

Column one continued then back to previous page then back to this page

Lake Williams

(Continued from Page 1)

resident of 34 years told her fellow townspeople.

Kent Sleath, president of the lake association, spoke of the value of memories, as opposed to dollars, in the form of many years of boating, fishing and swimming in Lake Williams.

"There's no way that 49 property owners can support a

\$426,000 bill, that's why we're asking the town to help us. For our children and our children's children," Sleath said.

"People say, 'I may not use it, why should I pay for it?' I say, 'I'm not going to use the school, why should I pay for it?' I urge you to be a community!" Lake Williams resident Francis Adamcewicz added.

hearing, argued:

- a one-time taxation rate of 4.6 mills would be too high,
- access to the general public, which would be mandatory in the event of a state purchase, would not benefit the town, and
- the 49 lakefront property owners would be the main beneficiaries of the purchase and should therefore take sole responsibility for the lake.

Residents were united only on the issue of when and where to hold the referendum. Popular vote determined the special vote will be held noon to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 2 at the Lebanon Fire Safety Complex.

Richard Clifford, the director of state parks and recreation for the Department of Environmental Protection, responded to several residents' assertions that the DEP should pay the entire purchase price. Clifford explained that Lake Williams is a community problem and that the DEP was only offering to help.

"If the town is willing to contribute, we are willing to contribute," he



Robert and Marie Holman, who own a seasonal home at Lake Williams, listen intently to the proceedings Tuesday night.

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Raucous debate launches referendum on 1

Townwide vote Aug. 2
to settle caustic issue

By SUSANN VIAFORA
Staff Writer

LEBANON - About 300 residents, state and local officials gathered Tuesday to discuss the Lake Williams purchase proposal, and after nearly two hours, the only consensus reached by the crowd was to send the matter to referendum Aug. 2.

The meeting was a scene of neighbors and friends apologizing to each other for holding opposing viewpoints; of loud clapping, bitter accusations, posturing and complaining; of handshakes and backslaps and earnest debate on a complex issue.

Many seated toward the rear of the crowded elementary school gymnasium couldn't even hear what was going on, and cries of "What's the motion? What did he say?" punctuated the meeting. But for most of those present, it was a chance to question state Department of Environmental Protection representatives on the details of the proposal and try to clear up confusion.



Photo by Susann Viafora

Lebanon residents packed the meeting hall Tuesday to examine the state Department of Environmental Protection's proposal for the purchase of Lake Williams. A townwide referendum is set for August.

On one side of the fence were those, primarily lakeside property owners, who said that they alone cannot bear the burden of the town's two-thirds, \$426,667 share of the purchase price. On the other side were residents who argue that townspeople should not have to pay for something for which they will not directly benefit. And then, there were some who said the town should not have to pay at all.

"If this deal is consummated, this will be a public lake owned by the state of Connecticut and there will be public access," said First Selectman Richard Bauwens, outlining the terms of the proposal. "She (DEP Commissioner Leslie Carothers) has made a commitment to purchase land for a boat launch and a picnic area. There will be no swimming area."

In addition to the \$213,333 one-third share of the purchase price, the state will also pay up to \$400,000 to repair the dam, Bauwens said. Up to \$160,000 will be set aside to acquire five acres of land on the east side of the dam for maintenance and repair, and up to \$273,000 to construct a boat launch and picnic area on four acres on the southwestern edge of the lake, off Route 207. According to the current proposal, each town taxpayer would be assessed a one-time tax of 4.6 mills.

Carothers recently notified the town that construction on the dam will not begin until late 1989 or early 1990, with two or three years needed for completion of the necessary repairs, Bauwens said. The level of water will remain the same throughout that time, except during the actual construction phase when water will have to be drained from the lake.

"I believe this is a very generous state contribution for the restoration of Lake Williams," Bauwens told the crowd. "The state has made a large commitment in both funds and staff ... At this point, it is up to the town, the biggest beneficiary."

"The state will have to shell out well over a million dollars," nodded state Rep. Edith Prague (D-Columbia). "In turn, the state is asking the town to fork over two-thirds of the appraisal price."

"We have a resource that we need to protect," said Lake Williams Beach Association president Kent Sleath. "We have 49 property owners along Lake Williams; there's no way 49 property owners can support \$426,000."

