

**Hidden Lake Association
Annual Meeting
May 21, 2023**

Meeting called to order by Jay Cassella at 2:33pm.

Board members in attendance:

Jay Cassella. Sheri Berger. Laurel Hoynoski Cindy Porriello
Bob Kiehm, Heather Edelson, Lloyd Pearson, Anthony Grandazzo, Lloyd Pearson

Association members present:

Donna Caron, Joe Caron, Karin Bullock, BJ Chotiner, Celeste Benoit, Linda Lamitola, Eleanor Porriello, Frank Nunes, Alan Howell, Jill Carey, Keha Esposito, Alan Stokke, Joe Muraca, Patricia Donahue, Phil Porriello, Bruce Alpert, Mary Arnold, Sandra Diruzza, Rich Digraziano, James Nicholson, Victoria Nicholson, Eleanor Morrison, Betty Barsevich, Mahmoud Ahmed, Kerri Wilson, Mary Shea, Teresa Resnick, Tim Wood, Mary Evelyn Wood, Brian Polek, Cassandra Polek, Sandra Kiehm, Mary-Berth Russo, Denis Pellegrino, Amanda Caron, Ted Endress, Peter Lombardo, John Hoynoski. Aline Grandazzo Barbara Delicata

Approval of the May 2022 annual meeting minutes:

Anthony Grandazzo made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes, seconded by Barbara Delicata.

Motion to waive the reading of the 22 minutes made by Anthony, seconded by Barbara Delicata.
Motion passed unanimously.

Two corrections were made to the minutes, Casella and Kiehm was misspelled, and Victoria Nicolson served on the Board for 5 years, not 6 as the minutes noted. With these corrections, Barbara Delicato made a motion to accept the 2022 annual minutes, and Mary-Beth Russo seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

President's year-end report – Jay Cassella
(See attached report)

Tax Collectors report Sheri Berger
(See attached report)

Lake Committee report

(See attached report)

Aquatic Wildlife Management Committee Keha Esposito

(See attached report)

New business

Bob Kiehm recommended a reallocation of funds based upon shortfalls in the following line items:

\$200 additional needed for electricity

\$1,000 for legal

\$375 for the septic overage

\$800 for Admin supplies

Unexpended funds from snow and sanding from this past winter will be utilized to cover the above expenses.

Alan Howell made a motion to accept the reallocation of funds as noted above. Phil Porriello seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Presentation of annual 23-24 budget: Bob Kiehm

\$62,000 operating costs; \$60,000 in tax collection projected. The difference of \$2,000 is proposed to come from general reserves.

There is no increase in taxes based upon this budget.

(See report for all line-item details).

Linda Lamitola made a motion to approve the proposed budget., Alan Howell seconded the motions. Budget passed unanimously.

Bylaw revisions

The proposed by-law revisions were discussed at length, some requiring additional explanation by the by-law committee. Many opinions were expressed, both in favor and in opposition to various proposed revisions. Following discussion of each, a vote was taken on each proposed amendment, Results are as follows:

Section 5 -To Clarify certain expressions in language of the Charter and By-laws regarding voting:

Passed – 30 yes, 2 no

Section 15 & 16 -Regarding committees and standing committees. **Failed** 18 yes, 15 no

Section 22 -Presidents' right to appoint committee members. **Failed** 17 yes, 16 no

Section 38 -Regarding bonds required **Passed** 30 yes, 2 no

Section 41 - Regarding lake privilege. **Passed** 29 yes, 2 no

Section 41A-B - Regarding picnicking and swimming. **Passed** 31 yes, 0 no

Section 52- Regarding building regulations and supplying building permits **Failed** 16 yes, 17 no

Section 51- Regarding Mobile homes/Camping. **Failed** 11 yes, 22 no

Keha Esposito made a motion to investigate activating a charter revision committee in order to explore the possibility of revising our charter. Karin Bullock seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously

Motion to discount the votes of those who left the meeting prior to the election made by Mary-Beth Russo and seconded by Karin Bullock. 7 for the motion 13 against the motion. Motion failed to carry. All votes will be counted.

