

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

LCIA Board Meeting – September 10th, 2025 - DRAFT

Date of Meeting: This meeting will be held at Pirzl Hall on September 10th, 2025.

Board Members:

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

Public in Attendance: Carmen Hall, Cesar Barrios, Raph Sherman, John Mayer, Irwin Krieger, and Neil Gordon

- 1. Call to Order/Seating of Alternates:** 6:33 meeting called to order by Mike Panek.
- 2. Approval of Minutes August 13, 2025:** Time was allowed for reading of the minutes. Motion to accept the minutes was made by Mike. Jerry motioned to approve, Seth seconded, one - Carol abstained.
- 3. Public Comments:** No public comments.
- 4. Approval of Treasurer's Report:** August 2025 – 2 months in, not too much to report. Motion to approve by Lynn, seconded by Mary. Chris abstained. All others approved.
- 5. Remarks by the President:** New meeting protocols: hand raising, no side conversations, stay on topic. Reminder to bring a copy of the agenda and previous meeting minutes with you to the meeting. Thank Mary Griffin for all her hard work for the event this past Saturday.
- 6. Correspondence:**
 - 1.** Cesar Barrios – tree trimming: *Signs located by the boat launch cannot be seen; signs will be repositioned. Jerry to move the old sign as well as putting up the new sign. Note that stop sign down from Hall is blocked by a tree.*
 - 2.** David Almonte – 10 Armitage Ct. – Tree cutting inquiry: *No rules or regulations as long as sure it is on your property. Wetland protocol may need to be noted if within a certain distance.*
 - 3.** Kathi Kidwell – DEEP grant info – weeds: *Mike to follow up for next year on the weeds, gathered grant information.*
 - 4.** 75 Westford resident warning about possible camper/tent approval for 76 Westford during home construction: *Resident in 75 was concerned that camper would be there for improvements for 76, lob cabin appears to be completed and owned by Stuart & Norma Sherman. Lynn knows they do not live here permanently at this time, but may have a tent for their kids to camp in backyard. To be determined, resident to keep us informed.*
 - 5.** Town Planning and Zoning meeting updates: *Mike was copied on an email that was sent out about a resident 73/76 Lakeview Drive listed out a number of concerns regarding the property. It was not on the agenda that was posted for the meeting. Board will not specifically note any specifics, but from Mike D.: a cease-and-desist order for both properties was issued. Pay attention to the Planning/Zoning meeting agenda; next meeting in October. Not sure where it stands yet.*
 - 6.** Town IWWC Meeting updates: *Resident sent a letter to Mr. Jim Larkin (officer of the wetlands agency) that the lake was being lowered this*

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year and wanted to ensure the board notified the correct people and to confirm if we needed permits. Letter went to the town prior to the General Meeting in August. Mike made it very clear that nothing would happen with the lake until Mike connected with Jim Larkin to ensure all compliance/permits. Since we voted not to lower the lake, we would expect to not vote on this again until Fall 2026. At the IWWC meeting they discussed the need to be contacted and involved in any lake lowering activities prior to it happening. Mike read Exhibit A into meeting minutes (see attached Exhibit A). Mike then read Exhibit B into the meeting minutes (see attached Exhibit B). Liz has another complaint on short term rentals, dogs/speeding/etc. Mike feels that there will be something coming from the town on short-term rentals.

7. Chairman's Reports:

- a. Boat Launch and Boat Dock:** (Jerry Dufresne) Mowing boat launch tomorrow (9/11) **1.** Raft removal: Jerry is going to move and try to repair, if possible. **2.** Fix dock: Need assistance to repair center supports from boat collision. Bought boards for the sign, almost finished.
- b. Constable:** (Jerry Dufresne) Nothing to report.
- c. Beaches – Main & Mothers:** (Liz Provencher MOTHER's Beach: porta-potties are gone, neighbors are still blocking the road, buoys will be removed. Mary Griffin: porta-potties are gone, buoys will be gone soon, beach does need more sand before next season **1.** Wood ladder removal: been removed. New signs going up for boat launch.
- d. Dam:** (no Chairperson) Jerry stopped by the dam, needs to be mowed, owner may be doing that otherwise Jerry will. Jerry noted Japanese knotweed is in the dam area, this is an invasive and very difficult plant to get rid of. Must be burned, just cutting it and throwing out will still spread it. Note: looks kind of like bamboo.
- e. Environmental Chairperson:** (Ralph Sherman) Geese seem to be gone, at least volume is lower **1.** August water samples: expected that Main and Mother beaches will have higher results but the results are still passing, this is due to the beaches being where the geese like to be. Overall the lake looks good.
Mike noted that he found a solar power device on Amazon that is motion detected and will "bark like a dog and makes a shotgun sound" and when the geese heard this they took off as soon and have not returned to Mike's property. It has different volumes that can be adjusted. Contact Mike, he will send the information to you in interested (\$21 each).
- f. Roads:** (Phil Silverstein) Marty Connors and Phil did about 5 hours on the roads two months ago. Intends to be on all the Lake Chaffee private roads to ensure compliance. **1.** Ashford Dr. had a complaint and Phil noted it needs improvement and will get quotes/pricing for the next meeting. Union Drive (#1 on established list) and Westford Drive (#2 on list) have both been fixed, Ashford Drive is next. Mike suggests one more assessment before the snow comes to ensure there are no issues. Primary goal is that an ambulance or a fire truck can safely navigate the road. Lynn notes Pine Hill also needs review/repairs (#4 on list).

