

Minutes for meeting Casco Water Quality Committee on March 18, 2026

Meeting called to order at 6:04PM

Attending: Commissioners Tom McCarthy, Eileen Tidd, Diane Cormier, Jim Arsham, Pam Edwards

Guests: Grant Plummer

Quick recap

The Water Quality Committee met to discuss the town's water quality plan and budget allocation for lake associations. They reviewed comments on the plan and agreed to invite lake associations back for a discussion on CBI (Courtesy Boat Inspection) funding. The committee also discussed dam management and water level monitoring for dam-controlled lakes. They considered having lake associations take over some dam management responsibilities-see Thomas Pond. The group explored ways to equitably distribute water quality funding among seven lakes, with CBI being the largest budget item. They agreed to develop a formula for allocating funds based on factors like number of launches and lake size. The committee also discussed the need for better documentation (Aerial Drones?) of shoreland zoning permits and potential adoption of a water quality policy by the Select Board.

Summary

February 2026 minutes approved

Lake Funding and Budget Planning

Tom discussed the Lake Association funding model, noting that three different lake associations had requested funding in recent years, totaling around \$16,000. He explained that a consolidated water quality budget was being considered, separate from donations, with \$25,000 allocated for seven different lake initiatives if approved. Tom emphasized the importance of involving representatives from each lake association in decision-making to build relationships and avoid appearing dictatorial. The discussion focused on determining an equitable distribution method for funding various lake activities, including CBI , water quality testing), with specific attention to Pleasant Lake Parker Pond's request for \$4,000.

It was decided that for 2026 the donation funding would continue to allow time to develop a funding model.

CBI Fund Allocation Discussion

CBI funding, coverage and issues were discussed. It was decided to invite the Lake associations to the April meeting and have a round table discussion on the best way to provide CBI in Casco..

Drone Shore documentation for shoreline was discussed.

Water Quality Plan path forward was discussed.

The Select Board Representative indicated that the Select Board would establish the Water Quality Committee a permanent Committee.

The committee will continue its efforts to complete the plan and draft a town water quality Policy

Dam Management and Lake Levels

Maintaining the PLPP dam water levels were discussed. Thomas Pond offered to provide information on how they conduct daily remote monitoring.

Actions:

- Tom: Draft and send email to all lake associations inviting them to next month's meeting to discuss CBI (Clean Boats, Healthy Waters Initiative) and begin roundtable on equitable distribution of water quality funding.
- All committee members: Review and comment on the draft email to lake associations (once circulated by Jim).
Committee members (especially those with contacts in each lake association): Ensure all relevant contacts for each lake association (including those without current associations) are included in the meeting invitation and future communications.
- Committee: Prepare for and participate in next month's meeting focused on CBI and the development of an equitable funding formula, inviting all lake associations.
- Committee: Develop and propose a clean water or water quality policy for Select Board adoption.
- Committee: Update the water quality budget request to reflect a stand-alone line item (separate from donations), including funding for shared test equipment, outreach/training, and conferences, and provide this updated request to the Select Board/Finance Committee.
- Committee: Put together a display and materials (including scorecards, map, and handouts) and arrange for staffing the Water Quality Committee table at the Bike Rodeo in early May.
- Jim (or designated member): Talk to Courtney about getting scorecards and maps blown up for display at the Bike Rodeo.
- Committee: Research and propose improvements to local shoreland zone permit applications and documentation requirements, including pre- and post-photograph requirements, for Select Board consideration.
- Committee (or designated members): Notify hydroseeding companies and request town support for posting signs prohibiting unauthorized water extraction from town water bodies.
- Committee (or designated members): Explore transferring dam monitoring responsibilities to relevant lake associations, including investigating costs and logistics of cameras and volunteer monitoring, and report back to the committee.
- Committee: Review and ensure plan language regarding committee review (not enforcement) authority is clear and not subject to misinterpretation.
- Committee: Set the next regular meeting date and notify members. Re-send 3/18/26 Agenda to all members.