

**MESSER POND PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
December 3, 2009**

The last meeting of 2009 of the Board of Directors took place at the home of Nancy Stetson. Present were President Nancy Stetson, Vice President Terri Bingham, Treasurer JP Paquette and Directors Dick Denise and Frank King. Absent were Secretary Betty Brown and Directors Debbie Hunt and John Harris.

With a quorum present, the president opened the meeting at 7:10 PM, welcoming all members.

The president asked the board for permission to use a recording device for the purpose of assisting with the meeting minutes. Permission was granted.

JP Paquette presented the financial report and distributed copies of the current Balance Sheet and P&L. The Balance Sheet reported total assets of \$7070 including approximately \$500 in the Lake Host Donations asset account. Thanks to the Town of New London grant and the NH Lakes grant, MPPA had to pay out only approximately \$300 for our 2009 Lake Host program. The P&L reported a net loss for 2009 due to the timing of when certain expenses were recorded and/or incurred including the purchase of water quality monitoring equipment and payment of the D&O insurance. The equipment was actually purchased in 2008 but the expense report was not submitted until 2009. The 2008 D&O insurance was actually paid in 2009 (although we were fully covered in 2008) and then the 2009 coverage was paid as well resulting in approximately \$1000 of expense in 2009 instead of \$500. Excluding these items would have resulted in a net gain for 2009. However, it was pointed out that there are still some outstanding expense reports for 2009. Nancy asked everyone to endeavor to submit them by January 15th. Nancy thanked JP for his report.

The first action item was then discussed: Meeting with Richard Lee to discuss winter roads issues. Nancy had made contact with Richard but a date had not been chosen yet. Nancy will continue to work with Richard to settle on a meeting date. Director Debbie Hunt contacted Nancy before the board meeting about adding another road issue to the list. She suggested that a new catch basin be added near Nutter Brook pondside to catch the large volume of runoff that comes down Forest Acres Road at that point and typically goes directly into Nutter Brook and then into the pond. All agreed this is an excellent suggestion and Nancy agreed to add it to the list.

The newsletter was discussed. The next newsletter is due out at the end of January. Nancy asked that articles be submitted by January 1st. [Nancy later requested via email a due date of January 15th due to the holidays.]

Vice President Terri Bingham presented an update of the 501(c)(3) tax change progress. Terri arranged an initial meeting with New London lawyer Michael Wood who generously agreed to assist MPPA on a pro bono basis. It will be held at Michael's office on Friday, December 11th at 10:30 a.m. and all are welcome to attend. Terri is preparing for the meeting by reviewing the IRS application and Pleasant Lake's Bylaws and Articles of Agreement because if we do decide to proceed with the tax status change we will have to amend our Bylaws and Articles of Agreement. Dick Clayton of PLPA has been of invaluable assistance by sharing PLPA's paperwork for when they applied for 501(c)(3) classification. Terri stated that much of the PLPA's paperwork was boilerplate and that she could crib from it, taking out or changing the PLPA specific statements. Terri commented that Michael previously worked for the IRS and his experience will be very

helpful. Terri stated that the IRS filing fee has increased from \$750 to \$850. Terri asked JP for a copy of our last tax filing to show Michael to make sure we do not have any financial red flags. Terri also emphasized that for some reason it is almost herculean to change from 501(c)(4) to 501(c)(3). It is much easier to apply for 501(c)(3) initially. Terri stated that PLPA's attorney took care of all the communication with the IRS which included quite a lot of back and forth to correct the application. Terri also stated that we will need to hold a Special Meeting with the membership to vote on the amended Bylaws and Articles of Agreement. Nancy thanked Terri for her report.