Sleath is also serving as chairman of the Save Lake Williams action committee. The group recently mailed a flyer to town residents, which states \$100,000 in tax revenues would be saved by preserving the lake. An additional \$33,000 to \$70,000 would be obtained by increased property revenues and development of seasonal lots

along the lake shore - seasonal lots which do not place a burden on town services. Also, conclusion of the lake deal would afford area residents with 250 acres of clean water for bass fishing, boating and wildlife, according to the flyer.

"The lake is not a DEP issue, it's a community issue," said Richard Clifford, director of the DEP parks division. As a public facility, the lake would be open to all state residents and not just residents of Lebanon, he noted. "Our commissioner and our department are trying to help you solve the problem."

In response to residents' queries on why the DEP rejected a proposed swimming area, Clifford said the lake is not considered large enough to justify the expense of developing a swimming area. He also said he is not aware of any determination that the quality of the water is "unsuitable" for a public swimming area.

That statement was contained in a letter written by Carothers and sent to the selectmen earlier this year.

Other proponents of the lake proposal included 40-year summer resident Nancy Viccaro. "We've helped you (pay taxes) for 40 years, and I feel you should at least consider helping us."

"I've lived at the lake 20 years, and I've seen the lake half that time," said Lake Shore Drive resident Frank Adamcewicz. "People say, 'Why should I pay, I'm not going to use it.' I say to you, I pay for the schools, and I don't use them. We all have to pay for the schools, the library. Let's have a nice natural resource in Lake Williams."

"I think the important thing for us to think of is, what are we going to leave our kids?" Prague said, noting that four mills equates to \$160 a year, or about \$3 a week for the average taxpayer. "The state is not going to come in and pay the full cost. This is the first time the state is going to buy a lake ... It was only because the governor's office got involved that the (lake owners Charles and Lawrence) Gilmans agreed to sit down and talk. If Lake Williams goes, Lake Williams goes and that'll be it for the future."

But opponents of the deal cited limited public access at the lake, an upcoming school building project and the cost of expanded town services as reasons for rejecting the proposal to assess each taxpayer equally.

"If Lake Williams goes, Lake Williams goes and that'll be it for the future."

**-Edith Prague
State representative**

Recently, the 117-member lake beach association voted against contributing a larger share toward the settlement than town taxpayers in general. Many lakeside property owners say they are already paying premium taxes and are either unable or unwilling to pay the extra share. Also, the Flood and Erosion Control Board is considering a proposal to establish a special tax district at the lake, but the idea has been loudly opposed by several members of the board and no formal vote on the issue has yet occurred.

"People had the lake in their hands and tried to outsmart the Gilmans," said flood board Chairman Sol Kiotic. "They lost."

Kiotic said that most of the lakeside owners are elderly people, many of whom will no longer be alive by the time the dam repair is completed. "They'll pay for it now, and won't live to see anything for their money."

"We've gotten noplacement with the state," agreed flood panel member Al Lopes. "For your money, you don't even know if you're going to get a boat launch area. We've been jerked around for the last four years with (former DEP Commissioner Stanley) Pak, and now the new Duchess

that's in (Carothers), she don't even know where Lebanon is. She sent two representatives who don't know what's going on.

"On Aug. 2, turn this thing down, send it back to the state and the Gilmans," Lopes urged. "We're not getting a damned thing ... We don't need a boat launch and we don't need a picnic area. I can picnic in my backyard. Why not make the Gilmans repair the dam and use the money for a swimming area?"

Charles Berger Jr., of the DEP Water Resources Unit, cautioned that ongoing legal attempts to force the Gilmans to repair the dam might not work. "The Gilmans are under orders to repair the dam, but that may not stand up in court," he said.

"Hasn't the issue been dam repair all along?" asked Helen Jensen. "Your problems is with the Gilman brothers, not the town. I feel that the state has let us down. I don't feel this big amount of money should be pushed on the town."

"Now, we're going to get all the riff raff from Hartford," objected Route 16 resident Ivan Shipp. "We don't need the drug pushers and all coming into town and running all the people out of Lebanon."

"People pay bucks to live on a lake, and that's the way it should be," said Carl Peterson. "I want to know the names of the people at the lake and whether they'll let me go through their yards to get at the lake."

Normand E. Leclerc Jr., owner of an 18-foot powerboat, argued that four acres of land is inadequate to handle the number of boats that would be using the lake. Where would people park, he asked, and what happens when traffic is all backed up along Route 207?

"I'd rather see a nice lake than a launch," Leclerc said. "We don't need it."

