



TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

SANDY NECK BOARD
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Sandy Neck Board Meeting December 11, 2023

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sandy Neck Board was held on December 11, 2023, at 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Conference Room.

Chair:

Thomas O'Neill

Vice Chair:

Peter Sampou

Board Members:

William Carey
William Monroe
Maureen Piccione
Rene King

Council Liaison:

Gordon Starr
Kris Clark

Barnstable

PD Liaison:
Chris Kelsey

Roll Call:

Board Members present by roll call: Tom O'Neill, Pete Sampou, Maureen Piccione, Bill Carey, Bill Monroe, and Rene King.

Board Members absent:

Staff: Sandy Neck Park Manager, Nina Coleman, and Assistant Park Manager, Hannah Lawrence.

Staff Member absent: Operations Supervisor, Donna Bragg.

Council Liaisons present:

Barnstable Police Liaison:

Public: Paul Berger, and Tracey Hallett.

Guest Speaker:

Act on Minutes:

On a motion from Pete Sampou and seconded by Bill Monroe, the Board voted on the acceptance of the September 11, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried. On a motion from Pete Sampou and seconded by Bill Monroe, the Board voted on the acceptance of the October 16, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

Notes from the Chair:

1. Tom O'Neill addressed the Board. We have a Board member vacancy due to Ann Canedy's resignation. There has not been action from the Appointments Committee. Nina pointed out to Tom that was due to the Town Council elections. Tom stated that it slowed everything down. Rene King, from Recreation is looking to find her replacement on the Board from the Recreation Committee. Tom said that if that cannot be done, we would have to find a replacement from the public who would then represent Recreation.
2. Tom said the intention was to invite Town Manager, Mark Ells to this meeting but the Project Committee had a meeting on November 20, 2023 and there was not enough new information to warrant the inclusion of the Town Manager at this time. Tom spoke with Mark Ells and said that it would probably be the January or February 2024 meeting he would be invited to attend.

Correspondence: None.

Staff Report: Hannah Lawrence addressed the Board. * See attached report.

- Gatehouse hours are by appointment only.
- Off Road Vehicle Beach (ORV), hours are 8am-4pm.
- No campfires allowed.
- Off Road Vehicle Campers must still make reservations at this time of year online; but there is no charge in the off-season.
- All 2023 Off Road Vehicle Permits will expire on January 15, 2024.
- Black powder deer hunt will take place December 11-16th. The Off Road Vehicle Beach will be closed at Trail 2 during the hunt. Only hunt participants and Cottage Owners will be allowed past trail 2. This extends to the Marsh Trail as well.
- We have had no cold stunned sea turtles as of yet. We are all set up to handle any turtle event. A reminder to the public to put any turtle(s) they find up above the high-water, cover with seaweed and mark the location with a buoy or stick. Call the Gatehouse at 508-3620-8300. Do NOT put the turtles back in the water.
- We are having a Holiday merchandise sale. Remaining dates are December 16th and 17th from 10am-2pm at the Gatehouse. All merchandise is marked down. All sales are final.
- We have started a Sandy Neck newsletter which is available on the front page of the Sandy Neck website.
- Tom asked about the Sandy Neck app. Nina said we joined the Town of Barnstable informational app. Patrons may go to the Sandy Neck website and download the app and choose which information from the town they wish to receive.
- Nina said staff is busy getting the permits ready for the 2024 Off Road Vehicle season. An email blast will be going out to all patrons that had a 2023 permit in the upcoming week so they may apply for a 2024 Off Road Vehicle Permit. Nina explained the permitting process. Patrons will apply online, making sure they have a valid registration. Click on the yes button, stating they will abide by the rules set forth in the regulations. Then at the end of the application click save. The application then will be sent to staff. Once staff approves, the patron will receive an email invoice to pay. Bill Carey asked about turn-around time. Hannah said it is a fairly quick process. There is no capping of permits.
- Bill Carey asked about the archery hunt. Hannah said none were taken during archery. At the start of the black powder hunt, one deer has been taken so far.

Old Business:

Conservation and beach erosion along our coastlines.

- 1. Economic sustainability.** None.
- 2. Public outreach and public use & participation.** Bill Monroe addressed the Board. There is one young man looking to do a project for either Sandy Neck, the dog park, or something for Marine Environment Affairs. Sandy Neck staff is brainstorming ideas and Bill will get together with Hannah to see what they come up with.
- 3. Sandy Neck Beach Reconfiguration Project Update.** Tom O'Neill addressed the Board. There was a project meeting on November 20, 2023. Things are going well. Tom and Nina will update the Board this evening. We are in the process of applying for a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, (NOAA), grant for the funds to pay for or partially pay for this project. The Board has had a request to submit a letter to those who are reviewing the grant application.
Nina Addressed the Board. We currently have a grant from Coastal Zone Management, (CZM). CZM grants have tight deadlines. The grant is in the amount of \$92,579 and must be spent by June 30, 2024. The grant covers; getting the plans to ninety percent completion, permitting, and final design. Once the task is final design, we will be at one hundred percent. We were selected to send in a letter of support for this grant. Right now, we are busy working on the ninety percent concept for the project. The permitting

process will continue over the winter. There is the Endangered Species permit which primarily focuses on Spadefoot Toad habitat. Currently negotiating with Natural Heritage on this permit. There will be some funding for mitigation. The other permit is through the Conservation Commission. Conservation Commission will be late winter. There will be an outreach meeting with the public for feedback prior to the Conservation Commission meeting. Hopefully we will have the final design prior to the end of the fiscal year in June. Tom mentioned that there is an archaeological survey that must be completed. Nina said that the archaeological survey is to make sure there are no Native American artifacts on the primary dune. There was discussion regarding funding and options. Rene asked what the timeframe was for the public meeting and comments. Nina said it would probably be in late February. Bill Carey asked about the NOAA grant. Tom said that the NOAA grant would be to fund all or part of the construction process. Nina said there are multiple sources of funding we are going after.

