

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Beaver River Property Owners Association**  
**Saturday, June 30, 2007 ▪ Beaver River Hotel, Beaver River Station, NY**

Board members present: Carol Schoch, President; Don Phelps, Gerry Fuerch, Bob Dickie, Ron Nearing.  
Absent: Jenny Lundberg, Steve Edic

The meeting was called to order by Carol Schoch at 3:15 PM.

Roll call was dispensed with and an attendance sheet was signed. There were 26 members present.

Carol announced that current BRPOA Secretary Jenny Lundberg wishes to step down and that Kathy Partridge has agreed to fill in as acting Secretary.

**Issue: Special Meeting for By-Laws & Membership Revision: Carol Schoch**

The special meeting has been postponed due to workload and other issues. The By-Laws revisions are proving to be more complex than anticipated. In particular, membership criteria must be looked at; we presently have paid members that, technically, are not eligible for membership and others who are two years in arrears on dues. These issues will be taken up at the Labor Day meeting.

**Treasurer's Report: Gerry Fuerch**

Current balance as of June 28, 2007: \$8652.06. A complete copy of the Treasurer's report is available from Treasurer Gerry or acting secretary, Kathy Partridge. There were no objections to the Treasurer's Report. Motion to accept: Don Phelps, second: Ron Nearing. All were in favor.

Discussion followed regarding the issue of "snail" mailings vs. email for contacting people when dues are due, for donations, proposed By-Law changes, etc. It would be more convenient to put together one package with all items in a single mailing.

**Dock Committee: Don Phelps**

We currently have \$1550.41 in the budget for dock repairs and maintenance. The planking up the center needs to be replaced, and the best price Don has found for the necessary lumber comes to \$1012.00. There should be enough stainless steel screws left from previous projects to do the job. The second wing on the right needs work where it is attached to the center walk. A notice will be posted on the website that there will be a dock work party on the first or second weekend in August. Please send an email to Don if you're going to attend.

Carol asked if there's a way to utilize the old dock. It is currently used as overflow "parking", but it's hard to get out there and not get your feet wet. Don says it needs a lot of work and will take a crew of six or seven people to fix.

**History Committee: Sharon Fuerch**

Sharon would like all members to submit a history of their camps for use in an updated (1980 to present) history of Beaver River. A notice will be posted on the website.

**Audit Committee: Ron Nearing**

Ron suggested that the BRPOA accounts be set up so that a second person can sign checks in case the Treasurer is unavailable for some reason. Carol Schoch suggested it be someone outside the Board

because of the turnover of Board members; that way the accounts wouldn't have to be changed every year. It was noted that other non-profits have their accounts set up in this way. The State will tie up funds if the Treasurer is incapacitated and a second person isn't authorized to sign checks. Discussion of the audit followed.

**Website Report: Kathy Partridge**

Between March 7, 2007 (the launch date) and June 27, 2007 the website has seen 4,871 page loads, as well as 1,380 first-time visitors and 489 return visits, for a total of 1,869 visits. A complete website report, including most visited pages and recent search terms is available from the Kathy-the-webmaster.

Carol asked if there was a way for visitors to bypass the security screen so that a member could automatically access the members-only area based on something like their email address. There isn't any way to do this. All members should enter the username and password and then put a check mark in the little box to remember this information for future visits, to save re-entering it each time.

Discussion followed on the possibility of setting up an online discussion group for BRPOA members only. Some members have sent emails to groups of BRPOA members, while mistakenly including non-BRPOA addresses as well. A discussion group would be a central location for conversing about BRPOA issues while avoiding the "hazards" of emailing.

**Sunshine Committee: Eleanor Hutchinski**

No news is good news. All members are healthy.

**Issue: Beaver River Junk and Codes Enforcement: Carol Schoch**

Carol has contacted the Town of Webb Codes Enforcement Office for advice on what the Town can do to help with the junk that's piling up at various locations in Beaver River. The Codes Enforcement officers said that they can come to Beaver River in July 2007, inventory the junk, and advise offenders, but not cite anyone. It will then be the responsibility of property owners to clean up their own junk. The BRPOA would be willing to assist in defraying some costs related to this. The Webb Town Board and the Adirondack Scenic Railroad have expressed a willingness to assist in the junk removal, once they have more specifics. The Codes officers would return in May of 2008, do a second inventory, identify junk issues that have not been addressed and issue citations to force compliance.

The primary concern is residences and properties with stockpiled junk. It was pointed out that there are two old trailers/camps on the Town of Webb's own property in Beaver River that have been there for years, but trees would have to be taken down to get them out of there and the Town seems unwilling to do anything about this. Tom Brown thinks we're asking for trouble bringing in codes people. Codes people will have to enforce NY State law. Among other things, they might make camp owners cut their grass. Other property owners have stated that they no longer bring friends to visit at camp because they're embarrassed by all the dead vehicles and other junk that has piled up around town.