By the end of the discussion, nearly half of those present had left, and a motion to send the issue to referendum passed with only a few dissenters. The referendum will be held Tuesday, Aug. 2 in the Fire Safety Complex on Goshen Hill Road between noon and 8 p.m. All registered voters and owners of property assessed at \$1,000 or more are eligible to cast their ballots. In addition, absentee ballots may be obtained from the town clerk or voter registrars.

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Expansion

building committee and a member of the library Board of Trustees. He attributed the success of the referendum to the committee's recent efforts to inform the public of the facts, including mailing fliers, telephoning voters, and writing letters to the editors of various newspapers.

"I was up until 2 a.m. last night folding little yellow fliers," Flaherty laughed.

Indeed, bright red "vote yes" signs appeared to be posted on every tree, telephone pole and plot of

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(Coventry, Page 10)

Stockholders dispute Lake Williams sale

LEBANON — The minority shareholders of the Gilman Brothers Co. have filed suit against the majority claiming that they overstepped their bounds when they agreed to sell the Lake Williams dam and water rights to the state and the town.

According to First Selectman Richard Bauwens, a copy of the complaint was sent to the town clerk's office earlier this week.

The suit claims that company president Charles Gilman, the company itself, and its board of directors lacked the authority to agree to the sale of the dam and water rights for \$640,000.

Charles' brother Lawrence and other minority shareholders filed the suit, saying that two-thirds of the shareholders had to approve the sale to the state and the town before it could go through.

The sale agreement is expected to go before town residents in a referendum Tuesday. Residents will be asked to authorize spending \$422,400 as the town's share of the purchase price. Under the agreement, the town would cover two-thirds of the price of the dam and water rights and the state would pay a third. The state would then repair the dam and purchase land for recreational use.

Although the suit did not ask for a court order to cancel the referendum, it does ask the court to cancel the agreement until two-thirds of the Gilman Brothers Co. shareholders approve of the terms.

Opinion

the Chronicle

Lucy B. Crosbie
Publisher

George L. Geers
Editor

William P. Pike
Director of Editorial Pages

Editorials

Vote 'Yes' For Lake Williams

*When the last tree has been cut down,
the last fish taken from the oceans,
and the last inch of soil poisoned
only then will man realize he cannot eat money.*
— Indian proverb

Tuesday, Aug. 2, the voters of Lebanon will decide on the future of Lake Williams.

That once-beautiful body of water which brought pleasure to hundreds and hundreds of people every year is now a weed-filled mudflat which offers nothing to humankind. It is no longer beautiful, and it is incapable of supporting the life of fish or fowl. Where pickerel, bass and bullheads once swam and where Canada geese and other fowl, heading north or south, stopped for a brief overnight respite on the rich waters of the lake, has disappeared. The sound of a fish jumping or the call of wild birds mixed with the laughter of children playing at the water's edge has been replaced by the voice of the toad and the frog and the hum of the dragon fly. The lake looks now like a giant ring whose great jewel has been lost.

Those concerned with environmental issues claim it might be better for nature if the area remains a mud flat. This may be true, but Lake Williams at its best use was as a people place.

Some say the recovery of the lake will just serve those who live at the lake. This is not so. A body of water the size of Lake Williams enhances the entire town and will make every acre of ground in the town more valuable. Just as the location of a new school in one neighborhood does improve the neighborhood, it also enhances the entire town.

The town will never have another opportunity to get support funding from the state. The town's share will be \$426,000 to be paid with a one-time tax rate of 4.6 mills. The state, which in a way represents every other town in the state, is willing to spend \$1 million to bring the lake back to its original condition, which means that someone in Hartford recognizes the real worth of such a treasure.

After 10 years of doing battle alone to save the lake, it is time for the entire town to join the fray. It is also time to return the pickerel, the bass, the bullhead to the waters of the lake. It is time for the geese and the other fowl to return. It is time to make the lake a people place again.

Vote "YES" on Tuesday.

Opinion

Lake Williams

The long history of Lebanon's Lake Williams is a tale of false hope, broken promises, and boiling frustration. The immediate future of this cherished body of water may hinge on the outcome of Tuesday's referendum vote.

After 10 years of little progress, the state has come up with a reasonable cost-sharing plan that requires the town to contribute less than half of the \$1.5 million total project cost. The \$640,000 lake purchase price would be split, with the state paying \$213,333 and the town funding the remaining \$467,667. In addition, the state will spend about \$400,000 for much-needed repairs to the lake dam, and will build a public boat launch on property purchased for as much as \$160,000.

