

Bonnet Shores Fire District

Monthly Meeting: Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2021

7:30 PM

Bonnet Shores Community Center – 130 Bonnet Shores Road Narragansett, RI

Call To Order

Chair Carol O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 7:35pm. Council members in attendance included: Chair Carol O'Donnell, Vice Chair Marlene Bellini, Carolyn DiLeo, Bob Anderson, Bill DelGizzo, Steve Danuszar and via Zoom Anthony DeAngelis. Additional present were District Manager Lisa DiBello, Treasurer Laurie McCarthy, and Clerk Stephanie Caldwell.

Pledge of Allegiance/ Moment of silence

The Assembly recited the Pledge and observed a moment of silence for the members of the community that have passed.

Chair to speak to procedure of meeting

Chair O'Donnell explained before a vote is taken on any agenda items, the public will be asked for comment on said item. She requested each person that speaks should identify themselves along with their address, speak once, briefly and courteously. Public comment for non-agenda items will be held at the end of the meeting.

A member of the public asked for the council to identify themselves for clarity, all did so.

Urgent Business

Chair O'Donnell addressed the expiration of the RI SOS executive order allowing Open Meetings to be conducted via Zoom, as of Friday July 23, 2021.

Approval of Minutes

Annual 2019 minutes have been approved and filed. Annual 2020 minutes to be approved. Carolyn DiLeo moves to approve July 1, 2021 Organizational Meeting Minutes, motion is seconded by Marleen Bellini. Chair O'Donnell addresses typos to be corrected on 7/1/21 Organizational Minutes. Bob Anderson moves to accept said minutes with corrections, seconded by C. DiLeo. June 5, 2021 draft minutes have been filed, no vote.

Treasurer

Treasurer Laurie McCarthy addressed the balanced budget. Discussion of beach cleaning budget, it was explained there is a \$35,000.00 minimum guaranteed expenditure, each cleaning is \$1,000.00. Chair O'Donnell asks if there are questions, Steven Puerini of Bonnet Point road asks about cleaning Kelly Beach. Chair responded that BSBC cleans the beach and removes trash from Kelly Beach.

Tax Collector

Steve Danuszar discussed continued collection of tax revenue, bills being mailed, plans with printing vendor, and that taxes are due on September 15, 2021 without interest, 3% interest if paid after 9/15/21, and 4% interest if paid after October 15, 2021.

Chair O'Donnell asks if there are questions, no responses.

Land Trust

Lenny Mercier announced the first new meeting of the Land Trust on Thursday August 5, 2021. The nature trail behind the community center has been cleaned by a new landscaper. There is a collaboration in the works with a local Eagle Scout troop to make trail improvements, hopefully by the fall or spring.

Chair O'Donnell asks if there are questions.

Anita Langer of Col. John Gardner Rd. asks how many acres of land does the land trust control. Lenny responds the Land Trust has of 96 parcels totaling 128 acres.

District Manager

District Manager Lisa DiBello reiterated the topics covered in her monthly report, including; the 2021 Annual Meeting, Narragansett DPW involvement with overgrown brush on private residences; water main break on Bonnet Point Road and Col. John Gardner Blvd., Mega truck accident with resident vehicle, the Bonnet Shores Community Center is open for rentals again, Kelly Beach is fully staffed with lifeguards, beach tags are an ongoing issue, boardwalk maintained by Phil Smith, new flag system with the lifeguards is now in place for safety, Kelly Beach cleaning is going well thanks to the BSBC, Little Beach seaweed cleanup is going well thanks to Bobby Barber, who also takes care of dredging at the beach, thank you Bobby! Phil Smith is building the new stairs at Little Beach – Thank you Phil! The painting class was a success, volunteer cleanup, swim lesson program is going well, neighborhood yard sale Saturday July 24, 2021, bulky trash pick-up is the following Saturday, July 31. No questions. Bill DelGizzo suggests District Manager's report is distributed via e-mail blast.

Chair O'Donnell asks if there are questions.

Melissa Jenkins raises her hand; it is explained that because she is not a property owner she is not allowed to participate. Pamela Childs of 12 Mohawk Trail asks the District Manager where did the grant money for the stairs come from? Lisa explains that she applied for a grant through the Rhode Island Local Interlocal Risk Management Trust, which is the FD insurance company, and they provided the grant to cover the cost of the wood. Immediately following Lisa's remarks there is a brief discussion between Bill DelGizzo and Chair O'Donnell about determining eligibility for meeting participation among community members present. It is noted this is not an agenda item for this meeting.

