

BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT

Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Monthly Meeting
130 Bonnet Shores Road
April 15, 2026
6:30 pm

A recording of the Monthly Council meeting is available on the Fire District website - www.bonnetshores.org under “2026 Council Meetings – All”

Call to Order

Council Chair Leslie McKnight called the Monthly Council meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Council members present were: John Chereskin, Jane Duran, Tony Girardi, Melissa Jenkins, Faith LaSalle, Leslie McKnight and Kevin O’Brien. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

J. Duran moved that the minutes of the March 18, 2026 Monthly Meeting of the Council be approved as drafted; M. Jenkins seconded. The Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes as drafted. J. Duran moved that the draft minutes of the Open Session of the March 30, 2026 Special Council meeting be approved as drafted; K. O’Brien seconded. The Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes as drafted. J. Duran moved that the minutes of the April 2, 2026 Special Meeting of the Council be approved as drafted. K. O’Brien seconded. The Council voted unanimously to approved the minutes as drafted (T. Girardi did not attend the meeting and did not vote).

Urgent Business – None

Public Comment

- **Bob Kubaska** – spoke in favor of allowing voting by proxy at the 2026 Annual Meeting. Thanks Council members for their service.
- **Paula Childs** – opposed the proposal to give beach club units ¼ vote; reported that her examination of Proxy voting showed errors; criticized comments made by Tony Girardi regarding Melissa Jenkins.
- **Robert Patterson** – opposed the draft Rules and Regulation for the Land Trust; opposed re-voting on the tax cap; criticized the draft Recall Proposal
- **Carolyn DiLeo** – expressed concerns regarding items 9-12 on the agenda as lacking transparency and adequate deliberation; urged re-establishing the By-Laws committee; criticized comments made at the prior meeting by a Council member which were critical of another Council member.

Reports/Updates

Treasurer Update – (starts at 0:25:30 on the meeting recording) Prior to the meeting the Treasurer submitted a report to the Council showing a total of \$399,000 on deposit in various District accounts; the Square terminal was purchased; discussed plans for preparation of the 2026-27 Budget; e-checks now being used exclusively. The Council had no questions.

Tax Collector – No report.

Land Trust – (starts at 0:26 on the meeting recording) Will be seeking approval of the draft Rules and Regulations; will seek approval for purchase of materials to refresh Camden Landing. Volunteers will begin pond testing. Memorial Bench paperwork in progress.

Manager Report and Harbor Update – (starts at 28:20) The District Manager was not present but submitted a monthly report prior to the meeting; the Council had no questions. T. Girardi reported that one qualified candidate (Tom Kane) applied for the Harbor Master position and will be interviewed by the search committee.

Social Activities Group – No report. The Chair resigned; new volunteers are being sought.

Legal Matters – (0:30:00 on the meeting recording) The Mega Trash contract renewed at a 6% increase; other contracts will be considered. \$15000 was budgeted for legal fees; YTD date legal expenses are \$15,867.50. F. LaSalle reviewed the status of various OMA and pending legal matters. J. Duran reported that the Attorney General issued a final ruling in the Mary Patterson APRA matter finding that the Fire District violated the APRA and ordered the Fire District to produce the records demanded.

New and On-Going Business

7. Narragansett Easement – (0:39:35 on the meeting recording) Steve Daignault, Public Works Director for the Town of Narragansett, made a presentation regarding a request for approval of an easement sought by the Town of Narragansett associated with drainage from Bayberry Road to Lot N-S-372, as part of a project with BETA Group. Approval is required to secure CRMC permitting for discharge onto the subject property. A discussion followed, including comments made by resident Kathy Daley, at the conclusion of which K. O'Brien moved that the requested easement be approved; F. LaSalle seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. Lewis Brisbois Engagement Letter – (0:51:00 on the meeting recording) J. Duran moved that that the engagement letter with the firm of Lewis Brisbois be revised, including revised rates, expanded scope of services, and authorization for designated officials to request legal services if the convening of the Council is not possible due to deadlines. F. LaSalle seconded the motion. M. Jenkins expressed several objections. K. O'Brien reviewed the history of the matter and summarized the terms of the existing engagement letter which had not previously been made available to him. After discussion, K. O'Brien moved that the motion be amended to provide that

any fee rate increase be effective May 2, 2026 (30 days after the receipt of notice of the fee increase request); that for any matters currently in progress, the current rates be increased by 10% effective May 2, 2026; that a description of what constitutes a “complex” matter be provided in advance, such that any possible additional rate increases in excess of the approved 10% for any such “complex” matters may be considered. Whereupon a vote was taken: K. O’Brien, T. Girardi, J. Duran, L. McKnight and J. Chereskin voted in favor; F. LaSalle and M. Jenkins voted no. The motion carried.

