

Hidden Valley Home Owners Association  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
June 4, 2016  
Tuftonboro Town House

**Meeting began at 9:00 AM**

**Board Members present** - David Smith, Mark Evitts, David Sharp, Janice Michaud, Ron McCracken, Chuck Wilcox, Ed Davis, Dotte Endres, Tom McPhail, and Bob Shockley

**Board Members absent** – Jim Minieri

**Guests:** Eedee Dopp, Ray Graham, Tammy Ducharme

**Agenda**

**Proposal to address condition of the Second Beach**

Mark Evitts presented a plan for Second Beach improvements which follows the state approved guidelines. In an effort to improve the situation Shane Folsom, from Folsom Design of Wolfeboro was engaged last summer. Shane prepared a plan for a perched beach and a permit was secured from the state of New Hampshire to enable the work outlined in his plan to be completed. Shane has proposed the largest beach area allowable after taking into account state regulations. A rendering of the proposed project was available at the Board Meeting. This plan was done with a focus on drainage issues and Mark has been assured by both the designer and contractor that it will perform well. That being said, it is possible that the contractor will have to make tweaks after installation.



Numerous quotes were requested from area contractors and several responded & several did not. President David Smith asked the opinion of each board member to the proposed plan. The majority of the Board had very positive comments regarding the design and plan. There was discussion regarding whether a stone wall or concrete block wall would be more durable, taking into consideration vandalism and children removing stones from the wall. Mark feels confident with the quality of the proposed stone structure.

There was concerned discussion regarding the contributors to the significant erosion where the mouth of the beach meets the water. While some undoubtedly resulted from lapping of the pond water as well as the impact of ice in and out, it was agreed that much was due to ground water working through the steps barrier. It was further agreed that the selected contractor must address provide assurance to our satisfaction. Mark expressed his confidence that the design and its execution would successfully address the ground water issues.

Another comment was made that best access for putting in kayaks and canoes should be considered in the plan.

Mark also expressed his strong opinion that due to the nature of what will be the finished product and its inability to stand up to such traffic w/out damage thus compromising this investment, Second Beach should be closed during the winter with access on and off the pond by snow mobiles/four wheelers directed to and limited to First Beach.

Another suggestion was to have a catch basin to pick up surface water from the beach area. In addition a question was offered regarding a performance bond to ensure that the plan provide the solution as expected. Mark suggested a warranty, or a suit against the company if such should prove to be necessary. Unfortunately, we may not know if there will be any problems in the first few years of the implementation of the plan.

David Smith asked that the Second Beach Improvement Committee be reformed in order to finalize the plan for the beach to their satisfaction and to bring their recommendation back to the Board and then w/ Board approval on to the membership at the Annual Meeting. Ron McCracken, Bob Shockley, Chuck Wilcox, and Mark Evitts all agreed to be part of the committee. Treasurer David Sharp stated that he needs to have a budget for the project to be included in the presentation at the Annual Meeting on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and reminded all Chairs to get their budgets to him in a timely manner.

There was a question as to whether or not the bidding should be kept open to other contractors. The majority of the Board voted Yes on this question. At this juncture it was pointed out that if the state-approved design is changed, we might go full circle, voiding the permits already in place. We want to avoid such if at all possible as obtaining new permits might take up to seven months.

## **Review of marina and pathway objectives and current completion readiness**

The marina has been installed and it looks fantastic. However, several boaters have complained the marina is not boat friendly **in the aspect that** there are no cleats to tie boat lines to. In speaking with the

manufacturer of the marina, Raise A Dock, it is recommended that we get some additional equipment to make the marina fully functional. Specifically, poles, cleats (attachable to the poles) and caps (for the top of the poles) are needed. Poles cost \$18.60 each, cleats cost \$29.00 each and caps cost \$3.00 each. Mark Evitts recommended and it was agreed that we purchase 40 of each of the aforementioned items for a total cost of \$2,024.00. This will outfit a portion of the marina to meet initial demand and if/when additional boats begin utilizing the marina we can order more to outfit the balance of the marina.

