

**TOWN OF LANESBOROUGH**  
**HARBORMASTER JOB DESCRIPTION**

June 19, 2014

The harbormaster is appointed annually by the Board of Selectmen. It is an unpaid position. Major duties and responsibilities are;

1. Macrophyte Control program. The herbicide macrophyte control program is funded jointly by the Town and the City of Pittsfield, and is operated by the Town of Lanesborough, acting through the harbormaster and with support from volunteers from the Friends of Pontoosuc and the Pittsfield harbormaster. Major responsibilities include
  - Develop and release an RFP for the herbicide application contractor working with the Town administrator as the Town procurement officer. Multi-year contract is the current practice.
  - Evaluate responses and recommend selection of a contractor.
  - Supervise the conduct of the program including making decisions on the timing and extent of the treatment. Support the contractor by organizing volunteers to post notices around the lake, publicize the treatment including advertising a legal notice, and help on the day of treatment by coordinating closure of the lake with Pittsfield and patrolling the lake to be sure restrictions on lake use are being followed.
  - Organize and conduct macrophyte surveys to evaluate the need for and effectiveness of the treatment. Pre and Post treatment are required as a minimum, and others may be needed. Document results and provide to the contractor for inclusion in the final report issued to the Conservation Commissions.
  - Request funding for the program from the Town and the City of Pittsfield.
  - Obtain permits from the Pittsfield and Lanesborough Conservation Commissions for the conduct of the treatment, including generation of and/or modification of the Notice of Intent (NOI).
  
2. Annual Winter Drawdown. The current practice is to conduct a 5 foot drawdown every three years and a three foot drawdown in the other years. Responsibilities of the harbormaster with support from volunteers from the Friends of Pontoosuc and the Pittsfield harbormaster include;
  - Obtain permits from the Pittsfield and Lanesborough Conservation Commissions for the conduct of the drawdown, including generation of and/or modification of the Notice of Intent (NOI).
  - Gather data in support of the drawdown including stream flow at the outlet, lake level, and depth of frost penetration in exposed lake bottom.
  - Coordinate with the DCR personnel who operate the dam to achieve the desired lake conditions.
  
3. Water Quality Assessment. Water quality measurements are needed to assess the impact of lake management practices and other factors on the health of the lake. Conservation commissions often impose specific measurements as part of their issued Orders Of Conditions (OOC).

Measurements taken periodically with support from volunteers from the friends of Pontoosuc include;

- Temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles
- Total Phosphorus.
- Water clarity.

4. Represent the Town to State agencies with control over Pontoosuc Lake. The lake is owned by the Commonwealth (via DCAM). Lake management is performed primarily by the Town and the City of Pittsfield. The dam is operated by DCR. DEP imposes restrictions on activities and issues dock permits. These organizations tend to discount or ignore input from volunteer groups like the Friends of Pontoosuc, so the harbormaster as an official of the Town needs to represent the Town and lake stakeholders to these agencies. We don't know what the future holds, but examples from the past where this has been helpful are;

- When DCR replaced the dam in 2005, volunteers were excluded from planning meetings, but as an official suggestions were made which resulted in an improvement in the design of the dam
- The Division of Ecological Restoration (DER, part of DCR) proposed limitations on stream flow and using Pontoosuc and Onota as pilot studies we were able to convince them that the restrictions would make lake management to achieve drawdown objectives impossible.
- We were invited to participate in the DEP effort to streamline the dock permitting process, and were successful in convincing the organizers of the effort to develop separate guidelines for inland waterways rather than lumping us in with tidal waters. Other suggestions made were incorporated into the revised guidelines.

5. Issue permits for moorings floats and buoys. Chapter 91 reserves the authority for this function to the local harbormaster. Permits are annual, and there is no fee. The harbormaster is responsible for developing and maintaining a policy on moorings, rafts, floats, and buoys.

6. Assist residents in obtaining dock Permits. Only the DEP can issue a dock permit on a great pond. The local harbormaster has no authority. However, as the go-to person for lake matters, the harbormaster shall;

- Develop and share a summary of the steps in the dock permitting process
- Help people through the process, including for those without computer and internet access, providing forms and the required DEP computer system generated application number.
- Advise the conservation commission on dock permit applications if requested.

7. Special Studies. Support the Town in initiatives which impact the lake and its stakeholders. Recent examples are the dock by-law committee, and the Roads and rights-of-way committee.