Although pending litigation now puts the validity of the state's purchase agreement in doubt, residents will vote on the proposal Tuesday at a townwide referendum that is expected to draw great interest. About 300 residents convened at a meeting earlier in July to debate the issue with local and state officials and representatives from the state Department of Environmental Protection. The meeting was heated, and served as an example of just how far this town is divided over the issue.

At the heart of contention is how the town should pay for its share of the lake cost. Originally, First Selectman Richard Bauwens was in favor of a plan that would establish a tax district comprised of homes within the Lake Williams area. That district would have paid a heavier burden of the town's share, based on the fact that their properties would benefit mostly from the lake purchase. After stiff resistance from residents around the lake, officials instead decided to pay for the lake with a one-time tax assessment that would tax each Lebanon resident equally.

It's unfortunate that lakeside residents and other town officials rejected this plan. The tax district proposal was a far more equitable approach to assessing the Lake Williams purchase on individual households. Increased property values and a secured future for the 270-acre lake impact heavily on those nearby property owners. The remainder of Lebanon residents will see little benefit from the lake purchase; although public boating access to the lake will be provided, that is hardly enough reason for most residents to vote in favor of the plan, particularly considering the state's recent purchase of 605 acres of land on Old Route 2 that will offer the public numerous recreational opportunities, including a swimming area.

Since the purchase plan was revealed this spring, lake residents have made little effort on their own behalf. Instead of offering to form a tax district to lessen the tax burden on the rest of town, lake officials quickly tossed aside the idea. Despite suggestions to do so, the group never bothered to detail the impact a special tax would have on all the homes that could comprise the district.

Seasonal and elderly lake residents point to school spending as an example of how they have contributed to the town tax rolls without receiving any benefit. But the reputation of a town school system reflects indirectly in the value of every resident's home. It is doubtful the status of Lake Williams makes much of an impact on the any home value besides those on the lake.

Despite its flaws, the First Selectman should be congratulated for bringing this proposal along so far. In less than a year in office, Bauwens has accomplished more to solve the persistent problems at

Lake Williams than his predecessors did in a decade.

Eastern Edition

State considers buying Lebanon's Red Cedar Lake site for park land

By SCOTT WENGER
Courant Staff Writer

LEBANON — The state is considering a proposal to acquire Red Cedar Lake and convert it into a state park, but local officials said Wednesday they would rather have the state purchase Lake Williams.

The 140-acre Red Cedar Lake, in Lebanon's extreme southern corner, would be a good site for water-based recreation, said Charles J. Reed, director of land acquisition and management for the state Department of

Environmental Protection.

The total lake area, about 340 acres, would likely cost several million dollars to acquire, Reed said. A formal appraisal of the lake, which is privately owned, is expected to be completed by early March.

Meanwhile, First Selectman Richard R. Bauwens said Wednesday that Lebanon is "faced with serious problems at Lake Williams," which is in the northwestern corner of town.

"We are trying to change their efforts from Red Cedar Lake to Lake Williams. It's a better alternative.

The total lake area would likely cost several million dollars to acquire, Reed said.

for the town," Bauwens said. But he added that local officials "are not opposed to a state park in town."

In July 1987, Gilman Brothers Co., owner of the dam at Lake Williams, drained the 247-acre lake, leaving

thousands of dead and dying fish, turtles and other animals to rot in the summer sun.

At the time, company representatives said they needed the water downstream in Bozrah. The action angered lake-area residents.

Lake Williams is now about half full.

In response to the draining, the state offered to help the town buy Lake Williams' dam and water flow rights, but townspeople rejected the buyout plan last year. Many said it was too expensive for Lebanon tax-

payers, especially those who do not live near the lake.

Reed said the Red Cedar Lake site, once a summer camp, is "a better property" because there is the possibility of also purchasing adjacent land. It also offers easier highway access, he said. Red Cedar Lake is located off Exit 21 on Route 2; Lake Williams is off Route 207.

Bauwens said he plans to discuss the two lakes with the commissioner of environmental protection, Leslie Carothers, at a meeting in the near future.

*Lake Williams deserves the same consideration as Red Cedar Lake
Contact your state Representative or Senator today.
(SEND A COPY TO OUR GOVERNOR!)*

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Tax district may be solution to Lake Williams problem

By JEANNE A. DUNCAN
Staff Writer

LEBANON — Residents Tuesday made it clear how they feel about purchasing Lake Williams, turning down by a nearly 4-1 ratio a request for \$426,000 as the town's share of the overall cost.