The Board voted the purchase of the 40 cleats, poles, and caps to complete 40 slips. Chuck will assign the boat slips.

The new marina stairway was also discussed. Everyone thought the steps look great and will hold up for many years. There is a plan to install timbers and either stones or a plank to go from the base of the steps to the docks.

There was also a request from Eedee Dopp that a ladder be installed for safety purposes in the event someone falls in, or swimmers need a way to get back onto the docks. Board Members thought this was a good idea, and approved the installment of the ladder.

## **Heightened concern of appearance of some properties**

There have been some complaints lodged to the Board regarding the appearance of several properties in the Hidden Valley community. Some Board members suggested imposing a fine on properties in an attempt to get non-responsive members to comply with our agreed upon HVPOA Rules and Regulations. The general sentiment was to avoid such actions if at all possible. Others felt that an appeal should be made to all owners to step back and look at their property with a critical eye and take whatever steps necessary to contribute to a message of a quality standard throughout our community. Thus in doing so ask that they consider how the appearance of their property impacts the value of their property and all the properties surrounding it and ultimately our valley community as a whole.

## **LRWC Rate Case Status**

David thanked Mark for keeping the pressure on while he was in winter quarters and through conversation with leaders at DES [Dept. Environmental Services] and the PUC [Public Utilities Commission] he has been led to believe that the approved rate increase will be considerably reduced from that applied for by the company.

## **New items –**

Issues related to public access and related fishing issues – initial awareness and preliminary discussion

Access to Lower Beech Pond at Brown Road has become a concern for numerous reasons. First, some background:

- There is no right to public access to Lower Beech Pond –

- Ted and Carol Steinman own the land on Brown Road where the public w/ their permission have accessed the pond. Originally, the bank leading to the pond was heavily vegetated and the occasional fishermen, kayaker, etc. would enter the pond carrying his/her canoe or small boats.
- In 1994, the state began stocking the pond with Rainbow and Brown Trout
- Gradually the amount of recreational users entering the pond increased largely to pursue the trout. As usage increased, trucks began backing down the bank to launch boats. In doing so they further, crunched the guardrail and that together with compression of the shoulder bank increased wastewater runoff and allowed pollutants to enter the pond from the roadway. Of equal if not greater concern the constant backing down of trailers in launching carries the greater potential to introduce Milfoil into the water body. The consequences of Milfoil infestation would be devastating to the pond quality and this would have a corresponding negative impact on real estate values. Since the south end of the pond is shallow, Milfoil would rapidly expand and potentially make usage of the First Beach undesirable. While this hasn't happened here yet, it has happened at many of the other waterbodies in the Lakes Region so the probability of milfoil being carried on a boat trailer into Lower Beech pond is not remote.

Mark Evitts suggested a solution whereby the Association would fund some type of barrier along the street by the access point so that vehicles can no longer compress the road bank or access the pond by trailer. Only small boats, kayaks and canoes could be carried over the barrier and into the pond, lessening the potential introduction of milfoil. Parking would be pushed across the street and this would enable the bank and shoulder of the road on the pond side to grass up to provide a natural filter for road runoff. It was suggested that a placeholder amount of \$15,000 be added to the 2016/2017 budget with work to potentially start later in the fall after further research with contractors takes place. Potential barrier materials could be a guardrail or perhaps large boulders.