Much lively discussion followed! Some people are concerned that once the codes department comes in there'll be no end to the nitpicking; others feel that since the Town has always taken a pretty hands-off approach to Beaver River (including the junk trailers on the Town's own property), they're unlikely to go overboard with citations and requirements now. It's easy to assume that officials ignore Beaver River and have no idea what goes on up here, but that's not the case. Judi Calhoun's daughter, while in a conversation with the State Police on another matter, happened to mention her family's camp in Beaver River. The officer stated that since access from the outside has changed because of the Thompson's barge

service, the days of us keeping unregistered and un-inspected vehicles in Beaver River are likely numbered. In the event of an accident between a registered “outside” vehicle with an unregistered camp vehicle, the latter vehicle’s owner would pay the damages. Because Beaver River now seems to be on more outside radar than in times past, it was also suggested that it might be wise to invite the Codes people in now and work cooperatively with them, rather than have them decide to come in on their own a few years from now and lower the boom with more draconian measures. Kathy Partridge wondered if some of the junk stockpiles which include items like old appliances, might come under the heading of “dump” and are in violation of state environmental law.

Carol asked if there is anyone who feels that Beaver River doesn’t have a problem with the junk.? No one raised their hand. It was concluded that we all agree that the junk is a problem.

Carol offered a number of possibilities in dealing with the junk:

1. We can invite Codes Enforcement in but with a specific limited approach. In an unofficial show of hands, 10 out of the 26 people present objected to this option.
2. We can form a committee within Beaver River to do our own inventory and then take it to the Codes Department. Several people wondered if this is a viable option and felt it runs the risk of appearing that we’d be cherry picking which properties were involved.
3. A third option would be to approach the Town to inventory only those properties that do not have a dwelling. In a show of hands, no one objected to this, however Al Larmann pointed out that you can’t be just a little bit pregnant, in other words this needs to apply to all properties or none.

### **Fire Protection: Ron Nearing**

Oberman Camp Fire: Don Oberman thanked the people that helped to fight the fire and then gave them a place to stay afterward. In his opinion, they saved Beaver River and a lot of old trees, and quite possibly prevented a major forest fire. In fighting the fire, the town came together with a sense of community, something not often seen in Beaver River. It’s unfortunate that it takes something disastrous like this for that to happen.

Carol noted that Bob Arlington’s grandson was a great help in fighting the fire. She didn’t even know who he was when he showed up but he pitched in like a real trouper.

Ron & Carol: There were real voids that became apparent in fighting the fire, especially since this was at night. Although the siren was in working order, it wasn’t understood that there’s a 30 second delay before any sound is heard. So the siren was turned off and on, and never actually came on to summon assistance. In a show of hands, few people in the room knew where the siren is, and even fewer knew how it’s supposed to work. Also, the night of the fire, the phones were out due to the thunderstorm that had sparked the fire. (It has been concluded that the Oberman camp was not struck by lightning; it was ignited by a lightning strike elsewhere in town that traveled through the phone lines and somehow sparked the fire in their camp.) Not understanding how the siren works plus the lack of phone service made it difficult to gather people to fight the fire. Also, the fire equipment trailer needs to be redesigned so it can be pulled by almost any vehicle. The night of the fire, the ATV that was available didn’t have the correct hitch height and wasn’t heavy enough so when they attempted to pull the trailer, the trailer tongue jammed into the ground. Carol also spoke of the need for lights, since the fire and propane tank that was burning created dense smoke and steam, making it very difficult to see more than a few feet. The walkie-talkies had batteries and worked, however they were too garbled for anyone to be understood. The water-intake needs some design modifications – it wanted to keep flipping to one side, so water flow

was interrupted. There were no firefighting jackets available – although there had been at one time, but bees got into them in the fire barn. It was suggested that we get new fire jackets and seal them in “space bags”.

It was very difficult to reach the Big Moose Fire Department for assistance. In the end, it was DEC Ranger Luke Evans that called it in, which is why the BMFD came even though Beaver River is not in their fire district. We’ve since learned that they should not have come, their insurance doesn’t cover structure fires outside their district. If a tree is on fire, no matter where it is, they can respond to the call, as that’s a potential forest fire and the State picks up the tab for that.

Ron: A lot of good things happened that night, but we need to learn from the problems. Beaver River Station needs to have its own fire district like they’re putting together in Stillwater or we need to get ourselves attached to the Big Moose Fire District. It would cost 25 cents per \$1000 of the total assessed value of all town properties in order to be covered by BMFD. There would be other requirements (unspecified) as well.

Ron announced that there is a fire practice scheduled for Sunday, July 1 at the fire barn by the north railroad crossing. Coffee and donuts at 8:30 AM, practice starts at 9:00. Siren test will take place at noon.

**Issue: Election of Officers: Al Larmann**

Everything will be mailed to members...drafts of the proposed By-Law changes, any remaining dues notices for those in arrears and other pertinent materials will be mailed to the membership several weeks prior to the Labor Day meeting. Because some of this may involve specifics of how officers are elected (quorums, etc.) the current officers will continue in place until the Labor Day meeting when the election for 2007-08 will take place. Some of the By-Laws changes may effect how today’s issues are handled as well as those in the future.

Don Phelps made a motion that Kathy Partridge officially take over as Secretary, now that Jenny Lundberg has stepped down. Bob Dickie seconded. All were in favor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Partridge, BRPOA Secretary pro-tem