Old Business

Moderator Joe Thomas explains there was a clerical error during the July 1st Organizational Meeting recording the term length for 3 of 5 of the newly elected council members.

Straws are drawn in the following order with the corresponding result:

Carolyn DiLeo	1 st Draw	Short Straw	2 Year Term
Bill DelGizzo	2 nd Draw	Long Straw	3 Year Term
Steve Danuszar	3 rd Draw	Short Straw	2 Year Term

Anthony DeAngelis	Remaining Straw	Long Straw	3 Year Term
Bob Anderson	Volunteered		2 Year Term

Before Land Trust straws for terms are drawn, Steve Puerini asks why the Council is responsible for determining Land Trust terms. Joe Thomas explains that the Council is merely following the rules put forth. Bill DelGizzo addressed the fact that the Land Trust is an independent body. Chair O'Donnell agrees and asks if the Land Trust would like to self-determine their terms. Lenny responds yes. Joe Thomas moves to table the issue, Chair O'Donnell tables the determination of Land Trust terms until the next meeting.

Paula Childs of 55 Lake Road spoke about drawing straws vs using popular vote to determine term length for council members. Chair O'Donnell called for order and respect. Carolyn DiLeo clarified for Ms. Childs that in fact the term lengths for new council members matched their popular vote standing, even if by default. C. DiLeo also noted this topic will be addressed in the future.

Joe Thomas spoke to commend Janice McClanahan's service to the community, followed by a standing ovation. He also thanked retiring harbormaster Mike Tortellani, and addressed community distress. Chair O'Donnell called for order following public outbursts.

New Business

- A. Beth & Kevin Gaffney of 6 Fairport Ave. ask to tape the community center basketball courts for Pickle Ball. Discussion: S. Danuszar asks is the tape may pose a hazard, it's agreed the answer is no. Carol Fortin of 10 Cross Road asks is it might interfere with basketball, it's agreed it will not. Steven Puerini asks about noise. B. Anderson moves to approve taping the basketball courts for pickle ball, S. Danuszar seconds, motion is unanimously approved.

- B. Joy Lane Abandonment – Raymond Trainor of Carol Lane discusses concerns with plans proposed by St. Veronicas for the clearing of land and expansion of parking area. He details concerns with drainage, sound, and visual disruption from proposed plans. Mr. Trainor asks for the Council to appoint a liaison to the town to address concerns. Bill DelGizzo suggests forming a committee. Chair O'Donnell discusses how to begin the process to bring the matter to the attention of the town, and explains at this junction the item will be tabled and followed. Questions followed from:
 - Tony Lupino, 25 Lake Road: Suggests the grass area besides the Shell station could be an alternate place for additional parking plan.
 - Robert Patterson, Parkland Road: Asks is the land in question is part of the Land Trust.
 - Carol Fortin, 10 Cross Road: Also asks if the land in question is owned by the Land Trust.
 - Neal Coleman, 31 Fairway Drive: Discusses in detail the size and scope of the proposed plan, suggests reaching out to local media and Naggaransett Town Council.
 - Frank Pike, Carol Lane: Addresses drainage concerns on Carol Lane
 - Chair O'Donnell speaks to the fact that the Council supports resident's concerns
 - John Carvallo, 7 Muratore Lane: Feels BSGD has rights to paper road off Joy Lane, refers to an earlier town council meeting this year.