Some 40 percent of the town's eligible voters turned out for the controversial referendum.

Following the vote count, First Selectman Richard Bauwens indicated it won't be long before he returns to residents with a new purchase proposal.

Likely to be proposed is Bauwens' original idea to

create a special tax district in which lake residents would pay more for the purchase than the rest of the town.

Bauwens said, however, his proposal is still in the planning stage and that it is not definite whether a tax district will be suggested. Bauwens said that he hopes to "come up with a plan acceptable to the lake residents and the townspeople."

"We're all disappointed that it wasn't resolved this time, but hopefully next time," Bauwens said, adding that the state's offer, as well as the owner's agreement to sell, was still good. Selectmen plan to discuss the matter at the Lake Williams

Beach Association's annual picnic Saturday.

DEP Commissioner Leslie Carothers said this morning she is sorry the referendum didn't pass. "I think it's a good project and it's good for the town."

Carothers said it's now up to the town to come up with another plan, but that the state will continue to back the project. She also said a three-part arrangement between the lake residents, the state and the town is a good one and would have a better chance than that which failed Tuesday.

Under the plan defeated Tuesday, the state would have contributed one-third or \$213,000

of the total \$640,000 purchase price of the dam and water rights from the Gilman Bros. Co. of Bozrah. The town's \$426,000 share was two-thirds of the cost. In addition, the state also agreed to pay the estimated \$400,000 to repair the dam, as well as the cost of five acres of land to repair the dam, and an additional four acres to construct a public boat launch and picnic.

Among those responding to the defeat of the referendum was State Rep. Edith Prague (D-8th Dist.), who has spent years negotiating the purchase,

(Lake, Page-5)



KENT SLEATH

(Continued from Page 1)

said she was surprised by the overwhelming rejection.

"But the will of the people must be respected," she said.

Prague said that she hoped the state and the town could come up with an agreement acceptable to all parties so that the lake may be saved.

"It's never over until it's over," Prague added.

Lake Williams Beach Association President Kent Sleath speculated that the proposal was rejected because it required a one-time tax of 4.6 mills on all residents. A tax district proposal might make a difference to voters, he said.

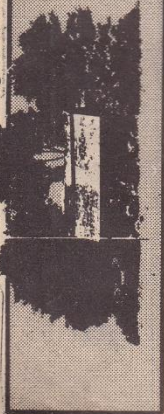
Sleath said he was sad that the referendum did not pass, but remained hopeful about the future of the lake.

Williams

"Something's got to be done," he said, adding that he would not be opposed at this point to a tax district although Lake Williams residents, many of whom are on fixed incomes, would be taxed more.

"I'm not gloating over the fact," said resident Sol Kiotic, who was one of those vehemently opposed to the referendum proposal at the town meeting on the subject, "I was born on it (the lake) and I want the lake."

Kiotic said he also thinks that those who live on the lake should carry a heavier share of the cost since the purchase and repairs would most benefit them. He said other alternatives such as a tax district would be more fair.