9. Proposed Fiscal Responsibility By-Laws (starts at 1:10 on the meeting recording) F. LaSalle said that the next three agenda items (9,10 and 11) should be discussed as a unit. F. LaSalle said that these items are necessary to protect against potential future “rogue” councils. She moved that a draft fiscal responsibility by-law be placed on the ballot for consideration at the 2026 Annual Meeting that would cap future tax increases, in an amount to be determined. It was agreed that no vote was required regarding item 9 (the current \$161,000 in reserve). After discussion, F. LaSalle moved, and J. Duran seconded, that a proposed draft by-law capping future Fire District tax increases at 7% per year be placed on the ballot for consideration at the 2026 Annual Meeting. Whereupon a vote was taken: K. O’Brien, T. Girardi, M. Jenkins and J. Chereskin voted no; J. Duran, L. McKnight and F. LaSalle voted yes. The motion failed. Given that vote, it was agreed that item 10 should not be taken up.

10. Proposed Recall By-Law - (starts at 1:28 on the meeting recording) J. Duran moved, and F. LaSalle seconded, that the Council approve a draft Recall Provision by-law for inclusion on the 2026 Annual Meeting ballot, subject to legal review confirming no substantive concerns. J. Duran recognized receipt of several objections and agreed that modifications may be considered. M. Jenkins moved that the matter be tabled. No second was made. K. O’Brien expressed concerns about taking up a matter of this complexity and the associated anticipated legal fees. After discussion, a vote was taken; T. Girardi, J. Duran, L. McKnight and F. LaSalle voted yes; K. O’Brien, M. Jenkins and J. Chereskin voted no. The motion carried.

11. Annual Meeting Format – (starts at 1:41 on the meeting recording) J. Duran moved that the time and format of the June 25, 2026 Annual Meeting be reconsidered, and instead of as previously agreed, be held at the Bonnet Shores Community Center, thereby eliminating the tent rental costs, by adjusting the voting hours to be from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm on June 25, to be followed by an approximately 30 minute transition period, with the remainder of the Annual Meeting then to be held from approximately 7:30-8:30 pm. K. O’Brien seconded the motion. The Council then voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

12. All Inclusive Voting Proposal (starts at 1:55 on the meeting recording) J. Duran reviewed the proposed voting proposal that was presented at the April 2, 2026 Special Meeting Workshop. Given the circumstances, she opined that the matter should be researched further. K. O’Brien moved that the Council take a vote indicating where it stands on the matter. No second was received. M. Jenkins reminded the Council that it must comply with the terms of the Settlement Agreement and Constitution. After discussion, M. Jenkins moved that the matter be tabled; K. O’Brien seconded the motion, whereupon the Council voted unanimously in favor of tabling this matter.

13. Mega Trash Contract (starts at 2:23 on the meeting recording). The Council voted unanimously to next take up Item 19 of the Agenda. The Council was advised that because no timely notice of termination was sent to the vendor, pursuant to the terms of the existing contract, the Mega Trash contract auto-renewed for another 1 year term at a 6% annual rate increase. J. Chereskin moved, and K. O'Brien seconded, that the one year renewal of the contract, with the rate increase, be approved, and that going forward, to prevent a recurrence of an auto-renew prior to Council review, an RFP be sent out to solicit bids for trash removal. T. Girardi recommended that the RFP process be commenced immediately. The Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

14. Camden Landing Dock (starts at 2:30:25 on the meeting recording) After discussion, J. Chereskin moved, and K. O'Brien seconded, that the proposal to authorize spending an amount not to exceed \$2500 to upgrade the existing Camden Landing dock be tabled. The motion was unanimously agreed to.

15. Beach Opening (starts at 2:38 on the meeting recording) Kelly Beach will be raked, trash will be picked up, and the Port-O-John will be available effective May 16, 2026. No lifeguards will be staffed. The official opening date will be June 20, 2026.

In light of the time, the Council decided unanimously to table the remaining items and adjourn the meeting. Accordingly, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Robert E. Patterson, Clerk