in 1965. Over 10,000 acres are protected through the trust. They employ 6 full-time employees. The Land Trust averages 7 new land acquisitions annually. Department of Agriculture enjoys many partnerships, particularly with Warren with the Warren Farming Future program. They manage 12 public hiking preserves. 29 working farms are protected through their organizations, and many rare and endangered species are protected. 1300 hours of donated time by staff have been recorded. CT Community foundation are currently provided funding for two interns, who also help with neighboring land trusts.

Reports of all environmental concerns: by 2100, 50% of all species on our planet will face extinction. The Weantinoge Land Trust is focused on healthy forests and mitigation measures to combat climate change.

Ms. Rawson presented a map of Berkshire Wildlife Linkage, which outlines the species' migratory corridor that runs from the Hudson River to Canada. The Northwest Connecticut is a pinch point for this corridor. Lake Waramaug is a Class AA water resource which is the highest classification given by the State. Tributary streams are also clear and cool. Farmland soils are fertile. Data from the Nature Conservancy shows highly resilient lands in abundance. The area is complex geographically, which is inviting for varied species, and there is a broad swath of rare and native species. The first loon was seen on the lake this year, the first one in more than a decade.

Conserving land is the best way to preserve water quality. Impervious surfaces can very quickly negatively impact water quality; even a 10% coverage of these surfaces can negatively affect water quality, and once that lower grade water quality is at issue, it is almost impossible to improve it.

65% forested land indicates better water quality.

Lake Waramaug has a number of strong conservation partners. Even a small acreage can make a big impact around water bodies, which Ms. Rawson wanted to impress most upon our constituency.

She presented a conservation primer to educate those members in attendance on how to move forward if one has an interest in donating or placing an easement on land. 95% of land is donated outright, with great tax advantages. If one is a qualified farmer, the benefits are exponential.

Paul Frank moved to wave the reading of the June minutes, which was unanimously approved.

June 7, 2020 will be our next Membership Meeting, to be held at the a time and place to be announced.

Anne Block adjourned the meeting at 3:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Adams, Recording Secretary