

Thomas Pond Improvement Association (TPIA)
Annual Membership Meeting
22 June 2024

President Bob Chapin welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

Public Safety Presentation: John Facella spoke about dangers of lithium ion batteries. He described several instances where these batteries were the cause of fires in the local area. He stated that it is very important to only buy lithium ion batteries from reputable manufacturers, and that the battery and its charger must be compatible. If one has a fire involving a lithium ion battery, the individual should call 911 immediately. John provided flyers with more information on these batteries for attendees to take home.

Bob continued the meeting by explaining the meeting ground rules as pertains to presenters, those wishing to speak during floor discussion, and time allotted for both purposes.

June 2023 Meeting Minutes: The minutes have been posted on the website since the 2023 meeting and copies were provided at this year's meeting; therefore Sue did not read the minutes. She did request an amendment to the minutes to state that there were 46 proxy votes rather than 49 proxy votes.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the 2023 meeting minutes as amended. There were no opposing votes.

Treasurer's Report: Christine presented the financial report for the past year, dates included are 1 June 2023 to 31 May 2024. Income sources were from dues/donations and a grant refund from RWPA for phosphorus testing. Expenses were from three categories: Administrative, Mission Specific, and Legal Fees. For the reporting period of 1 June 2023 to May 31, 2024—the starting balance as of 1 June 23 was \$14,570.00, with a total revenue of \$4,647.98 and total expenses of \$7205.95, resulting in an ending balance on May 31, 2024 of \$12,012.03.

It was moved to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved. There were no opposing votes.

Subsequent to brief discussion, it was also moved, seconded, voted on, and approved to keep dues at \$25. There were three opposing votes.

Dam Keeper's Report: Bob described the cleanup and log changes that occurred at the dam this year. Much of the cleanup was due to beaver chews and/or logs and vegetation piling up at the dam. He mentioned that Thomas Pond was not yet at in-season level of 17"-20". There was brief discussion about water level, but folks were then asked to reserve comment until later in the meeting when the Water Level Management Plan is presented.

Water Quality: Dick Horr said that Secchi Disk readings for water clarity so far this year have been good. Readings have been five to six meters. Temperature readings down to 16 meters have also been good. His last reading was 16 June; he mentioned that he is starting to see the thermocline (transition layer between the warmer water at the surface and the colder deep water) which naturally occurs at this time of year.

He also mentioned that, in 2023, the phosphorus readings had increased. A phosphorus reading below 12 is good. Last year, the readings were 9 at the surface level, 16 at the eight meter

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depth, and 51 at the sixteen meter depth. No conclusion was made as to why the readings were higher. Dick will conduct another three-level test this year. There was brief follow-on discussion about possible causes of the increased phosphorus and ways to try to improve on the phosphorus level.

Nominations/Elections: Bob Chapin's term as president and Frank Jaffe's and Ted Oliva's positions as directors expire this year. Each agreed to run again and there were no nominations from the floor for these positions. Paul McMeekin nominated Liz Tindley and Steve Hazen nominated Mike Polland for two of the three open director positions. Liz accepted the nomination; Mike was not present to do the same.

Bob was reelected to be President, and Frank, Ted, Liz and Mike were re-elected/elected to serve as Directors. There were no opposing votes.

ByLaws/Articles of Incorporation: The ByLaws committee began work on revising the ByLaws and Articles of Incorporation following the June 2023 annual membership meeting. The proposed revisions were posted on the website, thomaspond.org, in May for comment. Mr. Steven Hazen was the only individual to comment and was invited to present his views at this meeting. He advocated for a sense of community and for rejection of the ByLaws as they should not be for the majority. He opposed the requirement of paying dues to become a TPIA member and to vote. Hazen recommended that the ByLaws be rejected as they were not yet "ready" and another year would be needed to refine the changes.

Jerry Eaton spoke on behalf of the ByLaws committee. He reviewed each suggested change to the ByLaws and Articles and the reason for each.

Floor discussion followed and a vote by written ballot followed.

Survey Results: Frank Jaffe stated that one of the purposes of TPIA is to maintain mutually agreeable water levels. The Water Level Management committee surveyed property owners on Thomas Pond last year. The survey results represented folks living around the lake and showed that a large majority favored the pond levels as they are currently and have been managed in past years: they dis-favored the drawdown that was done in the 2022. The "take-aways" from the survey were:

1. Keep the water levels the same.
2. Establish an off-season low level target.
3. Be somewhat more aggressive in avoiding and responding to water level above target and try to avoid having the water in the pond drop below the target levels, especially in-season.

A discussion pro/con water levels followed the survey presentation.

Water Level Management Plan (WLMP): The WLMP committee began work on a new plan after the 2023 annual membership meeting. The plan was posted to the website, thomaspond.org in May for comment. Mr. Steven Hazen was invited to present his opposition to the plan. He stated that the plans for managing water level (flow and height) and managing the dam should be separate. He also stated that the 1990 DEP order for a 2.4 cubic feet/second (cfs) water flow was written in law and couldn't be changed.

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Frank Jaffe presented on behalf of the WLMP committee. He said that 2.4 cfs water flow is the value used in the easements and was determined by DEP to be incorrect. TPIA is attempting to work with the easement holder to modify the one remaining easement to address the inconsistency. The proposed plan incorporates guidance from the DEP and uses Aquatic Base Flow of 1.2 cubic feet/second as the minimum flow. The plan sets fixed periods for raising and lowering the pond levels.

Mr. Hazen countered that a scientific study would not show the Aquatic Base Flow as 1.2 cubic feet/second.

Floor discussion followed with comments, questions, and answers. Subsequent to the discussion, a vote on the WLMP by written ballot was taken.

New Business

Solar Farm: Laurie Wallace said that, last fall, an application was submitted for a commercial solar farm development on 4 acres of rural residential land between Rte 302 and Pulpit Rock Rd in Raymond. She discussed the work done to oppose this development and additional work being done to get a more robust solar ordinance for the town of Raymond. The developer has since withdrawn his application for the commercial solar farm citing prohibitive costs of both interconnection with CMP and the required fire suppression system.

A Citizen's Initiative petition was accepted by the Raymond Select Board and a special town meeting and vote on the commercial solar ordinance will be held Tuesday, Aug 13 at 5:30 p.m. at the Broadcast Studio, Rte 85, Raymond. She encouraged Raymond voters to attend this meeting in person to vote.

Concerns/Complaints: When concerns/complaints are received, they will be published to **thomaspond.org**.

Dam Condition/Fund Raising: A fund raising effort began this spring, via an appeal letter, to raise money to repair the concrete surface of the dam at the sluiceway. Bob Chapin said that there have been no concrete repairs done in 30+ years. In 2023, an estimate of \$19,000 was received for metal plating and resurfacing from Bancroft Engineering which is the company that did the work in the early 1990's. The target goal for this fund raising effort is \$25,000.

Tires: One member reported seeing two tires stuck in bottom of the pond when the water was drawn down in 2022. She proposed that there be a lake cleanup day. This can be scheduled in the fall. Folks will be able to volunteer for this work party on the website.

It was moved, seconded, and voted to approve adjournment at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Chapin, Secretary