Nominations for Board Positions:

President	Jay Cassella, motion by Anthony Grandazzo, seconded by Linda Lamitola
Vice Pres	Alan Howell, motion by Barbara Delicata, seconded by Sandy Kiehm
Vice Pres	Brian Polek., Motion by Mary-Beth Russo, seconded by Frank Nunes
Rec Sec	Frank Nunes motion by Mary Arnold, seconded by 2 by Karin Bullock
Fin. Sec	Sheri Berger, motion by Cindy Porriello, seconded by Lloyd Pearson
Treasurer	Bob Kiehm, motion by Alan Howell, seconded by Anthony Grandazzo
3-yr Bd member Howell	Heather Edelson, motion by Anthony Grandazzo, seconded by Alan Howell
3-yr Bd member	Celeste Benoit, motion by BJ Chotiner, seconded by Frank Nunes

Election results:

President	Jay Cassella
Vice President	Brian Polek
Fin. Sec.	Sheri Berger
Rec. Sec	Frank Nunes
3-yr Bd. Member	Heather Edelson

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Barbara Delicato, and seconded by Jean Cassella.
Unanimous decision to adjourn.
Meeting adjourned at 5:20pm

Submitted by,

Anthony Grandazzo

President's address

Hello and greetings to the 2023-24 Annual meeting of the Hidden Lake Association.

Once again, it has been a very trying but successful year. I would start by pointing out the success simply by looking around our community and our lake to measure the success by its appearance.

The quality and the aesthetics of Hidden Lake has been the best it has ever been. Of course, I can only attest to this personally over the past 40 years that I have owned my home here, but I believe the evidence of success is in our lake quality and in the improvements of our property surround us.

The members of this board along with the dedication from the committee members across the board has given us a community we can all be proud of. Our committee members have demonstrated the ability to work together for a common good. I can remember a time where the required committees did not even exist and when the Board of Governors had a hard time getting a quorum of board member together to even hold their meetings. Now we have committees that are not only full of dedicated volunteers, but have other members asking if they can join to help. In the past, the association had a difficult time even filling the positions of the board members and would never have any member other than the incumbents actually wanting to volunteer time on the board. Now we have candidates challenging this position so they too may be part of the success.

But there has also been outright hostility expressed from less than a handful of association members over the past year. The discord and has been the most difficult challenge for the board to deal with. I believe it stems from a misplaced anger that stems from their not being selected for committee assignments and due to a loss of elections for board positions. The conflict and distrust that has permeated many meetings that has been counterproductive to continuing the work of the HLA, and quite frankly, not warranted. The saddest part of all of this is that we have had to seek legal counsel many of these matters which has been very expensive, and a waste of precious monetary resources

Two members of the board decided that the acrimony and unjustified hostility of these constant interruptions at meetings was not worth the aggravation and didn't warrant their time. The recording secretary resigned at the beginning of his most recent term, and the current VP has decided not to run for re-election. This has put added strain on the Board and still maintain success.

Fortunately, the counterbalance to this negatively has been the multitude of compliments and comments from many other members who recognize and appreciate the work and progress that has been made over the past year. People point to the clarity of the lake, the lack of weeds, the maintenance of our beaches, and right of ways. The Board is justifiably proud of the counsel sought, advice taken, and resources committed to safeguarding the long term health of our lake.

The success of the Hidden Lake Association is going to be continued by the effectiveness of our working together not by pointing out the minor mistakes of the board for not crossing a T or dotting an I but by the work all of our volunteers do to make this a great place to live. That will be the mark of our success.

I would like to end by thanking all the volunteers of both the committees and the board. Their achievements are truly evident all around us.

Thank you again

Jay Cassella / President

Hidden Lake Association

Budget for FY 23/24

Funds Source	2022-2023	Year to Date	Over + Under -	2023 - 2024	Diff. FY 22/24
	Current Budget			Proposed Budget	
	<i>3.4mils</i>			<i>3.4 mils</i>	
Tax Collection	\$59,000.00	\$59,535.21	\$535.21	\$60,000.00	\$1,000.00
Interest/Misc.		\$2,121.65	\$2,121.65		
General Reserve - Saving Account				\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total:	\$59,000.00	\$61,656.86	\$2,656.86	\$62,000.00	\$3,000.00

Expenditures:

