BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT
Monthly Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 20, 2026 6:30pm

Attendees: Leslie McKnight, Faith LaSalle, John Chereskin, Melissa Jenkins, Kevin O'Brien, Tony Girardi and Jane Duran (arrived 15 minutes late)

L. McKnight, Chair, Called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. The pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

The following draft minutes were approved by L. McKnight, F. LaSalle, J. Chereskin, M. Jenkins, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi: April 9, 2026 – Public Budget Meeting Workshop Minutes, April 15, 2026, and May 6th, 2026. Note: J. Duran had not yet arrived to the meeting.

Public Commet: The following public comments were presented:

Michele Dunne: Provided an update on the Never Dunne 5k to be held Sunday May 31st expressing appreciation for the Communication that went to the Community for awareness. She reviewed the logistics of the event and that 130 participants had registered with a maximum of 200. She also indicated the emergency and safety personnel will also be on hand during the event.

Joe Iannucci: While he fully supports the All-Inclusive voting concept to be discussed on item 1 of the agenda, BSBC owners may not accept this voting scenario so the Council may need to look for alternatives. He believes that while it is not perfect, it is a compromise that the community is making but he does not see any compromise from the BSBC. He thanked the council for their service to the community.

Anita Langer: Provided her concerns about who was able to vote in the community and discussed her concerns about proxy votes in that she believes them to be discriminatory. Her understanding is a Trust and LLC can only able to vote 1 time. But her opinion is that individual proxy votes allow multiple people to vote which she thinks it is unfair. She interprets a Judge Taft Carter one page Consent Judgement says that only residents can vote.

Reports / Updates:

Treasurer's Report - The Treasurer's report was submitted prior to the meeting. No questions or action items were raised by the Council.

Tax Collector's Report - The Tax Collector reported that approximately 98% of taxes for the current fiscal year have been collected. Discussion occurred regarding voter and taxpayer lists for the upcoming election, including the availability of updated voter registration information and potential challenges associated with property transfers occurring after the most recent taxpayer list was compiled.

Land Trust Report – The Land Trust Chair provided a Land Trust update regarding recent stewardship activities, including planning for landscaping and signage on Land Trust property. The Council was also informed of a presentation by a civil engineering professional concerning the challenges and potential liabilities associated with accepting donated property within the District.

District Manager and Harbor Report - The District Manager submitted a written report and provided updates on District operations. Topics included ongoing challenges with trash collection services, plans to solicit bids for future waste management services, beach maintenance activities, and efforts to address repairs and permitting requirements related to Little Beach. The Harbor Master Search Committee reported that it had completed interviews and anticipated presenting a candidate for Council consideration at a future meeting.

Social Activities Committee – F. LaSalle provided an update regarding the status of the Social Activities Committee, including recent member resignations and the limited committee activity currently underway.

Nominating Committee – M. Weber from the Nominating Committee reported on candidate recruitment and interviews for the upcoming election. The committee also discussed plans for a candidate meet-and-greet event and noted that additional candidates, including write-in candidates, remain eligible to participate in the election process.

Legal Matters / APRA / OMA Update – F. LaSalle provided an update regarding pending APRA requests, OMA matters, and ongoing legal issues. The Council also received information regarding recent legal expenses and the handling of legal invoices and records requests. No formal action was taken.

New and Ongoing Business:

Voting Rights

The Council discussed next steps regarding the all-inclusive voting rights proposal that had previously been presented to the community. Council members discussed the lack of consensus among stakeholders, the challenges associated with obtaining legislative action, and whether additional legal options should be explored. Discussion included the possibility of seeking judicial guidance if a community-supported solution cannot be reached.

Motion by J. Duran, seconded by K. O'Brien, to research legal mechanisms, costs, and options for returning to court regarding the voting rights matter due to the inability to reach consensus.

> *Vote*: In Favor: J. Duran, L. McKnight, J. Chereskin, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi. Opposed: M. Jenkins; Abstained: F. LaSalle. Motion Passed.

Recall Provision

The Council discussed a proposed recall bylaw for placement on the 2026 Annual Meeting ballot. Discussion included the appropriate location of a recall provision within the District's governing documents, petition requirements, procedures for filling vacancies resulting from a successful recall, voter participation thresholds, and concerns regarding both accountability and potential misuse of the process.