The next action item was discussed: Comprehensive Lake Inventory. We decided to postpone this discussion until mid-winter. Director Dick Denise commented that at the Water and Watershed conference he attended in the fall he was able to pick up an extra Comprehensive Lake Inventory book to share with the board. The goal is to provide one book to each board member. Terri suggested that it would be nice if other members of the association (other than board members) participated in completing the Comprehensive Lake Inventory. This could perhaps be done via email. Dick agreed to undertake organizing this project. Dick also commented that he spoke with Barbara McMillan of DES who specializes in grants. Dick is planning to contact her again to get more information. Dick then described his experience at the Joint Water & Watershed Conference that was held in November at the Grappone Center in Concord. He attended 4 sessions, 2 of which he found very interesting. One, titled "Fond of Your Lawns", described the findings of a study about consumer attitudes towards lawn care and fertilizer use. Most important, the study offered recommendations about fertilizer use. Dick would like to share these recommendations with the membership in the spring via email or the newsletter. All agreed this is an excellent idea. Soil testing kits were discussed. The results show which nutrients are deficient and which are plentiful. It was thought that the town offered these soil testing kits but that needs to be confirmed along with cost and where to send the samples. Colby-Sawyer Professor Harvey Pine took some soil samples for the fall Environmental Chemistry Class. At the time Nancy spoke with him, the results had not yet been received. UNH no longer analyzes soil samples – Harvey sent his off to Antioch University, his alma mater. The issue of low or no phosphorous fertilizers was discussed. While not a law yet, NH Lakes will be initiating legislation soon which limits the amount of phosphorous in lawn fertilizer sold in NH. Laundry detergent is currently controlled by law to eliminate phosphate content and dishwasher detergent will be similarly controlled effective this coming summer. Low or no phosphorous lawn fertilizer is currently available for purchase. Dick discussed another Water & Watershed session about GIS mapping and led by a UNH professor. There are some interesting things you can do with Google Maps such as placing map markers and then you can save it as dot file which can be accessed by others. Dick suggested we may be able to use this tool for Messer Pond such as identifying water sampling locations. The last session Dick attended was titled "Designing Stronger Projects and Proposals for Watershed Protection." It was about grant writing. Dick thought the overall conference was very worthwhile and there was a good turnout. Nancy thanked Dick for his report.

Colby-Sawyer Professor Harvey Pine is finalizing the data for the Environmental Chemistry Class held in the fall in which Messer Pond and its Watershed was the chosen subject. Harvey would like to present the data at our next board meeting in February on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Terri suggested that we open up the meeting so that other pond residents could attend Harvey's presentation as well. A bigger venue will be required. Nancy will check with Tracy Library for availability. We then discussed making Harvey's presentation a separate event from our board meeting. Nancy will contact Harvey in January about this and ask him for a suggested date. Harvey did mention a couple of points about the data so far. He said that the pond has very low alkalinity which means our buffering capacity is low. He also said that they were currently compiling the chloride data

but since the data was taken in the fall, the results show that the chloride levels are low, as expected. Harvey said there would be another Environmental Chemistry offered for the spring semester. While this class will not be totally on Messer Pond, he said it would be good if they could come out in the spring, after ice-out and repeat the chloride measurements. This is something we have wanted to do within MPPA but have not been able to do it yet for various reasons. All agreed this would be wonderful.

Secretary Betty Brown had contacted the board via email prior to the meeting to say that the town department of public works had picked up the deadhead logs at the boat launch a couple of weeks prior to the meeting. We are very grateful to the town and to Dick Cavallaro, Derek Hunt and Bruce Stetson who hauled these logs down to the boat launch and then onto the side of Bog Road. These logs were partially floating causing potential boating hazards.

Betty also confirmed that she had sent out the 2 letters composed by Terri which thank both the town and NH Lakes for their milfoil protection/lake host grants and described how the money was spent and the lake host results. Terri mentioned that the NH Lakes letter helps them lobby for more funds. Nancy thanked Terri for the letters and Betty for sending them out.

Betty emailed a membership report to be read at the meeting. She received a new membership application from David and Alison Hennig who bought the Anderson's house on White Pine. Betty thanked them for joining the association and welcomed them to the pond. They are planning to attend the Wine and Cheese Gathering in December. David said they are excited to meet other members and they are interested in getting involved with the association. They would like to try and plan around the spring and fall cleanups and do more as time goes on. The Crane's house on Forest Acres has been sold to new owners Jack and Sharon Bowie of Newton CT. Betty emailed the Bowies to invite them to the Wine and Cheese Gathering and to the association and she gave them our web address for further information. Betty said the membership status is looking up with our two new members, the Hennigs, and hopefully the Bowies will join as well. There have 7 recent renewals and Betty has contacted 5 families about renewing. Since September, she has received \$165 in membership fees, \$855 in calendar sales, \$30 in tee-shirt sales, and \$10 in note card sales. Betty reported that we received a thank you letter from Jarod Teutsch, president of NH Lakes, for our \$50.05 donation. We all thanked Betty for her report.

Non-invasive native weed management was discussed next. Nancy emailed NHDES for any information about how we can control native weed growth. NHDES responded that it is extremely difficult to obtain a permit for such control. However, if we had exotic invasive weed growth, such as exotic milfoil, permitting would be relatively easy. We are all very happy that we do not have this problem, knock-on-wood. Nancy will continue to research the subject.

