

BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT

Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Monthly Meeting

October 15, 2025

7:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

(A full video recording and transcription of the meeting is available under the “Council” tab at www.bonnetshores.org)

Call to Order

Council Chair Leslie McKnight called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. Council members present were: John Chereskin, Jane Duran, Tony Girardi, Faith LaSalle, Leslie McKnight and Kevin O’Brien. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Announcements

J. Duran began by noting that based on a comment at the September meeting, the Narragansett Registered Voter Rolls and list of Bonnet Shores Fire District Property owners have been posted to the Fire District website underneath the Annual Meeting link. She reminded the community that all agendas, meeting minutes, and Zoom replays are also available on the website.

Approval of Minutes

The Council then took up consideration of approval of the draft minutes of the September 17, 2025 Council meeting, copies of which had been previously distributed to the Council. Faith LaSalle stated that she provided a copy of the transcript to the Clerk for convenience as to the points she made at that meeting and also pointed out that she wanted reference to be made in the minutes to Article III, Section 4 of the By Laws as defining the role of the Clerk. Faith LaSalle said for clarification, the September 17 minutes should indicate that Leslie, as the

Chair, will be the contact person with legal counsel and communicate with the Council.

With the changes requested by F. LaSalle, and upon a motion made by Jane Duran, seconded by Leslie McKnight, the minutes were approved.

Urgent Business – None

Public Comment

- Anita Langer – Anita said that the Charter has not yet been amended consistent with the terms of the Consent Judgment. She feels the Consent Judgment needs to be enforced.
- Steve Puerini - Steve asked about the status of replacing the electronic road sign near the Beach Club entrance. He complained about speeding in front of his home, and has been in contact with the Narragansett Police Department. He asked whether the Council would be willing to assist in asking for installation of a Stop sign. He next commented that the sign recently installed by the Land Trust at Wesquage Pond identifies the Pond as an Audubon Refuge, which it is not, and asked about correction of that mistake.

Mark Gillolly discussed prior problems with vandalism of the electronic sign. He also discussed his experience in asking for new Stop signs, though he did offer to discuss possible installation of a speed limit sign with the Department of Public Works.

- Bill DelGizzo – suggested that the two equalizing culverts under the Causeway should be cleaned out.

New and On-Going Business

Treasurer Update – Neal Prescott thanked Laurie for her help during his transition. He said the Fire District is in good financial help; he met with the bank about increasing the interest paid on deposits; he is beginning to automate certain functions and tasks; and attended the recent tax sale.

Tax Collector – Helen Patience delivered the Tax Collector report. She said \$479,00 in taxes has been collected, leaving about \$50,000 left to collect. 5 of the 13 properties were sold at the Tax Sale, and she is awaiting guidance for the Fire District lawyer about possible options for the remaining unsold properties, including possible acquisition by the Land Trust. J. Chereskin discussed transfers to the Land Trust, and has also been in touch with the lawyer regarding the remaining unsold properties and possible coordination with the Town of Narragansett. He will compile a complete list of all 17 properties for the Chair.

Land Trust – Joan Fandetti said the Land Trust met on October 15. She discussed plans for sale of Land Trust logo T shirts and the associated costs. She discussed the status of plans to correct the previous 501c-3 application, including plans to retain the Foundation Group to assist in that regard. Joan said she would provide K. O'Brien a report she had previously prepared regarding the proposed changes under discussion. F. LaSalle said she and Steve Danuszar had previously worked on this matter and that it will likely be a "corroborated effort of what we'll present". T. Girardi also agreed to distribute to the Council a summary of the required changes. Joan will also supply the Council with the executed copies of the contract with the Foundation Group.

Manager's Report – (the full Manager's Report is available on-line with the meeting agenda). Mark reported that the most recent storm passed without any problems. He thanked the beach club and Carol O'Donnell for their recent assistance. The port-o-potty has been brought back and the beach and harbor are closed for the season. J. Duran and T. Girardi asked questions about the open moorings and the gear. Mark said that boat owners are responsible for their own mooring equipment, which they own. In response to a question, Mark said that he planned on no further seaweed removal at Little Beach during the winter. J. Duran said she felt it was important to have a Beach and Safety Committee. She asked about the status of renewal of the walkway assent and tax-exempt certificate, which Mark is handling. T. Girardi said he was recently contacted by several mooring holders about possible capital improvements to the harbor facilities. A discussion ensued among the Council members, as a result of which it was agreed Tony would have further discussions with the mooring holders about preparation of specific proposals for discussion at a future meeting.

Social Activities Group – Leslie reported that planning is underway for a Children’s Holiday Party at the Community Center.