Motion by J. Duran, seconded by L. McKnight, to place a recall bylaw proposal on the Annual Meeting ballot incorporating a two-step recall process, election of replacement candidates, and a turnout threshold tied to participation in the election at which the recalled official was elected.

> *Vote*: In Favor: J. Duran, L. McKnight, F. LaSalle, T. Girardi; Opposed: K. O'Brien, M. Jenkins, J. Chereskin; Motion Passed.

Proxy Voting
The Council discussed proxy voting procedures and reviewed a legal opinion from Attorney Michael Marcello concerning the Clerk's responsibilities under the Charter and Bylaws. Discussion focused on the administration of proxies for the upcoming election, the Clerk's stated concerns regarding implementation, the legal obligations established by the Charter, and potential options for ensuring the election proceeds in accordance with the governing documents.

The Council also discussed delegation of proxy-related responsibilities to a Deputy Clerk and the potential need for indemnification protections for individuals involved in administering the proxy process.

Motion by J. Duran, seconded by L. McKnight, that the Clerk delegate proxy administration responsibilities to Janice McClanaghan, subject to indemnification agreements for both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

> *Vote:* In Favor: J. Duran, L. McKnight, F. LaSalle, J. Chereskin, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi; Not Voting: M. Jenkins. Motion Passed.
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> Attorney Marcello was directed to prepare proposed indemnification documents for consideration at a future meeting.

Annual Meeting Agenda
The Council reviewed the proposed agenda for the June 25, 2026 Annual Meeting. Discussion included the timing of budget-related items and the possibility that the salary approval item may need to be modified based upon the outcome of the upcoming Budget Meeting.

Motion by L. McKnight, seconded by T. Girardi, to approve the June 25, 2026 Annual Meeting agenda, subject to possible modification/removal of the salary approval item based on the outcome of the Budget Meeting.

> *Vote:* In Favor: L. McKnight, F. LaSalle, J. Chereskin, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi, J. Duran; Not Voting: M. Jenkins. Motion Passed.

Commercial Mill Rate
The Council discussed a proposal to establish a zero mill rate for commercial properties within the District. Discussion included the impact such a change could have on District revenues, whether commercial property owners benefit from District services, substantial interest and legal and policy considerations associated with taxing different classes of property.

Motion by M. Jenkins, seconded by J. Duran, to table the matter for future consideration.

> *Vote*: In Favor: L. McKnight, F. LaSalle, J. Chereskin, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi, J. Duran, M. Jenkins. Motion to table passed.

District Manager Resignation
The Council discussed the resignation of the District Manager effective September 2026 and reviewed next steps for recruiting and selecting a successor. Discussion included the anticipated transition period, continuity of ongoing projects, and the composition of a search committee to oversee the recruitment process.

Motion by K. O'Brien, seconded by F. LaSalle, to appoint L. McKnight to lead the District Manager Search Committee.

Vote: In Favor: L. McKnight, F. LaSalle, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi, J. Duran; Not Voting: Jenkins, Chereskin. Motion Passed.

Executive Session:

J. Duran made a motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(2) to discuss and approve the sealed minutes of the Executive Session held on March 30, 2026. L. McKnight seconded the motion. M. Jenkins objected. The vote was approved 6-0 with M. Jenkins not voting. The council moved into executive session. In attendance were Jane Duran, Leslie McKnight, K. O'Brien, T. Girardi, F. LaSalle, J. Chereskin and Attorney Michael Marcello. M. Jenkins did not attend.

Return to Open Session

T. Girardi made a motion to conclude Executive Session and return to Open Session, seconded by L. McKnight. The vote was approved 6-0.

Report of Votes

J. Duran reported on the votes of the executive session indicating that the minutes from the March 30, 2026 executive session meeting were unanimously approved as amended by the council members in attendance by a vote of 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Duran, Vice Chair

Note that Robert Patterson, District Clerk, was present at the May 20th meeting. He resigned after the May 20th meeting prior to preparing the minutes.

Minutes Approved on 06/17/2026