A second issue related to the above is the trout themselves. As part of exploring the above access issues Mark has had numerous conversations with the NH Inland Fishery Chief. Our conversations have centered on not only access to the pond but the fish themselves. As many who have been around Lower Beech Pond for years know, the sunfish, perch, pickerel, catfish and smelt populations have crashed since the introduction of the trout. Some also point out that there seem to be fewer Loons on the pond possibly due to the lack of the small fish they feed upon. Mark Evitts stated "It is my theory that the difficult to catch Brown Trout are consuming large amounts of feed and this has thrown the ecology of the pond out of whack. That being said, it is hard to tell what is happening without some type of scientific data. The state has repeatedly promised to do a fish net study but unfortunately they have never come through on this promise. As a result of the Steinman's letter and some conversations Mark has had with Fish and Game it appears that the state will now follow through on its long awaited promise of a fish population survey study in 2017 so we can start to understand what is happening with the fishery in Lower Beech Pond. Possible solutions to the problem may be a return to a warm water fishery (no trout stocking) or perhaps fewer trout or maybe only Rainbow Trout. At present the state has stopped stocking the pond until a mutually satisfactory solution is agreed to."

A third issue relating to the access to Lower Beech Pond is the Ice Fishing. A large part of the ice fishing culture is drinking and a general sense of rowdiness. There have been complaints from waterfront property owners that large groups of guys set up in front of their houses and drink all day and relieving themselves in full view, plus leaving trash all over the place and starting bonfires on the ice is not uncommon.

Possible solutions include returning the waterbody to a warm water fishery (no trout stocking which would drastically reduce the number of ice fisherman on the pond) or gaining status as a Trout Pond which would close the pond to fishing from mid-October to late April each year. Mark Evitts suggested we consider giving the state two solutions: return to a warm water fishery or designate the pond as a trout pond perhaps with Rainbow stocking only. Both of these solutions would likely vastly improve open water fishing, eliminate ice fishing (warm water fishery would technically continue to allow ice fishing but numbers would decline with no trout) and potentially improve the ecology of the pond.

Mark proposed that a barrier should be installed at the Brown Road access point. A suitable barrier would prohibit larger boats from being put into the pond and reduce the risk of invasive plants being introduced into Lower Beech Pond. The Steinmans, owners of the property at the access point, have agreed to let HVPOA do this. The Board approved the idea in principle of paying for this barrier. Specific authorization for payment will be dependent upon proposals and cost estimates to be submitted in the future.

## **Consideration of the question of increasing dues over next three to five years**

Our Treasurer Dave Sharp prepared an informative presentation regarding the results of the survey he composed and sent out to all HVPOA members. It is apparent by the responses that a very significant majority of the respondents consider improving the conditions of our common property to be a priority. At the same time, not surprisingly, respondents hope we can avoid any dramatic increase in dues. We are left with the impression that the membership supports the expenditure of the funds necessary to both address what has resulted from deferred maintenance and to upgrade our beaches, tennis courts, roads, and marina. It was further recognized in doing so HVPOA properties will maintain and/or increase individual property values.

Dave distributed a Financial Report and led a discussion showing the expenditures and CPI over the last number of years with no corresponding increase of dues. He also gave a detailed report using charts demonstrating the impact of our projected capital expenditures in upgrading our common facilities and infrastructure. These expenditures, and the responsibility to avoid deferred maintenance going forward, with properly budgeting of depreciation as an expense, which we have failed to do in recent years, it is apparent that our dues will need to be increased. After much discussion, as to the amount and scaling over a number of years the Board decided to hold a decision regarding these decisions until all Directors submit their budgets for 2016-2017.

## **Director's Reports**

### **HVPOA Road committee report for year 2015-2016: Ron McCracken**

#### **Road Paving:**

Last fall we re-claimed, re-paved and widened Valley Road from just past Paul Dubec's house to the intersection with Ridge road. (675 ft).

The major work was done at the intersection of Ridge, consisting of straightening the roadway, widening it from 12 to 17ft (actually more at the corner) and providing a better sightline for oncoming traffic. This work required blasting the ledge at the corner.

**Major Work:**

See Road Paving

**Tree Trimming:**

No overhead tree trimming was done this year, however, ice storms left many branches and trees down that had to be removed and chipped up.