Admin. Supplies & Expenses	\$6,500.00	\$4,258.05	-\$2,241.95	\$6,500.00	\$0.00
Beach Maintenance	\$1,500.00	\$630.00	-\$870.00	\$1,000.00	-\$500.00
Beautification	\$1,000.00	\$60.00	-\$940.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Benevolence	\$200.00	\$0.00	-\$200.00	\$200.00	\$0.00
Dam Maintenance	\$2,000.00	\$77.93	-\$1,922.07	\$1,400.00	-\$600.00
Electricity	\$1,000.00	\$901.24	-\$98.76	\$1,200.00	\$200.00
Insurance & Bonding	\$9,500.00	\$9,190.08	-\$309.92	\$9,500.00	\$0.00
Lake Testing	\$1,000.00	\$602.00	-\$398.00	\$1,200.00	\$200.00
Lake Weed/Debris Removal	\$8,000.00	\$4,150.00	-\$3,850.00	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Legal	\$1,000.00	\$908.00	-\$92.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Misc. Expense	\$500.00	\$154.79	-\$345.21	\$500.00	\$0.00
Property Maintenance	\$8,300.00	\$6,770.00	-\$1,530.00	\$9,000.00	\$700.00
Road Drainage Maint./Improv.	\$4,000.00	\$1,798.48	-\$2,201.52	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Road Maint. & Repairs	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	-\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Septic Tank Pumping	\$7,500.00	\$7,875.00	\$375.00	\$10,500.00	\$3,000.00
Snow Removal and Sanding	\$5,000.00	\$2,525.00	-\$2,475.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Total Expenditures:	\$59,000.00	\$39,900.57	-\$19,099.43	\$62,000.00	\$3,000.00

West Shore Dr. Repair

General Reserved Budget FY 22/23

Funds Source	2022-2023	Year to Date	Over + Under -	2023 - 2024	Diff. FY 22/24
	Current Budget			Proposed Budget	
General Reserve - Money Market Account	\$104,338.31		\$57,000.00	\$37,000.00	-\$20,000.00
(as of April 24, 2023)					
General Reserve reduction by committed Funds	\$72,000.00				
Total Remaining Funds in Reserve:	\$32,338.31		\$57,000.00	\$37,000.00	-\$20,000.00

Expenditures:	2022-2023	Year to Date	Over + Under -	2024 - 2024	Diff. FY 22/24	Committed Funds	Remaining Committed Funds
	Current Budget			Proposed Budget			
Dam Maintance (Reserve)	\$0.00			\$10,000.00			
Dam Repair (Reserve)	\$10,000.00			\$0.00			
Lake Preservation Fund (Reserve)	\$20,000.00	\$8,000.00		\$0.00		\$40,000.00	\$32,000.00
Lake Weed/Debris Removal (Reserve)	\$5,000.00			\$5,000.00			\$0.00
Miscellaneous BOG (Reserve)	\$5,000.00			\$5,000.00			\$0.00
Property Maintenance Additional (Reserve)	\$5,000.00			\$5,000.00			\$0.00
Road Chip Seal Fund (Reserve)	\$10,000.00			\$10,000.00		\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
Road Drainage Projects (Reserve)	\$2,000.00			\$2,000.00			\$0.00
Total Expenditures:	\$57,000.00			\$37,000.00	-\$20,000.00	\$80,000.00	\$72,000.00

Tree Removal by spillway

Hidden Lake Association
Fiscal Year 07/01/2022 – 06/30/2023

Mill Rate 3.4

Last Fiscal Year End (2021 Actuals)
Revenue Collection Report

Fiscal Year 07/01/2021 – 06/30/2022

Total Annual Collectable Tax Revenue:	60,525.05
Principal:	59,212.21
Interest:	956.72
Lien Fees:	<u>168.00</u>
Total Collected:	<u>\$60,336.93</u>

Current Fiscal Year [07/01/2022 – 06/30/23] began with:

Total Annual Collectable Tax Revenue:	60,402.65
Annual Access Fee Due:	200.00
PAST DUE Tax:	2,981.68
Interest Due:	624.02
Lien Fees Due:	<u>120.00</u>
Total Due:	<u>\$64,328.35</u>

Revenue Collected:

Current Tax:	58,853.54
Annual Access Fee:	200.00
Past Due Tax:	751.50
Interest:	377.77
Lien Fees:	<u>24.00</u>
Total Collected:	<u>\$60,206.81</u>

Access Fee (21 First Avenue): In accordance with the State of Connecticut Superior Court judgment on February 9, 1998 docket number SC-9-86385. Judgment states that on an annual basis \$200 will be paid to Hidden Lake Association for repairs, maintenance, plowing, lighting and insuring of Hidden Lake Association roads.

