

Hammond Acres Club, Inc.
January 2022

Dear members of the Hammond Acres Club,

This letter accompanies the set of documents in the January 2022 paper and electronic mailing, sends new year greetings and summarizes some important topics.

We appreciate the supportive spirit of the entire membership and the efforts of members who jump pandemic hurdles to get things done. During the past year we convened for social occasions like the regatta and corn boil and maintained the club's assets with the help of dedicated volunteers. For better or worse in 2022, let us make the most of the events and dates set in the attached calendar.

Dues and dam assessment: Annual dues for 2022 went up to \$540, raised from the 2021 figure of \$495 by the ten percent maximum increase allowed under rules set by the board. The enclosed statement, payable by May 1, is an invoice for dues plus the annual \$200 assessment for dam repairs and improvements. The dam assessment is billed for 2021 through 2023 and a final assessment to be determined will be billed in 2024 based on actual construction and permitting costs.

The dam assessment is necessary to ensure that the dam will pass the next five-year inspection in 2024. At the annual meeting in August 2021, Dam Administrator John Rooney said that the last inspection in 2019 rated the dam as "Fair." If the next inspection in 2024 drops the condition of the dam to "Poor," the state would take over and mandate repairs and schedules without regard to the owners' ability to fund or manage the project. Engineer Dave Lenart, who has worked on the dam for many years, presented a proposal at the annual meeting to improve the condition of the dam from "Fair" to "Satisfactory." The first part of the project, design of bid documents, is now underway at an estimated cost of \$15-18,000. Of that amount, \$5000 went to Dave Lenart as a retainer, and the rest is for engineering.

Rental Rules Reminder: The HAC Rules and Regulations state that members who intend to do any short-term rentals (31 consecutive days or less) of any part of their properties during the calendar year shall register with the HAC treasurer at least two weeks before the first such rental. Members shall pay a \$100 fee per rental, unless the member's short-term rentals days total 14 days or less. Short-term rentals are limited to a total of 50 days per calendar year. If this applies to you, please review your rental activity and follow the rules. See the Rules and Regulations at hammondacres.org for complete information.

Committees and board chairs: To promote care of the Association's assets, the board encourages member participation on committees, and has assigned board members to serve as committee chairs and liaisons to coordinate activities. Thanks to members who signed up for committees at the annual meeting. Here is a list of board members and their committee responsibilities. Please contact them if you want to help. You can find contact information for the "Board of Directors 2021-2" among Club Documents at hammondacres.org.

Committees and Board Members designated as Committee Chair / liaison:

- Dam: John Rooney
- Barn: (rentals): Mike Martin
- Golf Course: Russ Gibson

- Roads: Douglas Thayer
- HAWC (Hammond Acres Watershed Committee): Mike Martin & Russ Gibson
- Beach: Dawn Monahan
- Lake Access: John Rooney (other members: Dawn Monahan and Alan Kirouac)
- Trees: Peter Contuzzi as Tree Warden
- Communications: Dawn Monahan (chair) and Leah Glasser (to review web and create regular communications with members)

Pond and watershed protection: The beauty of the pond and surrounding land bind the community and motivate protective activity. The revived Hammond Acres Watershed Committee (HAWC) has proposed and pursued measures to preserve water quality, guard against invasive species in the pond, remove invasive plants on Hammond Acres land, develop educational programs, and improve signage.

Steve Daiber has taken the lead in reactivating HAWC. He spoke at the annual meeting and to the board, renewed contacts with Westfield State University scientists to advise on water quality, and organized a walking tour with HAWC members and a consultant to discuss control of invasive species on HAC land.

Judy Leeds led the production and sale of the gorgeous calendar, which netted \$1881. The committee will use the proceeds for projects related to club needs and watershed stewardship. It is considering a new two-sided kiosk-type sign like those seen in state and national parks, to replace the existing sign by the road in front of the barn, and display calendar information and educational exhibits about the watershed.

Tree stewardship: A committee led by Tree Warden Peter Contuzzi has inspected hemlocks along HAC roads each spring for woolly adelgid infestations and has contracted with tree services company C L Frank to spray affected trees with a horticultural oil. The pest can kill hemlocks in a few years and threatens this prominent forest species. Members can have their own hemlocks inspected free of charge and then decide if they wish to take advantage of these services on their own properties at a reasonable cost. Email Peter Contuzzi at p.contuzzi@gmail.com if you haven't already put your name and Goshen address on the inspection list. The adelgid pest can kill hemlocks in a few years. Winter cold spells (several consecutive days below zero) reduce the adelgid population, but we are now normally seeing fewer of these cold spells. In 2021 we found more widespread infestation. However, if this winter's bitter cold continues and knocks back the adelgids enough, we may be able to postpone treatment until a future time

Proposed improvements to access areas: All members can access the pond at four access points, in addition to the beach. About 48 members (almost half) do not own waterfront property. The two most utilized access points are on Lake Drive. The other two are on Adams Road and Washington Road. Joe Silverman spoke at the annual meeting and the October board meeting about suggested improvements. Joe conducted a survey that got responses from well over half of the membership. The survey showed support for easier access, more places to sit, and addition of docks and rafts. The board set up a Lake Access Committee to study possibilities for improving access points, with board members John Rooney (chair), Alan Kirouac and Dawn Monahan.

Roads and plowing by the town: The town set conditions on some of our roads to permit their plowing: no vehicles parked on the road; and no surface defects exceeding two inches in either depth or height. Thanks to road work by Doug Thayer, we have had no complaints from the town

about road conditions at this point in the plowing season. All the roads on the town's list were plowed and sanded after several inches of snow on Sunday and Monday, January 16 and 17.

The town can now plow and treat the sloped section between the barn and the dam, after we created a turnaround area for plows by enlarging the opening of the driveway at 164 Lake Drive across from the gatehouse. The big town plow trucks weigh too much to cross the bridge over the spillway, so it is plowed by other means.

Fiber optic connections. Many Hammond Acres residents have signed up with Whip City Fiber for internet service, with telephone service as an option. The signup deadline, which ensures the subsidy on installation, has been extended by the Town of Goshen until February 28. The town has a list of about three dozen Hammond Acres residents who signed up in order to get the subsidy, but asked Whip City Fiber to postpone installation until the spring, thereby saving some monthly fees. Whip City Fiber will be calling those residents in the next month and a half to schedule installations in April, before the crews leave town.

The board decided in favor of internet service in the barn starting in the spring, so we have signed up. Like many seasonal residents, we will suspend service in the off-season for the allowed six months, probably from November 1 until May 1. We shall see during the first year of service whether the usage justifies the expense and choose whether to continue or cancel.

Thanks again for all your help, and best wishes for the new year.

Charlie Lotspeich, President, Board of Directors