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- 79 **g. Fund Raising:** (Mary Griffin) Fall party, good attendance. Mary to add additional signs that
80 note Lake Chaffee as the signs note LCIA but not everyone knows what that is. Future
81 fundraising: paint party and line dancing.
- 82 **h. Tax Collection:** (Tom Martin) New list from Mike for Tom for overdue notices.
- 83 **i. Hall:** (Lynn Fontaine) **1.** Closet paperwork/shred day: *paperwork from the closet, needs to be*
84 *reviewed. Mary and Lynn will look through the other closets to clear them out. 2.* Possible
85 Hall upgrades: *new floor, fresh paint, tables/chairs, light bulbs/covers to dress it up, repaint*
86 *outside covers over windows.*
- 87 **8. Old Business: 1.** Raft – 37 Lakeview – Emil Szymczak *Raft needs to be removed, Jerry to find*
88 *contact information for Emil for Mike. 2.* Tax bill help: *reminder that members are welcome to*
89 *stay tonight to assist with preparing the tax bills to be sent out this year.*
90 Mike reminder: all items are open to be included in the agenda, just to let Mike know in advance
91 of the meeting.
- 92
- 93 **9. New Business: 1.** Ordinance/Bylaw review process: *Multi-meeting continued effort to review*
94 *charter/bylaws/ordinances to review, potentially change. All members should have a copy of the*
95 *bylaws and charter with them for all meetings. Mike would like to set aside 15-30 minutes to the*
96 *end of every meeting to review these.*
- 97
- 98 **10. Adjournment:** Jerry motion to adjourn, Lynn second. Meeting ended at 7:46pm.

FROM SEPT 2, 2025 IWWC MEETING:

Exhibit A

Other Business:

CT DEEP/Lake Chaffee Association Draw Down

Mr. Larkin explained that apparently there have been several miscommunications and/or misunderstandings of procedures concerning a possible draw down of the water at Lake Chaffee. The IWWC only knew of the plans by receiving a notice from a lake resident. The DEEP wanted to know if the Lake Assoc. had notified the town of its intentions. No formal information or request has been received by the town for draw down. Apparently only the Lake Chaffee Web Master was notified.

Mr. Larkin has asked to be copied on any correspondence regarding the draw down. The DEEP wants notification of draw down dates, amount of draw down so that it can understand if the work qualifies as an appropriate activity under statutes. Also, DEEP may visit the site to see the dam.

The visitor, * reported that at the Lake Association meeting August 17th a discussion and vote was taken, a tie vote. As a result, there is to be no draw down this year. Mr. Zulick noted that lake draw downs are serious business and that there can be many negative results. Although it might be done to remove weeds (some would think a positive) other negative results such as damage to and killing of plant and animal wildlife (negatives) may happen as well as damage to adjacent land/wetland areas.

Ms. Chase noted that if done it is best done in late October or November and might be considered a non-regulated use, but there are other impacts. When and how long will it take to refill the lake? If the IWWC is to have any positive input and the draw down to be considered non-regulated, a letter of intent needs to be received early enough by the IWWC. She recommended that the IWWC get a document together regarding lake activities, what requires a permit and what does not, for example, the use of machinery requires a permit, so that we have this in place before the same situation, or a different activity, happens again. M. Chase requested of * that she convey the IWWC's request to have the Lake Association be part of the agenda for a discussion soon.

* noted that Lake Chaffee water level is still down after the last draw down. She indicated that they have a Charter but that they also must follow town rules. Any plans or activities that effect the lake should be reported formally to the IWWC. Mr. Zulick stated that the state of Connecticut assumes ownership of state lakes. Ms. Hall mentioned that she believes that the Lake Chaffee Association owns the lake bottom.

* RESIDENTS NAME RETRACTED

Exhibit B

Email 9-3 in reference to meeting minutes of IWWC 9-2:

Hello Mr.Larkin,

I would like to introduce myself, Mike Panek, current President of the LCIA, Lake Chaffee Improvement Association. After reading the notes from the meeting on 9/2, I feel the need to give some truthful information. First, the reason I, nor any representative of the Board of Directors attended after seeing that we were on the Agenda for a Lake Drawdown was the fact that the reason we were on the Agenda in the first place is a lake resident decided to write you a letter to "alert" you of our "illegal" plan to lower the lake, which at the time written was not accurate. We had not had our annual meeting where we vote as a community whether or not it gets lowered. When that meeting happened, the letter you received from the resident was discussed and prior to the vote, I as the President made it clear to ALL in attendance that IF the vote was to approve a lowering, that not one drop of water would be drained until I spoke with you personally to clarify the "rules" and that we as an Association were doing things legally, without any violation. Since the vote was to not lower the lake this year, I had no reason to speak to you at this time but planned on discussing prior to NEXT year's vote and also thinking your meeting agenda would be a moot point, except that I see the resident who wrote the letter was in attendance and spoke as a citizen with some facts, and some non-facts. Including that the lake is still low from last year's lowering which is false.

Second, since I have been at the lake for the past nine years, and with the help of some senior Board members, I was told at our meeting that during past drawdowns, the most recent being last year, that LCIA has always alerted the Willimantic Water Works of our plans when the lake is lowered. I am also aware, that last year several residents went through the process of getting permits to fix retaining walls on their properties legally. I am also aware that a resident added a load of sand to the lake, which is not allowed by LCIA, except under certain conditions which were not met at the time. LCIA alerted IWWC, and after some more "misinformation" from the resident, we were sent a letter that it would take no action against the resident and that LCIA was just as responsible for the action.

Finally, since we now have 11 months until the next vote for Lake lowering, I suggest that we get the FACTS on the table, so that any future activity is done with the blessing of any entity you feel is needed so that there is no questions that the LCIA is acting legally.

I welcome any feedback you may have, and the opportunity to speak at an upcoming IWWC meeting about ANY lake activities you feel relevant. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mike Panek
President
LCIA Inc.
mikepanek@aol.com