

LAKE CHAFFEE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.
PO Box 231, Ashford, CT 06278

LCIA Board Meeting – August 13th, 2025 – Approved

Date of Meeting: August 13, 2025 @ 6:30pm. This meeting will be held at Pirzl Hall.

Board Members:

Mike Panek (P)	Tom Martin (VP)	Erin Szela (S)	Chris Fyler (T)
Gerald Dufresne (R)	Mary Griffin (R)	Seth Kaufman (R)	Lynn Fontaine (R)
Joseph Hall (Alt)	Liz Provencher (Alt)	Kay Warren (Alt)	

Board Members Absent: Phil Silverstein (R) Carol Natitus (R)

Public in Attendance: Carmen Hall, Cesar Barrios, Ralph Sherman, and Catherine Silver-Smith

- 1. Call to Order/Seating of Alternates:** Meeting was called to order at 6:32pm by Mike Panek. No alternates needed.
- 2.** Motion made to move President's comments, motion by Lynn seconded by Tom.
- 3. Remarks by the President:** Mike welcomed new members to the board, both present and not. Mike spoke regarding new meeting protocols for meetings: **1.** Please raise your hand to be acknowledged and speak, **2.** Speak in turn, no side conversations/comments while someone is speaking. **3.** Stay on topic to keep items concise, **4.** Everyone on the board should review the minutes prior to coming to the meeting, as well as looking through the Treasurer's report, **5.** Come to the meeting prepared with minutes reviewed/corrections ready. Please be sure to make your own copies of the minutes/treasury report/agenda for meetings.
- 4. Approval of July 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes:** Time was allowed for the reading of the minutes and provide any corrections. Motion to accept made by Tom, seconded by Seth. Lynn abstains due to absence. Voice vote of approval.
- 5. Public Comments:** No public comments.
- 6. Approval of Treasurer's July 2025 Report:** Note that the numbers currently match from first month of the budget cycle to the total budget. Seth made a motion to accept, seconded by Lynn. Voice vote approval, Chris and Tom abstain.
- 7. Correspondence:** Mike spoke on several correspondence he received: **1.** Concern from a resident for a short-term rental violations. Mike recommended the complainant seek police assistance; legal notices will not be read into minutes. Mike then spoke to First Select on concerns about violations occurring and whether building/zoning/wetlands have overlap with short-term rentals. The board remains neutral on this. **2.** Monday, August 11th, via Zoom, Mike attended the Zoning town meeting and spoke to raise concerns Lake Chaffee residents have in regard to short-term rentals. Result: Town reviewing how they can assist with enforcement and updating regulations/rules to assist with these short-term rentals around town in general. Tom had correspondence with resident at top of Circle Drive. **3.** Resident is building a house on top of Pine Hill in Union. Tom informed him of our road bond and received a check to his address. This will be brought in to the Treasurer. *Reminder on road bond policy:* Checks are held and not cashed, only cashed if needed per damage to the road from construction traffic;

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otherwise return to residents. Same resident also had concerns about overhanging trees, if the trees are on someone's property they can be cut while working with property owner.

8. Chairman's Reports:

- a. **Boat Launch and Boat Dock:** (Jerry Dufresne) No mowing this past week, dock appears to have been hit with a boat. Need a group to assist with lifting and correcting the dock for safety/security. Jerry has wooden boards to create a sign for the boat launch, suggestion to add an additional sign: "Members Only".
- b. **Constable:** (Jerry Dufresne) – No news to report. Mike received correspondence regarding an attempted break-in on the new construction house on Shore Front. Police came and took a report. Reminder to make sure your doors/cars are locked, be diligent about what is going on in the neighborhood, remain vigilant. More research needed for who owns the property, Board notes #19 Shorefront and the previous owners are rebuilding—Mike will contact.
- c. **Beaches – Mothers & Main:** (Liz Provencher, Mary Griffin) – **Mother's:** Has been mowed, easy access, no one parking and blocking the beach. **Main:** Mary put something on the "unofficial" Facebook page about a bucket for people to assist with cleaning up the goose droppings. A resident purchased a scoop for droppings, seems to be going well. No trash, residents have been cleaning up, only observation is someone reattached the wooden ladder to the raft so now there are two there. Mike thanked Cesar Barrios for his volunteer help for assisting in repairing washout at Main beach. Kay expressed concern about the wooden ladder, needs to be reviewed for safety. Mike noted this will need to be removed entirely due to safety concerns. New signs for the beaches have arrived, need to be hung.
- d. **Dam:** (no Chairperson) No chairperson currently, Jerry noted the dam needs mowing again and needs some stone added.
- e. **Environmental Chairperson:** (Ralph Sherman) Geese are now in flying/training sessions. Ralph would like to give a big 'thank you' to all the volunteers assisting with removing the weeds in the lake. Water testing: June and July were successful. August testing planned for next week (week of August 18th).
- f. **Roads:** (no Chairperson) – Nominate Phil Silverstein to Committee
Tom noted that Union Drive, corner of Deer Field has not been addressed yet but that is the next project. Mike nominates Phil Silverstein as Chairperson for Roads, Tom seconds, unanimous vote approved.
- g. **Fund Raising:** (Mary Griffin) – Fall party date confirmation which Mary noted that we already advertised online and in the newsletter that it is September 6th. Expected to be 2-5pm. Mary requests assistance with printing 200 copies of the flyer, Mike confirmed. Tag sale planned for Sunday, September 28th 9 to 2—not official yet, Mary needs to check with the town and others to ensure nothing too large is occurring that day as well that will impact attendance. Family Day (September 14th, Sunday) – Mary/husband plan to do apple fritters and clam cakes, would like to take an ad out in the Ashford Citizen (\$25 for the ad). Mike welcomes our First Select to our meeting who is in attendance and notes efforts to connect Lake Chaffee events and town events. Tag sale attendance as vendors: Mary to advertise and then will give a cutoff date of Sept 10th if not enough vendors, we cancel.

