

Joe's Pond Association Meeting Minutes July 6, 2024

President Joe Hebert opened the meeting at 10:03 am. There were approximately 90 members present. Joe welcomed everyone and asked if there were any new members but there were none. He thanked Marion and Garry Cairns for their generosity in allowing their site to be used for the fireworks and Joe noted that the comments he heard were positive. There was a round of applause. He reminded everyone that dues are due on July 1st and still can be paid.

Vice-President Richard Gagne noted the worse part of the meeting is remembering the ones that we have lost over the past year. Camp owners lost this year were Virginia Johnson, Andre LaPrade, Dolly LaGue, Gary Larrabee, Lisa Hebert, Ray Richer and Linda Lane. Extended family members lost were Bernie & Sandy Archambault, Francis Berwick, Robert Hilferty, Steven Martin, George Whelley and Vincent Yesalonia.

Secretary's Report: Susan Bouchard read Jamie Stewart's condensed version of the 5/25/2024 JPA meeting. The full meeting minutes can be found on the JPA website. A motion was made, seconded and the minutes were approved by voice vote.

Board Actions/Announcements:

Membership Change: the proposal made by Joe Cassani to have more involvement from the "next generation" by becoming an associate member was discussed with the Board members. There is one vote per household/property. Family members and guests can use/share the facility. Creating another member type would lead to unnecessary clerical work. The Board recommended making no changes.

Firework Donations: Board unanimously agreed that if there are donations given for fireworks they would be used to off-set JPA costs. All donations are welcome, but the Board doesn't want stipulations on how the donations are to be used. The Board recommend no changes / no action necessary.

Wake Boat Petition: Joe Hebert wanted to clarify if there is a petition, it is to ban wake sports not wake boats. Also stirring up the bottom is unimportant as the water depth where wake sports would occur is generally deeper than 20 feet. Joe noted that Responsible Wakes for Vermont Lakes (RWVL) was happy with the 20 feet depth. The Board suggested a vote to occur whether to submit a petition or not. He suggested there be a discussion.

Boomer Morris noted he has a wake boat and we should not petition until we see if the new regulations work. We need to give it time instead of rushing into a petition to ban wake sports.

Gracie Kurrle gave a passionate talk about her family's time at Joe's Pond and how they have respected the rules of wake sports. She feels the new rules need to be given a chance and asks for everyone's tolerance.

Kate Chatot who attended many of the hearings and felt the lobbyist for the wake boat industry lobbied hard the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and found it difficult to accept and respect DEC decision.

Jack LaGue states he opposes "at this time" any petition to the state. He feels DEC listened to the science and had a balanced decision. He states we are pushing the panic button and membership should give it time for the rules to work.

Larry Riegert has some environmental engineering background, but he is only speaking as a property owner. He has concerns about the water quality regarding erosion but also very concerned for his grandchildren and their safety with the large waves. He appreciates the owners of wake boats wanting to maintain the rules, but others can come into the lake and abuse rules.

Sharon Dewitt, who is on the middle pond, is concerned about erosion but it is not just wake sports. She states give it a year to see how it goes before petitioning.

Dorothea Penar asked if the petition process can grandfather the ones that are already here.

Dave Kidney indicated DEC listened to the science and asked initially for 600 ft. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) changed it to 500 ft. He feels this is the time to petition as time goes on this sport can be considered a “normal use”. Jet skis are considered “normal use” so they could not be banned at the present time ~ years ago Caspian Lake banned jet skis as they were not considered “normal use” at that time. At the present time, we have 2-3 wake boats with good citizens but if we do a “wait and see”, there will be new residents who may want these boats and they will get bigger. He notes we need to be good stewards to protect the other water sports (swimming, canoeing, kayaking, sailing). If a petition is voted for, he will request volunteers to help him. Dave indicated once the State receives the petition, there will be further meetings to gather information from both sides of the issue before a final decision is made. This could take months and will not happen right away as other lakes/ponds are also submitting petitions.

Claudia Sacuk expressed concerns about water quality and who will enforce the rules.

Brad Town stated that science shows that deeper waves will stir up the silt on the bottom.

Don Sherwood shared his personal experience as what he believed was murky water conditions as a result of wake sporting.

Annie Powers asked what is the timeframe for “normal use”.

Jim Kurrle asked for middle ground and felt there was too much fear mongering.

Joe Hebert noted we have 3 options

- Do nothing
- Kick the can down the road
- Start the petition process now

Larry Riegert made the motion to vote

- Yes vote would support sending a petition to the state of Vermont to eliminate wake sports
- No vote supports not sending a petition

Vote by standing was counted

- Yes: 42
- No: 18
- There were 4 proxy votes for Yes so total YES is 46

Treasurer’s report: Jack LaGue briefly reviewed the financial report. A motion was made and seconded and was approved by voice vote.

Water Quality /Milfoil: Nicole Begin noted the greeter program is up and running. There are some days with no boats but on July 3rd there were several boats launched. She placed an article in the Cabot Chronicle and the JPA website to satisfy the state's media requirement or expectations. This helps getting funds for grants.

Cyanobacteria: Dorothea Penar states she recently found 2 mild levels of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). These blooms were in the cove near the JPA area and also near her property. Our storms are getting worse, and grass is like "concrete" and does nothing to retain water. Culverts and ditching leading directly into the pond can contribute to bacteria and cyanobacteria blooms. She suggests considering a rain garden and "Lake Wise" can help you slow/stop the water from running off your property into the lake. She referred to Vermont's Dept of Health tracking system (color coded map) indicating where the problems are. She and Pam Hebert do weekly inspections and send their data to the state. If there are significant blooms in the lake, it will show up on the map and alerts will be sent to the public. A suggestion was made to have the link <https://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/tracking/cyanobacteria-blue-green-algae-tracker> added to the JPA website.

JPA Events: Susan Bouchard indicated the Schedule of Events is posted on the JPA website and listed in the JPA newsletter that was sent this spring. Since it was brought to her attention at the last meeting not everyone knows who all the coordinators are so she asked them to stand so this should help new members. She discussed the three upcoming events (Italian Dinner, Pig Roast, Cocktail Party) along with the other activities (Yoga, Mah Jongg, Pitch, Pickle ball Tournament and Sailing). She thanked all coordinators but recognized Peter and Paige Crosby who were the coordinators for the Ham/Mac & cheese dinner along with Marian Carnes and her helpers for a superb dinner. She mentioned a great way to get involved with the JPA is to volunteer for these types of events.

Membership: Peter Crosby noted 11 signs have been painted. The name changes should be completed in a few weeks now that Thierry Guerlain is back.

Maintenance: Larry Rossi indicated new mulch was placed around the playground and thanked Martin Bertolini for the use of his truck. He is working on a way to correct a "step up" condition in the pavilion area.

Member Questions:

Joe Cassani felt the issue about granting membership to the "next generation" of camp owners was not addressed. It was clarified the Board recommended no change to the membership, but a vote can be taken if someone wants to make a motion. No motion was made.

Sharon Dewitt requested the agenda be sent via email to all members in addition to posting on JPA website, Jane Brown's blog and at Hastings. Jack LaGue indicated there is no requirement to email an agenda. Motion was made to use email to notify members of the agenda. By a show of hands, the motion failed.

Michael Rubalcaba asked if there will be fireworks next year and Joe Hebert confirmed there will be fireworks in 2025.

Larry Rossi made a motion to adjourn at 11:18 am. It was seconded and passed by voice vote.

Respectively submitted,

Susan Bouchard

