

In person at the Mill Pond Building - start time 6:40pm - Attendees: Ryan Goodwin, chair, Matt Shwom, Paul Delaney, Robin Pendergast, Jennifer Costain, Zip Corning

- Discussion pertaining to the upcoming FinCom meeting (3/1/23 6pm) and the forthcoming budget review. There will be oversight into cost cutting and budget reduction for the Mill Pond Committee as well as other town committees. The current MPC budget is \$2100.00
- Discussion regarding the recent Board of Selectmen's meeting and the feedback about the plans for the All Access Trail and redevelopment of the area around the Mill Pond Building. The major reference was an article published (12/2322) by the Newburyport Daily News and journalist Jen Solis. Members of the Open Space Committee, Parks and Rec, residents, and the hired landscape architect Trent Lloyd all weighed in on the discussion with contentious results. Based on the outcome of the BOS meeting, the current All Access proposal has been put on hold indefinitely.
- Discussion about implementing new activities and seasonal events instead of a Winter Carnival which never seems to come to fruition for many reasons, not limited to weather. Proposals included a Fall Festival incorporating Local farms and vendors, children's activities, food and crafts; a movie night similar to what the PTO does for the Page School; and an Open House during the weekends. We talked about how to better incorporate local groups like Boy Scouts and the WN Garden Club, and how this would not only lead to more interest in the recreation area, but potentially add to the number of full or associate members of the MPC. Additional info included Jen Costain's recollections of time spent here in her youth. There were fishing derbies (and a stocked pond!), Friars from the then Catholic School/Orphanage skating on the pond in robes, as well as swimming and how the Mill Pond Area was an epicenter of activity for the town.
- Discussion and updates on ongoing Dike Repair proposals. It appears that there will be an option to add riprap and larger boulders to the pond side of the dike to counteract the erosion and misuse of that particular area.
- Discussion regarding tree and limb removal from the pond. How viable will it actually be and what might the budget be? The proposal for an ongoing process to deal with this was proposed and it was noted that it may take private enterprise to accomplish this. Members also mentioned the environmental impact of machinery at the water's edge, trees already submerged at depth and care and maintenance of existing trees on the banks and near shorelines. A question was proposed as to who has authority over the process. Notes were made to seek out the wording of a Massachusetts general law regarding fallen trees in bodies of water.
- The committee chair, Ryan Goodwin proposed that more members of the committee take additional ownership of the multitude of proposed and developed projects and tasks. Members agreed that this is a necessary step in order to see the said proposals move forward and be completed. Additional meeting dates of April 3, 2023 and May 6//7 2023 were set in order to pursue this meeting item. Additional details include the alteration of the meeting style to reflect a working hour at the beginning of the meeting to address cleaning and maintenance of the Mill Pond Building, creating an agenda to itemize needed tasks and making a list of necessary items for cleaning and upkeep.
- Additional Open discussion included a forthcoming ECTA event at Mill Pond, trail maintenance, a frozen animal carcass in the ice, and the proposed acquisition of the Austin Property adjacent to Poor House Lane. A motion was made to support this purchase and seconded unanimously by the committee.
- The Mill Pond Committee believes that it should be the steward of this property and add it to the purview.
- Meeting adjourned at 8pm