New and On-Going Business

A. Election Data Analysis – (the revised Election Data Analysis is available on-line and was distributed with the Agenda prior to the meeting.). Jane reported on her recent meetings with Kevin, which resulted in revisions to the Election Data Analysis. She reiterated that the analysis was limited to who can vote and who showed up. She discussed the source materials used for the analysis. Per the analysis, it was observed that there was an approximately 20% YOY decrease in voters identified as Bonnet Shores property owners while corporations increased 40%, which Jane attributed to restructuring of property ownership deeds in the Fire District. There was a 138% increase in Narragansett voters who also own a beach club unit. There was a decrease in the number of voters who showed up. The tax revenue breakout remained unchanged. She addressed how she computed the opinion poll. She said there were some conflicting comments on the opinion poll, citing an example where a person checked the box for Narragansett Registered Voters only, but then wrote in “all property owners should be able to vote”, which suggested the need for further education on voter eligibility. Leslie observed that we lost 46 full-time residents, while there was an increase of 68 seasonal residents. Jane discussed how those changes were calculated. Kevin commended Jane on her work and discussed why he sought changes to the prior analysis and the changes that were made as a result.

From the audience, Bill DelGizzo opined about the importance having email addresses for each Fire District tax address.

B. Memorial Bench Program – T. Girardi referenced and discussed three documents relating to the proposed updated Memorial Bench Program (the “Program”) submitted by the Land Trust (copies of the Program documents had been distributed with the agenda prior to the meeting). F. LaSalle asked if the Program was restricted to “deceased people”? Tony confirmed it is, and it agreed to add that clarification in the Program documents. There was then discussion about removal of the benches in the event of storms, and Tony agreed to add that it referred to “a forecasted significant” storm. At the conclusion of the discussion, T. Girardi moved, and J. Duran seconded, that the Program be approved as

modified. Whereupon, the motion was unanimously adopted by the Council.

C. Land Trust T Shirts – The next order of business was the proposed Land Trust T shirt sale, previously discussed during the Land Trust report. The cost to prepare 100 shirts is \$800, each of which will be sold for \$25. J. Chereskin asked about the previous sale and how much was made. J. Fandetti said she did not know. M. Gillooly said there were about 25 shirts left over from the prior sale. K. O’Brien suggested that if the goal is to make money, then more shirts might be sold if the shirts simply said “Bonnet Shores”. F. LaSalle said the sale is a way for the Land Trust to raise its own money, and then discussed the allocation of fees in connection with land purchases in the Town of New Shoreham. At the conclusion of the discussion, J. Duran moved, and T. Girardi seconded, that the Land Trust be authorized to purchase the 100 T shirts for fundraising. K. O’Brien opposed.

D. Col. John Gardner Plantings – L. McKnight said she had been contacted by people who suggested that plantings be added along the new revetment recently installed by the Town of Narragansett along the water on Col. John Gardner Road. J. Duran suggested planting beach roses, but agreed that that the matter would need to be researched with CRMC. A discussion ensued, at the conclusion of which it was agreed more research is needed, and that, as a first step, Mark Gillooly would contact the Town to see what, if any, additional plans it has for the area. Whereupon a motion made by J. Duran, seconded by T. Girardi, it was unanimously agreed that Mark would begin researching the matter by contacting the Town of Narragansett.

E. New Refrigerator – J. Chereskin reported that two bids had been received for replacement of the nonfunctioning refrigerator in the Community Center – \$854.82 for a white refrigerator, and \$1026.02 for a stainless steel refrigerator. After discussion, upon motion made by J. Chereskin, seconded L. McKnight, it was unanimously agreed that a new stainless steel refrigerator would be purchased for a cost not to exceed \$1100.

- F. AV Equipment** – this matter was tabled pending receipt of further information.
- G. Strategic Planning Workgroup** – K. O’Brien reported that the first of five anticipated sessions of the Strategic Planning Workgroup would be held at 6:00pm on October 16, 2025. F. LaSalle said she asked Kevin to keep in mind that there is only one express bus from Providence and that she and Helen Patience take it and that the sessions be scheduled to accommodate those who commute from Providence.
- H. Never Dunne Foundation** – this matter was tabled pending availability of the requestor, Michelle Dunne.
- I. Beaches/Public Safety Working Group** – J. Duran asked whether anyone had heard from Melissa Jenkins about her non-attendance at Council meetings. L. McKnight said that she has gotten no response to emails she sent to Melissa, including whether she would agree to serve on the Paul Masse workgroup. T. Girardi asked about the allowable number of meetings in a calendar year for a Council member to miss. F. LaSalle said it was six. The Council members engaged in further discussion, at the conclusion of which, upon a motion made by F. LaSalle, seconded by K. O’Brien, it was unanimously agreed that John Chereskin and Leslie McKnight would co-chair the Beach and Public Safety Working Group.
- J. Paul Masse Dealership Working Group** – L. McKnight said she had previously offered the chair of this working group to Melissa Jenkins but had received no response. She agreed to email her again and renew the offer.
- K. By Laws Working Groups** – L. McKnight suggested that a public work session to review possible updates to the Annual Meeting and Election processes should be held at 6:30 pm before the November Council Monthly meeting, and that L. McKnight would attempt to gather the recommendations made by the prior By Laws committee. F. LaSalle said she wanted to hold a similar session at a future date. At the conclusion of

the discussion, upon a motion made by L. McKnight, seconded by J. Duran, it was unanimously agreed that a public working group session regarding Election processes would be held from 6:30-7:30 before the November Monthly Council meeting.

There being no further business, upon a motion made by T. Girardi, seconded by J. Duran, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

/S/

Robert E. Patterson, Clerk