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h. Tax Collection: (Tom Martin) – Website direction – email?

Nothing new to add at this time from Tom. Current Treasurer email auto-forwards to Mike's email to help keep him involved and will loop in Chris as needed. Chris raised a question on behalf of a resident about how to add a Pay Online feature online. Joe noted potential fees for using certain payment vendors. Tom notes GoDaddy is a company that he has experience accepting payments like that and offered assistance. More research needed.

i. Hall: (Lynn Fontaine) No new items to report. Jerry provided update on Hall kitchen sink project almost complete. Kay mentioned adding to website that the hall is available to rent, Chris mentioned to include costs for rentals online, Mike suggests conversation for hall rental fees, Mary notes cleaning as well as other updates (new tables, update floors, deep-cleaning). More discussion needed.

9. Old Business: **1.** Swing Island barricade/tree removal: *Barricade is not put back up but the tree has been removed and the island is currently open.* **3.** Weed consultation: *New England Aquatics, Matt is the owner, resident Ben Schooler spoke to Matt about the weeds already. The weeds that we have in the lake are called "Elodea," a common water weed. Matt seems very familiar with all of these issues. First Option: a harvest machine – essentially sucks them up out of the lake and removes them from the lake entirely, 1 day period can do about an acre – cost \$2,750/acre. This would cover just the cove, not the entire lake. A private citizen could also pay to have this done as long as they have LCIA approval. Issue: where do the weeds go, this cost only removes them from the lake not disposal. Note: it may be difficult to get the harvester into certain places due to its size. Second Option: can use an herbicide to remove it, but would kill the fish. Joe noted that we would need approval from the town due to wetlands with Provision 9. Mary noted that we would need volunteers during this process to assist with removing these weeds. Mike noted the best method would be for residents to continue to remove the weeds. Liz asked if this weed issue is a "this year" or a "Lake Chaffee" issue or if this occurs everywhere: seems this is an issue all around CT, the problem doesn't get worse or better. Jerry raked out in front of the boat launch.*

10. New Business: **1.** Preparing tax bills: *Offsite bookkeeper is prepared to process these. Mike seeks volunteers for assistance with creating a prep train for the tax bills to assist with sending them out, volunteers to be prepared for next meeting to stay after to assist with this.* **2.** Sign removal post annual meeting (Aug. 17th): *Lynn will remove signs after meeting.* **3.** Potential Siphon crew for lake lowering: *Need to put the siphon together, need a crew to assist (potential previous volunteers: Jeff Cosman, Ivan. Mike to reach out to them). Kay noted her neighbor could potentially assist. Mary and Erin will not be at the Annual August meeting. Ralph noted that during the last lake lowering the siphon was established long prior to when the siphon process would begin. Mike noted that we have not had requests from residents seeking assurance that the lake will be lowered so they can work on their retaining walls. Lynn noted on the "unofficial" Facebook page a resident questioned why we do not just lower the lake every year (Note: this is part of our Charter). Mary notes residents have concerns that the lake was lowered too early last year.* **4.** *First Select notes that Shred Day is offered October 11th 9am to noon at the Senior Center, free to residents. Town will pay for it. Request that residents bring a non-perishable donation for the food pantry.*

11. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Lynn and Mary seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:27pm.