**Fall Maintenance:**

Think cleaning culverts.

**Winter Maintenance:**

We brought sand barrels back this year, 3 total, all on Valley Road.

**Sweeping:**

Sweeping was done in mid May and even with a rate increase, the cost came in at \$750 (vs. \$870 last year).

Thanks to Ray Graham for taking the sand.

**Roadside Mowing:**

As we've done in the past, plans are to mow twice. Once prior to 4<sup>th</sup> of July and again in late August, prior to Labor Day.

**Speed Bumps:**

Undecided as to paint or not. They seem to be in pretty good shape so I'll let the board decide.

\*\*\*\*\* For the upcoming year \*\*\*\*\*

We need to target the beaches this year, if any dollars are left over I will gladly spend it.

Ron McCracken

**Recreation:** Contained in the projects reports and to be expanded and included in the next set of Minutes following the Annual Meeting

**Proposal to add additional Directors meetings during the off-season**

Mark Evitts proposed that additional Directors meeting take place during the off-season. Currently, Board Meetings are held during the summer months, only. This makes planning projects, communicating with other Board Members and responding to the day-to-day issues in the Hidden Valley community difficult. To resolve this problem, **it is suggested** that 3-offseason Board meetings be held each year. The proposed dates are the last Saturday in October, January and April.

In support of this proposal, David Sharp said he could arrange for those members who could not attend physically to attend via telecommunication. The Board responded positively to the idea of increasing the number of meetings, and were very pleased with David's solution for those who could not be there for the meetings.

## **Overlook rejuvenation**

Eedee Dopp requested support for giving the Overlook next to Second Beach an overhaul. She would like to have the grassy area repaired and improve the overall look of this area. The Board agreed unanimously to support this proposal.

## **Annual Meeting Location**

Janice Michaud proposed that we change the location for our HVPOA Annual Meeting.

Having attended the HVPOA Annual Meeting since 1991, although the First Beach is a great place to enjoy a lovely summer day, she believes it is not an ideal place to have our annual meeting for the following reasons:

1. It is often windy, making it difficult to hear the people addressing us with important information.
2. Dealing with handouts with reports can be difficult when it is windy.
3. People tend to sit in circle formation, making it difficult for speakers to be heard if their back is facing some members of the audience.
4. Although we have not had many meetings postponed due to weather, it did make it difficult for some of us to reschedule our plans for postponements.

Proposed Solution:

Janice's proposal is to hold our annual meetings at the Tufonboro Town House. Here are the benefits:

1. There is a stage area for speakers to address the audience.
2. All those in the audience can be facing toward stage, thus hearing speakers better.
3. The use of the Town House is free, and available.
4. Handouts can be passed out or made available without hindrance of wind.
5. No need to postpone for inclement weather.
6. As secretary, it will be easier for me, or anyone else who needs to take notes to do so if sitting at a table.
7. There appears to be a minimum of 60 chairs available. We could suggest people bring a chair just in case there aren't enough.
8. There is a screen at the Town House and plenty of outlets, making it very simple to display agenda items and reports for all to see.
9. The building can hold the number of attendees easily.

The members of the Board voted to change the location of the Annual Meeting to the Tufonboro Town House. It has been reserved for July 2, 2016 at 10:00 AM

## **Need for Nomination Committee**

David announced that he would be retiring from the position of President of the Board after a dozen years serving in that capacity.

He called on all board members to be on the lookout for and to encourage interested members to join the Board.

A motion from the floor was brought forth to elect Ray Graham to the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting.

If anyone else is interested in serving on the Board, call David at 569-4623

**Next Scheduled Board Meeting:** Saturday, June 25, 2016 at 9:00 AM at the Tufonboro Town House on Route 109A

**Adjournment:** There being no additional agenda the meeting of the HVPOA adjourned at 12.20 PM.

Prepared by Janice Michaud  
Secretary HVPOA