Lebanon

Lake defeat sends officials back to drawing board

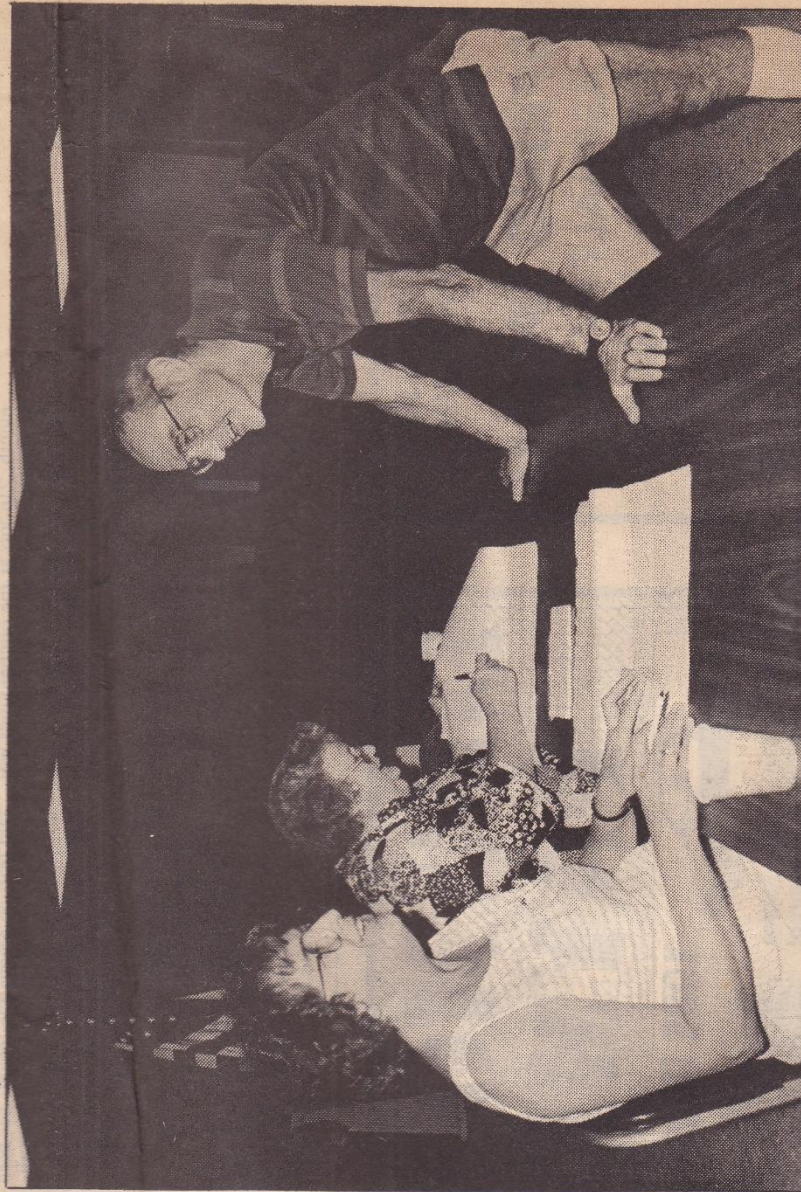
By SUSANN VIAFORA
Staff Writer

LEBANON - It may have been any one of a number of things: news of the state's recent Savin Lake purchase, a pending lawsuit against lake owner Charles Gilman, a campground owner's reported intention to buy the lake if all else fails. Or, it may simply have been what Flood and Erosion Control Board Chairman Sol Klotz terms "the principle of the thing," of people being asked to pay to save a lake that will offer only limited public access.

Whatever the reason, or reasons, were for voters' resounding defeat of the proposed Lake Williams purchase last Tuesday, town officials and concerned residents must scramble to find another solution before it is too late.

The turnout was a near-record: about 40 percent, or 1,354 of the approximately 3,100 eligible voters, dropped by the Goshen Hill Road firehouse to cast their ballots last week. Flyers, posters and telephone calls all sought to influence their vote one way or the other, but the outcome was as expected. By a near 4-1 margin, residents and eligible property owners voted 1,074 to 280 to reject the lake purchase proposal.

According to the proposal, all town taxpayers would have been assessed a one-time, equal supplementary tax of 4.6 mills to pay the town's \$426,667 share of the



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 to pay the town's \$426,667 share of the
 settlement. The state would have paid
 \$213,333, the remaining one-third, of the
 purchase price. The state also planned to
 repair the lake dam, buy land to maintain
 the dam and to construct a boat launch
 and picnic area, bringing their total con-
 tribution toward the settlement to approx-
 imately \$1.5 million.

But objections to the proposal surfaced
 after members of the Lake Williams Beach
 Association voted during their annual
 June meeting not to contribute a larger
 share to the settlement than other town
 residents. The beach association's tax col-
 lector then gathered 31 signatures on a
 petition asking taxpayers to agree at
 referendum to split the cost of the settle-
 ment equally. Members of the flood and
 erosion board, despite agreeing to ex-
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Photo by Teri Schleicher
Art Young checks in to vote Tuesday at the Lake Williams referendum with Deputy Registrars Corinni Nichols (left) and Katy Kasack.

shareholders, and is seeking to block the
 deal and collect unspecified monetary
 damages.

At the same time, reports surfaced that
 a couple who recently purchased a lakeside
 campground from former owner Ray
 Kanter may be willing to buy the 270-acre
 lake property and convert it to a public
 facility. Leigh H. Jr. and Sandra C. Rider
 of Farmington bought the property on
 April 18 for about \$615,000. Leigh Rider,
 however, when contacted last Wednesday,
 refused to confirm or deny the reports.

