

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP**  
**Minutes of 04-19-10**  
**4:15 p.m.**

*Selectmen:*

*(Absent with Notice)*  
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*Charles G. Palm, Chairman*  
*Colette Worsman, Vice Chairman*  
*Peter F. Brothers*  
*Miller C. Lovett*  
*Nathan J. Torr*

*Town Manager:*

*Phillip L. Warren*

*Recording Clerk:*

*Karin Landry*

Call to Order: Chairman Chuck Palm called the meeting to order 4:15 p.m. He introduced the Board, Town Manager, and the Recording Clerk.

**W 10-18      Lawn Care Committee Update**

The Lawn Care Committee is a subcommittee of the Waukegan Watershed Advisory Committee. Randy Eifer, Chairperson of the Committee, updated the Board on the Committee's efforts. Educating the public on better, smarter, sustainable lawn care practices was identified as one of the 68 recommendations made by the Waukegan Watershed Advisory Committee about five years ago. The Committee educated itself on the use of pesticides through the use of documentaries films and the assistance of the Toxic Action Center, a non-profit organization in New England. Mr. Eifer explained the harmful effects of phosphorus and synthetic pesticides on humans, pets, and water bodies, including algae blooms and milfoil growth. State law dictates that pesticides cannot be applied within 250' of a surface drinking water. The Committee prepared a map of Lake Waukegan depicting the 250' no phosphorus/pesticide zone in red, and will distribute advisory material to all those living within the zone.

Committee member Dan Harris, of Realgreen Lawncare, is committed to working with the Town and local businesses on going 100% organic, using no synthetic pesticides or phosphorus in maintaining lawns. Mill Falls has been on an organic program for several years. The Committee is not against lawns, but does not advocate the use of synthetic pesticides that eventually run into the lakes.

The Lawn Care Committee's work is complete, and a press conference will be held on Wednesday, April 21, at 10 a.m. at Church Landing. Flyers and lawn signs have been printed that tout the Committee's slogan *Don't "P" in the Lake*. The signs will be posted in parks and playgrounds and will be distributed to those willing to make the commitment to go "P" free. Letters have been sent to local retailers urging them to carry no phosphorus fertilizer. Education is a key component of the campaign. The Committee has made presentations to civic groups and is getting the word out to homeowner's associations. They are available to make a presentation to organizations with an interest.

The Committee has received letters of congratulation from state authorities for taking a lead on the issue of safe lawns and safe water, including a letter from Representative Suzanne Smith, who is the prime sponsor of HB 1466, which is intent to study the possibility of banning pesticides in

certain areas in the state where children congregate. In addition, the Town has been approached by surrounding communities for guidance in establishing similar programs.

Selectman Torr thanked the members of the committee for their willingness to volunteer their expertise.

Selectman Worsman inquired if there are alternatives for pest control. She is not a proponent of regulation, but education is paramount. Mr. Harris explained that using proper mowing and watering techniques, soil testing, thatching, and core aeration will alleviate or eliminate many pest problems around the home. Organic pesticides can be used as a next course of action, and manmade synthetic pesticides can be used as a last resort. Safelawns.org is an excellent educational resource. The Committee intends to host a free soil testing workshop as a component of their educational efforts.

Chair Palm inquired whether the schools are adopting the program for their athletic fields. Mr. Eickler told the Board that the school has not been using pesticides on their fields. The Chair is willing to distribute the flyers to the two marinas in Meredith that service a lot of island traffic.

Dialogue ensued regarding the efforts being made in Hesky Park to keep an attractive lawn without jeopardizing the health of the Lake. The Committee has operated well within their \$900 budget.

#### **W10-19 Health insurance proposal update**

Town Manager Philip Warren updated the Board with additional information they requested at the health insurance proposal workshop:

Discounts: It is possible that the Town could receive up to \$45,000 in discounts from LGC on other lines of insurance. It is unknown at this time what those discounts would actually be. The Town Manager solicited quotes from other insurance companies, and it appears that they will come in at the same level as LGC, exclusive of discounts. Even if there is a loss of the \$45,000 discount, there will still be a savings in the combined plans in the vicinity of \$70,000, while retaining similar benefits. It is hoped that the final quotes will be received this week.

Spreadsheet: The Town Manager compiled a document that compares the benefits and costs of the LGC and Harvard Pilgrim plans. It demonstrates that the benefits of the Harvard Pilgrim plan match, or are better than, what the new plan would offer. Additionally, it offers a savings through the health reimbursement aspect of the program. The document will be color coded to make the information more easily understood.

The Town Manager asked the Board to consent to his proceeding as Purchasing Officer with the change in plans, including giving LGC the required 15-day notice. It is imperative that the educational component for employees begins as soon as possible as open enrollment will commence next month.

There was a consensus among the Board that the move to the Harvard Pilgrim plan is a benefit for all. Dialogue ensued regarding how the Harvard Pilgrim network will benefit employees, including the savings that will be available for retirees under the plan. The life insurance coverage will remain the same as under the LGC plan.

Selectman Worsman motioned to adjourn the Workshop at 4:55 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Torr. 3-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

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Charles G. Palm, Chairman

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Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

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Colette Worsman, Vice Chairman

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Nathan J. Torr