Terri reported that she will be meeting with the other town lakes (Pleasant Lake, Little Lake Sunapee and Lake Sunapee) in February to discuss an equitable plan to use the town's remaining milfoil protection funds. Currently, the town has no plans to continue to fund this account. In 2009 the process of determining the distribution of the milfoil funds to the town lakes became very heated amongst the lakes, the Conservation Commission and the Selectmen. By having this meeting in February, Terri said the lakes hope to avoid a repeat performance. Terri went on to say that if the distribution is based on the number of motorized boats a lake host counts, which is the type of boat that most frequently transports weeds, then Messer Pond would receive a much smaller grant because most of our boat traffic consists of kayaks. There are many factors which may also be considered including volunteerism, total number of boats and hard cash contribution.

Terri stated that a warrant article is not needed for 2010 but may be a possibility for 2011. She said that Jessie Levine, town administrator, requested that the lakes work with her when the time comes for a warrant article. Nancy thanked Terri for her report and applauded her efforts in working cooperatively with the other lakes.

There was nothing new to report on water quality sampling.

Nancy reported on a septic issue which cropped up in the fall. Shorefront property owners discovered a high level of e. coli found in their dug well. Because of the property's age the well is located very close to the pond, a grandfathered condition. The owners hired a firm to sanitize and disinfect the well. The firm suspected a mouse had gotten inside the well. NHDES was contacted about whether or not the pond should be tested for e. coli near the property. The response was that it is highly unlikely that the pond caused the problem but it would not hurt to do the testing. Due to this response and the fact that the Colby-Sawyer LSPA lab was closed for the season it was decided not to perform the testing. Nancy will follow up with the owners as to the result of the final e. coli testing after the well sterilization. Based on these results we can decide whether or not to do e. coli testing in that location next year. Terri suggested the possibility of doing a pond septic survey. Septic system information is public information. JP pointed out that before a certain year, probably sometime in the 1970's, the information is archival and on paper rather than on a computer. Terri stressed that the purpose of the septic survey would be to help protect the pond. She also stated that the topic of imposing septic regulations is becoming a hot topic with LSPA and NH Lakes.

The Messer Pond Fall Cleanup was fairly successful. We had several volunteers who braved a cool, soggy morning and we are very grateful to them. There was an issue as to whether or not the town picked up the debris piles. JP suggested that in future we pick up our own piles and drop them off at the town garage like we did with the very first cleanup. JP offered the use of his construction trailer to perform the task. JP suggested that this would ease the town's burden. We all agreed this was a good idea. During the cleanup, two totally blocked under-road culverts were reported to the town, one on Fieldstone Lane and one on Forest Acres Road. It was later observed that the town had brought in equipment to hydroblast and clear the culverts. There continues to be an erosion problem on Fieldstone that was brought to the town's attention but it has not been resolved yet. We all agreed to continue with the culvert cleanups and to continue to work cooperatively with the town.

Director Frank King distributed fish and wildlife handouts to the board and he asked about cleaning out the wood duck boxes around the pond. He asked whether or not the duck box off Bog Road on Clark Pond is our responsibility to maintain. Frank agreed to check with Bob Brown of the Conservation Commission. Frank asked whether or not we needed more duck boxes. He stated that the wood duck is the second most common duck, with the first being the mallard. We have not seen any wood ducks on Messer Pond yet. Frank showed us photos of male and female wood ducks. Terri asked what draws wood ducks. Frank said they eat acorns and other tree nuts and seeds plus berries. Wood ducks also tend to be in ponds where there are beavers and/or shallow water. Messer Pond did have a beaver at one time which became a nuisance. Terri suggested that we contact the Conservation Commission to find out if there have been any wood duck sightings in New London. Frank noted that there are several wood duck boxes in the greater New London area. Frank then discussed the possibility of attracting loons to the pond. Last year a loon pair was sighted paddling near the island, scouting it out for a possible nesting location but they did not stay. The island is not ideal because of changing water levels, the