And news of the state's purchase of 605
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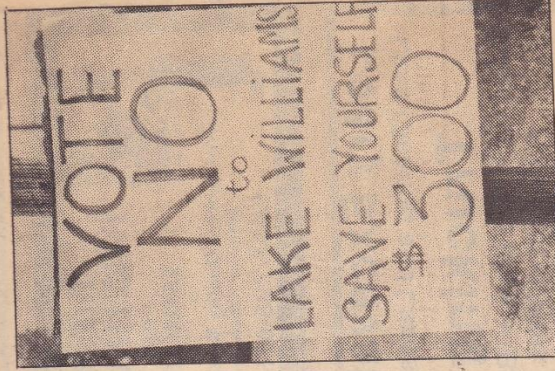


Photo by Teri Schleicher
Posters tacked up through town

Association voted during their annual June meeting not to contribute a larger share to the settlement than other town residents. The beach association's tax collector then gathered 31 signatures on a petition asking taxpayers to agree at referendum to split the cost of the settlement equally. Members of the flood and erosion board, despite agreeing to examine the impact of setting up a special

and have not yet completed the study. Events came to a head last month, when a lawsuit was filed against lake owner Charles Gilman by minority shareholders in the Gilman Brothers' Bozrah plastics manufacturing company. The group claims that Gilman, who holds 50.1 percent of the company stock, was not empowered to conclude the purchase agreement without a two-thirds vote of the

damages.

At the same time, reports surfaced that a couple who recently purchased a lakeside campground from former owner Ray Kanter may be willing to buy the 270-acre lake property and convert it to a public facility. Leigh H. Jr. and Sandra C. Rider of Farmington bought the property on April 18 for about \$615,000. Leigh Rider, however, when contacted last Wednesday, refused to confirm or deny the reports.

And news of the state's purchase of 605 acres off Old Route 2 in Lebanon and Colchester may have sealed the fate of the referendum. The state acquired the property for use as a public recreational area, offering activities such as hiking, hunting, fishing, picnicking and, at some future time, swimming in a 70-acre lake located on the site.

Last week, beach association president Kent Sleath stood by as voters streamed in and out of the firehouse, attempting to gauge their reactions. The comments he heard were similar to those offered during telephone calls he and about five others made to residents in the days before the referendum. Shortly before the vote was read, Sleath predicted the proposal would "get dlobbered." The results of the vote came as no surprise.

"We've got a significant number of individuals who are retired, and we'll have to see what can be done (now)," Sleath said, adding that the state has spent millions to buy and improve other land parcels in Connecticut but has only offered \$400,000 to save Lake Williams. "I don't understand the issue, but I think they're trying to tell us something."

When asked if he would support the institution of a special tax district, Sleath replied, "Absolutely." But the odds on that proposal succeeding, he admitted, may not be favorable.

"I really don't know ... we have to do something. The lake is too important."

"It's pretty obvious that people felt an equitable solution," commented First Selectman Richard Bauwens. "I think the beach people have realized they don't



Photo by Teri Schleicher

Posters tacked up through town last week tried to persuade residents to vote.

have the support they thought. Now, they may be more willing to negotiate."

Bauwens plans to meet with members of the lake association during their annual picnic on Saturday, Aug. 6, to discuss the tax district idea and any other options that may surface.

Flood board Chairman Sol Kiotic has been one of the most vocal opponents to a potential tax district. The outcome of Tuesday's referendum has not changed his mind, he said; he still hopes the lakeside homeowners will come forth with their own proposal.

"Who will they (the petitioners) try to outsmart now?" Kiotic asked. "But the big question is, what will the state do about the dam? It's thrown back in their lap. It's in the state's lap now, all over again."

Resident Art Young agreed. If the state or the lake association "came back with better terms, I would go for it. And I would help push it."