- Ernie Collucci, Carol Lane: Is concerned about proposed project impact on residents.
 - Chair O'Donnell suggests residents organize and form an plan of action
 - Tony Lupino, 25 Lake Road: Discusses confusion around road ownership, points out that if BSFD owns Joy Lane, than the town did not have the right to abandon the road.
 - Anita Langer, Col. John Gardner Rd.: Speaks about BSFD road ownership with Bill DelGizzo, and believes the topic of paper roads was never discussed with the town.
- C. Discussion to add signs at north & south ends of the causeway for pedestrians and cyclists, council agrees to move this discussion to the Narragansett DPW.
- D. Recording of Council Meetings or Livestream: Discussion of purpose, and logistics. Bill DelGizzo makes a motion to task Communication Committee to investigate how to livestream Council meetings and post to YouTube. Motion is seconded by Bob Anderson. Motion unanimously passes. Tony Lupino comments on Zoom role in meetings in the future.
- E. Facebook Issues: Discussion of current Facebook pages with Bonnet Shores title and their roles, if the current group with "BSFD" in the title should be replaced. What role the BSFD website can play.
- F. Keys to gate at Little Beach; New harbormaster Joe Bleczinski is introduced. Discussion of how to access keys to gate, residents looking for access are to call Joe directly. C. DiLeo asks about empty moorings, Joe discussed work in progress to contact owners of these balls, as well as owners of small craft on Little Beach without proper stickers.
- G. Overgrowth in the Battery on Col. John Gardner Rd.: Discussion about how quickly it can be addressed by Beautification Committee, getting estimates, looking for help.
- H. Need for Ethics opinion for Bill & Carolyn: Discussion of getting an Ethics Opinion to decide if there is a conflict to attend executive meetings while supporting a pending lawsuit against BSFD, and who on the Council this should apply to. Bill DelGizzo raises the issues of ratifying Executive Session minutes, and budget concerns regarding lawsuit costs.
- Tony Lupino speaks about Open Meeting law concerns.
- I. Tax collector vacant position: Discussion of how to fill the position. Treasurer McCarthy explains role of Book Keeper and Treasurer. Discussion of hiring to fill the position vs outsourcing, and investigating further. Discussion of possible invoice revisions to streamline the process. Council agrees to e-blast request for applications.
- Richard Mercier speaks about cost
 - Janice McClanahan speaks about logistics and time sensitivity with resolving the issue
 - Steven Puerini of Bonnet Point Rd asks about BSBC being charged with sending and collecting their own taxes
 - Richard Mercier speaks about possible issues BSBC may face collecting taxes from the unit owners. Suggests contacting Washington Trust for assistance with tax collection.
 - Tony Lupino of Lake Rd speaks about BSBC and tax collection
 - Gail Gismondi, Col. John Gardner Rd – speaks about tax bills
 - John Carvallo - speaks about filling the position
 - Robert Patterson – speaks about payment ideas
- J. Pathway to bring our community together: Caroyln DiLeo discusses role of committees for unifying community, and possible role of SOS for education. Bob Anderson discusses hostility on social media followed by numerous outbursts from several members in

attendance. Marlene Belini addresses community issues stemming from social media. Bill DelGizzo discussed other ways of social connection in the community, and the importance of the Social Committee. No comment from Steve Danuszar or Anthony DeAngelis.

- Tony Lupino speaks about public comments being reflected in the minutes
 - Carol Fortin speaks about her desire to see more community activities designed for youth to bring people together
- K. Demand respect for our District Manager, work load, hours contracted: Chair O'Donnell discusses District Manager Lisa DeBello's outstanding work ethic, and the lack of respect and mistreatment that she experiences at times from members of the community. Carolyn DiLeo discusses how the Council can assist Lisa with community complaints, and how harassment should be addressed. Lisa discusses common complaints (beach tags, recycling cans), and the underlying sentiment of community members (in part fueled by social media) that enables people to act with disrespect. Bob Anderson speaks about Council's duty to provide a safe, stress-free work environment. Bill DelGizzo speaks about how using information may better prepare new community members with regard to procedures and common expectations. Steve Danuszar comments on Lisa's 24/7 availability to the community.
- L. Legal suite; Retain Janice M. as Liaison – Chair O'Donnell would like to retain J. McClanahan as liaison to attorney, Carolyn DiLeo disagrees b/c she is not a Council member. Chair O'Donnell volunteers to take up the position as liaison, all agree.
- M. Informational: Online instruction Open Meeting Laws: RI SOS is hosting the Annual Open Government Summit Virtual Meeting on Friday July 30th. Carolyn DiLeo explains how attending this summit can help to inform all members of the Council and the public.

Public Comment

- Tony Lupino discusses open meeting status of meetings, and public forum.
- Anthony DeAngelis comments that RI Open Gov booklet that the public's right to participate in public meetings is limited from disrupting the meetings.
- Robert Patterson commends the Council on the success of how this meeting was conducted.
- Steven Puerini comments that it is the Council's responsibility to address community member's issues with BSFD policies
- Paula Childs asks if the Council will invite RI SOS to speak on voting rights, Council is unable to answer at this time.
- John Carvallo comments to thank the council and Lisa for their work
- Melissa Jenkins of Bayberry Road comments about public participation at meetings, and her opinion that council members who are members of BSBC do not participate in Executive Session Meetings with the Beach Club. Chair O'Donnell responds they are not.
- George Monahan of Bonnet Shores Road asks that the council read the By-Laws, and discusses if the BSFD is a corporation, and if so what are the implications with open meeting laws and procedures.
- Carolyn DiLeo responds that the RI Secretary of State has identified that the Bonnet Shores Fire District is in fact a public body.

Adjournment

Bill DelGizzo makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:27pm, motion is seconded by Marlene.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Caldwell
Bonnet Shores Fire District Clerk