Tom read a draft of the letter of support from the Board that will be going to NOAA for the Sandy Neck Coastal Resiliency Project. * Please see attached.

New Business:

1. Election of Board Officers. Tom asked for nominations by voice for Chair and Vice Chair. Pete Sampou nominated Tom O'Neill to remain as Chair for the Sandy Neck Board. There were no other nominations for the position of Chair. Tom asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Bill Monroe nominated Pete Sampou to remain as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations for Vice Chair. Tom called for a voice vote for Pete Sampou as Vice Chair. Motion carried by voice vote. Tom called for a voice vote for Tom O'Neill as Chair. Motion carried by voice vote.

Nina checked with the Board for the dates of the 2024 meeting dates. The Board agreed to the dates and times. Tom asked that Donna send an updated contact list to all Board members as well as the 2024 meeting dates. Nina agreed.

2. Annual Sandy Neck ConCom Report Presentation. * See attached. Nina addressed the Board. The ConCom Report is required as part of Sandy Neck Orders of Conditions in order to operate Sandy Neck Beach Park. This report is annual. Nina had already presented the report to the Conservation Commission. The report details five consecutive years of data on Piping Plovers and Diamondback Terrapins. The report includes the number of plover pairs, the number of plover nests and the number of fledglings. 2023 was a record-breaking year for Sandy Neck. We used three takes, (deterrents), this year for the Habitat Conservation Plan. Tom explained how hard the staff works to keep as much of the beach open as possible. Nina spoke about Massachusetts Beach Buggy Association, (MBBA), partnering with Sandy Neck by providing pallets to use as cover boards as well as the amount of time MBBA helped place the pallets. Nina said this was the second year we did not have to turn around any Off Road Vehicle patrons due to the efforts to deter plovers from the HCP. Bill Carey asked about the number of pairs verses chicks this year. Nina said that we had two over-wash situations resulting in the loss of eggs. She pointed out that the birds rebounded by re-nesting, resulting in fledged plovers. Storm related incidents occur and there is nothing that can be done about it. Diamondback Terrapins also had a record-breaking year on Sandy Neck. 408 nests laid. Predation was less this year. We didn't do as many capping of nests. The terrapin head-start program continues with great success. The head-start program invests the community in the ecology of Sandy Neck. The number of terrapins indicates that the Great Marsh is a healthy ecosystem. Rene asked if there was an opportunity to have some terrapins at the Hyannis Youth and Community Center. Pete said one of the challenges is that there must be an adult in charge of the care of the terrapins. It is a consideration. The average nest size is twelve eggs. Pete said there were a lot more turtles nesting on the south side which presents challenges, particularly on Route 6A. Terns continue to do very poorly. Their reproductive rates are very low. The terns are a species of special concern. Predation in colonies as well as abandonment and over-wash are some of the issues resulting in low productivity.

Cold stunned sea turtles at Sandy Neck for 2022. During the turtle stranding season, Sandy Neck had 125 sea turtle strandings. 119 Kemp Ridleys, 3 Green, 3 Loggerheads. Pete asked about the survival rate of the Sandy Neck rescued turtles. Nina said about eighty percent were live. This was a record for Sandy Neck.

Wetland restoration on Sandy Neck. 75+ isolated fresh water wetlands were treated for invasive species as well as parts of the Great Marsh.

AmeriCorps assisted with the project. Bill Monroe asked about the phragmites on the south side by 6A. Can they be removed. Nina said it was problematic because we deal with Sandy Neck proper only.

Enforcement was down a little bit this year. Partly due to the weather. Alcohol issues have been down since Covid.

We did well with revenue this year. The increase in permit fees helped. There was a discussion about the Cottage lease fees. Off Road Vehicle Permits, we are right on target even with the weather issues. Camping nights were down also due to weather issues. Bill Carey asked about beach concession rent Nina said we don't make money, it is about services provided for patrons. Rene spoke about the challenges at other beaches regarding keeping vendors at beaches. Bill Carey brought up the revenue from Sandwich. Nina said it should be reevaluated again as it has been several years since it was looked at. Nina said she would do a cost-of-service analysis.

Property Owner escorts were up and it was determined that is was one or two Cottage Colony families that were using the escort service often.

Pheasant hunt, 276 birds stocked. Tenting nights, 227. Fire permits, 417. Two-wheel drive tests 26 Special Permits, 36. Horse permits 21, with 12 daily permits for additional rides on beach. Walks and talks, 3 Barnstable Land Trust and 3 Massachusetts Audubon. Beach cleanup, 1 MBBA and 1 CoastSweep. Junior Ranger Program working with the Recreation Department; Tuesdays, July 11th through August 8th. Halfway House Permits, Sturgis, 2 day trips and Cape Cod Art, 6 day trips. Portable toilets, 6 on Off Road Beach.

Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair: None.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bragg, Secretary Pro Tem

Attachments:



December 11th –
Staff Report.pptx



Board letter to
NOAA.pdf



ConComreport2023
#.pdf