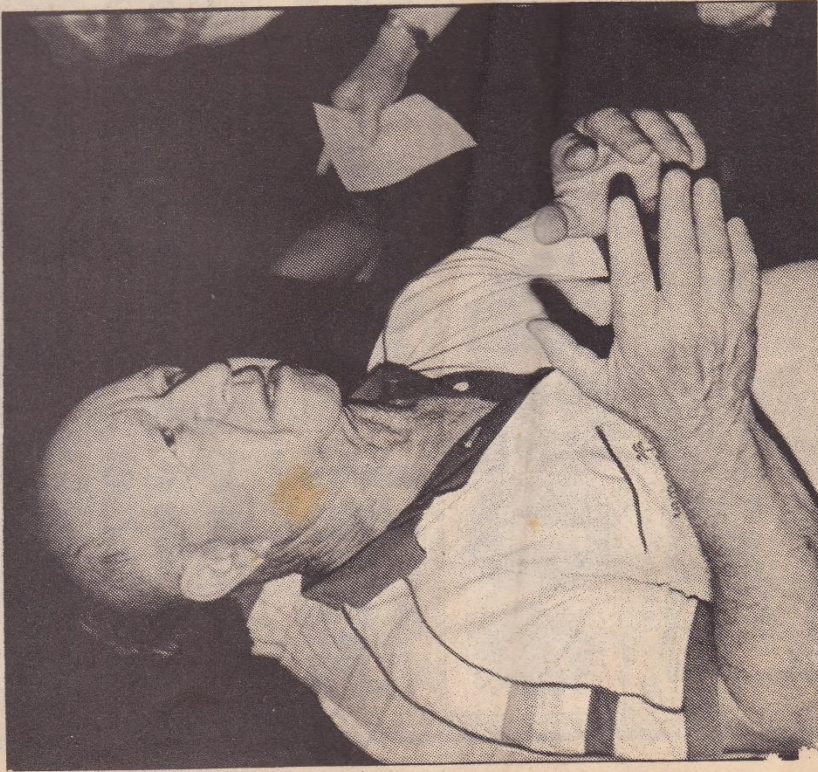


Photo by Teri Schleicher

Sol Kiotic, chairman of Flood and Erosion Control Board made his feelings clear during the weeks preceding the referendum.

New tax district seen as solution for Lake Williams

8-10-88

LEBANON — First Selectman Richard Bauwens has proposed creation of a Lake Williams tax district — an idea that apparently meets with approval of the lake association.

Bauwens is also considering an idea whereby the state would drop plans to purchase a boatlaunch and picnic area so that the overall cost of the lake purchase would drop in half, to \$213,000.

Lake Williams Beach Association president Kent Sleath said this morning that Bauwens has not discussed the proposal with the association, but that the board of directors had approved Bauwens' concept of a tax district in February, although no specifics were discussed.

"We are interested in saving the lake as it is a valuable resource," Sleath said.

Any plan would have to be approved by the state Department of Environmental Protection, the agency which would be putting up the state's share of the money.

DEP Commissioner Leslie Carothers said last week she likes the idea of a tax district and said it is a better idea than the one which was defeated in the Aug. 2 referendum.

The new plans for the lake, dam and water rights were prompted by voters' rejection last week of a plan whereby the town would pay \$426,000 or two-thirds of the overall cost of the property. The state would come up with the remaining \$213,000.

Some speculated the reason

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to pay for one-third of the purchase cost at \$213,000, would then be asked to reallocate money set aside for the proposed picnic and boat launch area towards the purchase of the lake instead, increasing the state's contribution to the purchase cost to \$426,000 and leaving the tax district to pay \$213,000.

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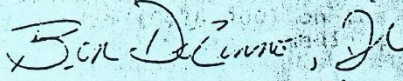
Erosion Control Board was set up in the town of Lebanon for the primary purpose of establishing such a special taxing district. It is our understanding from legal council that this is not statutorily within the purview of this commission. Are there some extenuating circumstances in this instance? Legal council has advised that such districts are set up statutorily under Title 7 as are other special districts which fall under the jurisdiction of OPM. 4) Residents have been assured that at the end of the bonding period that this special taxing district, having served its purpose, will be terminated. Is this so? 5) Indications have been given that once water has been restored, DEP will assume all further financial and other responsibilities for maintenance of the lake. Fifty percent of the lake is so overgrown that even if water were to be restored to maximum capacity it would not be useable. Does your department have plans to correct this problem so that paying residents will receive benefit for their investment? Is so, can you please elaborate.

Many of these 150 families are willing to support participation with the state in the purchase as an environmental saving measure - but they would like some guarantees on water rights in addition to keeping this at a level of affordability.

We would like to meet with you regarding this matter at your earliest convenience. As always, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


 Representative Ronald L. Smoko
 Chairman/Finance, Revenue and
 Bonding Committee


 Representative Ben DeZinno, Jr.
 Chairman/Planning and Development Committee

cc: Senator Przybysz
 Representative Prague
 Richard Bauwens, Selectman, Lebanon
 Mr. Carlton Hathaway
 Mary Anderson