presence of otters (lots of mussel shells) and human use of the island. However, the Loon Preservation Committee did state that the island is the most likely place for nesting despite its issues. During loon mating season, in May/June, we must keep our eyes open for signs of loons scouting for nesting areas. If we do see this activity then we would like to ask the residents to stay away from the island until we can confirm active nesting. If nesting occurs, then we would like to post signs to stay away from the island until the eggs have hatched and the baby loons have made it to the water. Once this happens the loons will remain in the water and not return to the nest. Frank asked about lead sinkers, which are illegal and will kill a loon if ingested. Terri stated that she would like to have the lake hosts pass out non-lead sinker samples to fishermen and stress the dangers of lead sinkers. JP stated today's sinkers are made of steel but fishermen may still have old lead sinkers in their tackle boxes. Terri will contact the Loon Preservation Committee to ask about the non-lead sinkers they pass out. She also would like to have the lake hosts pass out information on loon protection. Frank then discussed the issue about bass - that one should not eat any bass over 12" long due to its high mercury content. We should include this in the newsletter. Terri asked about the 2 perch which were submitted to DES for mercury testing in the summer. Nancy replied that we have not yet received any results and that she would check with DES. Terri brought up a member's suggestion to introduce weed eating fish to the pond. However, DES has stated this should absolutely NOT be done. The problem with these fish is that they eat everything - bass habitat, etc. and that soon we would have nothing left in the pond - no weeds and no wildlife. These fish are also non-native and would wreak havoc on the ecosystem of the entire watershed besides being illegal. Terri said that she had read an article in SooNipi about these fish, a type of carp. Nancy said she would try to find this article and dispel any bad information to the membership. Frank suggested we also remind members not to add any non-native fish to the pond or fish not found in our watershed, especially not to dump aquariums in the pond. DES believes this is how the exotic milfoil problem started in our waterbodies because exotic milfoil was once a favorite aquarium plant, now illegal. Next Frank discussed his handout about the invasion of the Asian Longhorn Beetle which is devastating forests as close as in Worcester, MA. There are some beetles which look very similar such as the White Pine Borer, JP stated. We all agreed this would be a good article to publish in our newsletter. Frank recounted the story of how 6000 trees were selected for cutting down but then the ice-storm came and people came from all over the country cutting up the trees and taking the wood away for firewood and the beetle may have been spread anywhere. JP stated there is a big push now from the NH Campground Owners Association and NH Fish & Game asking people not to bring in their own firewood for fear they may bring in infected wood which would spread the beetle. Nancy thanked Frank for his great handouts and presentation and suggested they be included in the newsletter.

Next on the agenda was Education and Activities. Director Debbie Hunt organized a very successful Ladies & Gents Fall Luncheon with 13 participants including 3 men. It was held at Bistro Nouveau in Eastman. Debbie has planned the Holiday Wine & Cheese Gathering which will be held on December 12<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., at the Shucarts'. Traditionally board members are asked to supply cheese and crackers/appetizers and non-board members are asked to bring a bottle of wine to share. Set-up will be at 5:15. Debbie will bring a holiday centerpiece to give to the Shucarts as a thank you gift.

The next topic was the website. Nancy had recently updated the website to include the latest newsletter, an updated schedule and main page. Terri asked about the Fish Survey done a few years ago. Nancy said it was published in a newsletter which is on the website but it could be duplicated and published separately on the Fish & Wildlife webpage.

**Fundraisers: The 2010 Messer Pond Calendar is for sale within MPPA and at the Morgan Hill Bookstore which had taken 25 to sell, 15 of which have already sold. There are only a few calendars left within MPPA – Nancy will bring them to the Wine & Cheese Gathering to try to sell. Betty had previously provided a report on the tee-shirt and note card sales.**

**MPPA report for the Town of New London 2009 Annual Report: Due January 8<sup>th</sup>. Nancy thanked Terri for drafting an excellent report. Terri will make some minor changes to comply with the town's request that the report includes thanks for any support received since this year's theme is appreciation. Terri suggested that in addition to a lake hosting photograph that we include a water sampling photo. The town requested photos but may or may not publish them. We decided to submit the report to the town as soon as it is ready. Nancy thanked Terri again.**

**MPPA brochure for lake host handout: Terri is working on a brochure similar to LSPA's which describes and promotes MPPA. Terri stated that it would be best to wait until we know about our 501(c)(3) status before publishing. The brochure will include a tear-out for a prospect to fill out and mail to us for membership and/or a donation. This handout was a suggestion brought up by a member at the last annual meeting.**

**Finally we had a discussion over the correct procedure to go forward with the 501(c)(3). We agreed that we will ask the membership to approve a) acceptance of the amended Articles of Agreement and Bylaws and b) spending the necessary amount of money (a range to be specified) to submit the application for tax status change.**

**JP made a motion to adjourn and Dick seconded the motion. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Nancy Stetson  
MPPA President**