HLA Tax Collection Report – Annual Meeting May 21, 2023
Submitted by Sheri Berger, Financial Secretary

HLA Lake Committee Annual Report 2023

Lake Committee Members:

Sheri Berger, Jay Cassella, Anthony Grandazzo, Victoria Nicholson, James Nicholson, David Chalifoux

Accomplishment Summary:

1. Completed water testing per bylaw recommendations
2. **Aquatic Ecosystem Research (AER)**
 - Bathymetric mapping delivered
 - Sediment and lake report delivered
3. Lake blankets installed and removed
4. Beach signs have been received, installation is in work
5. Beach entrance posts that hold the cabling have been painted for safety/visibility
6. New landscape company has been hired
7. Lower the Lake: Pond and Lake Connection has made technical advice on depth of lowered lake. The depth gauge installed at the dam as well as the bathymetric mapping that was recently completed shall help this determination.
8. During the draw down a plan to reclaim the sand at the beaches was completed
9. Beaches cleaned, and sand recovered
10. Proposed Lake Committee budget

AER Report Summary Recommendations

Water Quality:

- Develop a standardized water quality and bacteria monitoring program and memorialize these protocols in a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) or similar document;
- As financial resources allow, incorporate first the critical water quality variables at one or two sites, and several times a season (early season, mid-season, late season);
- Evaluate E. coli testing sites and adjust accordingly. Consider sampling more frequently;
- Compile all existing water quality and waterbody datasets, expand on this compilation with future data;
- Assess trends and variability within future and current datasets.

Plant Management:

- Continue management of aquatic vegetation situated in the central “deep water” basin, as well as high use shoreline areas to maintain recreational access;
- Utilize mechanical methods for removal of plants in shallow areas as possible. Mechanical methods will remove organic material from the waterbody rather than allowing degradation/sedimentation;
- Retain plant assemblages in undeveloped shoreline areas and coves;
- Conduct a waterbody-wide third-party plant survey to assess community health; a horizon of once each decade is recommended;
- Continue with watercraft inspection program to limit the possibility of invasive plant introduction.

Drawdowns:

- Conduct drawdowns of consistent depth and duration;
- Reduce the frequency and duration of drawdowns to “as necessary” to retain shallow water plant species.

Sedimentation & Bathymetry:

- Conduct periodic intensive bathymetric/sediment surveys using comparable methods to the 2022 initiative to assess basin depth. A horizon of once each decade is recommended.
- When conducting catch basin maintenance, monitor and record catch basin sediment accumulation.

Watershed:

- Develop a “LakeSmart” program (i.e. Beseck Lake, Lake Pocotopaug) to educate homeowners on practices to protect the water quality and ecosystem of Hidden Lake;
- Work with shoreline landowners and/or landscaping companies to establish native vegetation buffer zones and gardens on shoreline properties;

- Limit or prohibit use of fertilizers and pesticides by Association homeowners;
- Monitor existing and proposed land use activities in the larger watershed. Communicate concerns or comments to local land use officials

President, Hidden Lake Association, Board of Governors
Report of the Audit Committee of 2022/2023

May 21, 2023

The following report covers the annual audit as of May 21, 2023.

The audit was done on various dates in April and May. The scope of the audit was as defined in the Hidden Lake Association (HLA) By-Laws, Section 16-C. All three members participated in the audit as evidenced by their signatures below.

Tax Audit

The Financial Secretary, Sheri Berger, is responsible for all the tax records of the Association. See HLA By-Laws Section 25 for the specifics of her responsibilities.

Virtually all the information she works with, e.g., property lists, are provided by third parties such as the Haddam town hall. The result is a reasonably accurate and complete list of property owners/HLA members. Bank records were provided showing deposits and individual deposits are well documented, giving a high degree of reliability from the auditors' perspective covering her whole process.

Financial Records audit

The Treasurer, Robert Kiehm, is the custodian and financial officer for the HLA. See Section 26 of the HLA By-Laws for a full description of his responsibilities.

Overall expenditures were within their respective line-item allocations except for three-line items. The amounts involved were minor and adjustments by moving funds from lines where the full allocation was not used to cover these overages will be requested at the annual meeting. Total expenditure will not exceed the budget.

There is no indication that payments made electronically have the approval of the Treasurer and one other officer. A follow-up conversation with at least one member of the audit committee should take place within 30 days following the annual meeting to discuss this issue.

The presentation of the reserve funds in the monthly Treasurer's report could be clearer. A follow-up meeting within 30 days of the annual meeting is also recommended.

The individuals serving these jobs were entirely cooperative with all aspects of their audits.

The overall audit results are very satisfactory and reflect the high character and the striving for excellence of these individuals.

Signed May 21, 2023

Alan Howell

Jean Cassella

Cynthia Porriello

Enclosures with the original
CC: Robert Kiehm, Sheri Berger