

## GARDNER LAKE AUTHORITY

270 Hartford Road  
Salem, CT 06240

Meeting Minutes of October 14, 2021  
Montville Public Safety Building

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

### Attendees

Bozrah: Henry Granger, Scott Soderberg  
Montville: Bill Wrobel, Kate Johnson  
Salem: Chris Rios, Jim Miller

Excused: Tony Lasaracina, Mike Magliano  
A quorum was noted.

Guests: Bob Kortman, ECS; Ben Burpee, ECS; Mike Lambert, DEEP; Hugh McKenney, Sue Coffee, John Hummel, Len Johnson, Val Hornat, Janet Schultz.

### 2021 Aquatic Macrophyte Survey & Limnological Monitoring Results

Limnologist Dr. Ben Burpee with Ecosystems Consulting Service (ECS), a Division of GSA, presented this year's report with support from Dr. Robert Kortmann. Dr. Burpee listed the following long-term goals for Gardner Lake:

1. maintain total phosphorus below 20 mg/L,
2. maintain dissolved oxygen greater than 1 mg/L at 6 meters deep,
3. maintain secchi transparency >3 meters through summer; and
4. prevent development of nuisance aquatic invasive plant community.

For 2020 and 2021, Gardner Lake has experienced good clarity one meter deeper than in previous years.

This year the anoxia boundary (oxygen loss boundary), monitored from the deep hole at the northern end of Minnie Island, rose to within a meter of the main water body from June to October. If the dissolved oxygen ascends to the main body of water, the anoxia boundary could spread across the main body of the lake, causing lack of oxygen for micro-organisms, and the lake could potentially require aeration.

Other points of interest that can influence the lake's well-being included:

- Wake boats are creating bigger waves.
- Increasing boating is causing lake "busy-ness."
- It was recommended that DEEP consider regulating boat size on Gardner Lake.
- Nutrient loading increases algae which can block light necessary for photosynthesis.
- There was more water loading this season due to high rain levels.
- There was not an alarming increase of invasive aquatic plants. However, it was again confirmed this year that Gardner Lake's annual drawdown does help to manage the spread of invasive aquatic plants.
- A *Watershed Analysis* is recommended.
- Nitrate loading was not bad this year, but it was noted that nitrates are coming in from Sucker Brook.
- When oxygen is used up, nitrates can offer some assistance – to a point.
- Aquatic plants near Sandy Beach are beginning to encroach into the lake.
- Total phosphorous levels rose above 20 mg/L this year.
- Longer summer seasons contribute to longer nutrient loading due to weather patterns.
- Completing the annual drawdown before freezing is beneficial for hibernating wildlife, especially before ice cover.
- ECS is recommending the installation of a data logger at the deep hole for electronic tracking of dissolved oxygen levels and temperatures in real time.

- There was discussion about invasive plant treatments and herbicides, along with concerns over the widespread colonization of hydrilla in the Connecticut River this year and its potential to reach Gardner Lake.

### **DEEP Management of Gardner Lake Boat Launch and Dam**

Mike Lambert, DEEP Bureau Chief of Outdoor Recreation, reported on DEEP's statewide coverage and answered questions on the drawdowns. He noted that CT was one of the few states where state parks stayed open throughout the pandemic, although the number of park goers had to be monitored for a period of time.

Connecticut operates 117 boat launches. This year DEEP hired seasonal employees for the boat launches to educate vessel owners on the importance of safe boating and to educate boat operators on the transport of invasive aquatic plants. Concern continues to grow over the risks of fishing tournament participants spreading invasive weeds throughout CT lakes, which is a serious statewide problem. For the 255,000 acres of state park properties, an additional 30 seasonal EnCon rangers were hired to supplement the existing law enforcement staff.

Although Gardner Lake dam management does not fall under Outdoor Recreation, Mike Lambert has been given the temporary charge of establishing communications between the State and GLA on the operation of the dam. DEEP staff at Gillette Castle State Park handles the physical aspect of opening and closing the dam gate for the drawdowns. Planning drawdowns is a collaborative effort between fisheries and inland waterways, and is guided by policy. GLA has requested a copy of the policy. Mr. Lambert has requested a follow-up email regarding this year's dam closing, and will check with Jack Hine to see if he maintains a record of water levels at each monitoring.

GLA continues to question why we were billed for nine weeks after the closing of the dam gate in mid-February when the lake filled very quickly, and why it was closed so early with 10 inches of ice over the lake. The same day the dam gate was opened CT announced Open Fishing, allowing for outdoor recreational fishing during the pandemic. It is GLA's goal to establish communications with the State on our drawdowns and state-sponsored fishing tournaments, and to work together towards sound stewardship of Gardner Lake. **It is of utmost importance that state tournaments follow guidelines and be held accountable for the removal of all plant fragments before boats are put back into a waterbody again.**

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the September 9, 2021 meeting were presented for approval. Chris Rios made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Bill Wrobel. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Attachments**

- Treasurer's Report from 8/18/2021 to 9/17/2021.
- Client Monitoring Field Data Sheets: Dated 8/10/21 and 10/2/21.

### **Correspondence & Communication**

- **Client Monitoring Field Data Sheets:** Dated 8/10/21 and 10/2/21.
- **UConn CESE Invoices:** Dated 9/15/21 in the amount of \$358.00; and a second invoice dated 10/12/21 in the amount of \$675.48; for a total of \$1,033.48 for lab analysis. Kate Johnson made a motion to approve payment of both invoices; seconded by Chris Rios. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Email from Dr. Ben Burpee, ECS:** Dated 9/27/21, confirming the ECS presentation at the October meeting, noting that they are still awaiting lab analysis data from CESE to complete their report. Ben will be presenting, and Dr. Kortmann will be available to answer questions.
- **Email from Dr. Ben Burpee, ECS:** Dated 9/29/21, 2022 proposal cover letter with a note regarding recommendation of MiniDot instruments.
- **2022 Proposal for 2022 Gardner Lake Monitoring Program:** In the amount of \$8,275, with an additional option for installation of the MiniDot at \$1,750.
- **Email to Salem First Selectman Kevin Lyden:** Dated 10/11/21, requesting additional town funding in the amount of \$2,000 for 2021, as previously agreed to, leaving Salem with a remaining shortfall of \$2,670 for 2021.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Scott Soderberg presented the October Treasurer's Report (August 18, 2021 to September 17, 2021) for approval. Bill Wrobel made a motion to approve the report; seconded by Chris Rios. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Committee Business**

- **Law Enforcement Patrol:** Henry will check with Major Brian Newman for this year's patrol invoice. Major Newman and Sgt. Dwyer will be invited to the November meeting.
- **Water Quality Sampling:** Approval of the 2022 Gardner Lake Monitoring Program was tabled.

### **Old Business**

- **2020-2021 Drawdown Invoice:** Invoice approval was tabled.

**New Business** – None.

**Other Business** – None.

**Public Comment** – None.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 18, 2021, (third **Thursday** of the month due to Veteran's Day on the second Thursday in November this year) at the Salem Town Hall beginning at 7:00 pm.

### **Adjournment**

Chris Rios made a motion to adjourn at 10:25 p.m.; seconded by Kate Johnson. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Kate Johnson,  
Secretary