BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT
Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Monthly Meeting
130 Bonnet Shores Road
August 19, 2026
6:30pm

Meeting Minutes
(A recording of the Monthly Council meeting is available on the Fire District website – www.bonnetshores.org under "2026 Council Meetings – All")

Attendees:
John Chereskin, Tony Girardi, James Hill, Melissa Jenkins, Matthew Mannix, Leslie McKnight, Kevin O'Brien,

Call To Order:

Chair Chereskin called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a moment of silence.

Public Comment:

Sharon Doherty (57 Onondega Rd.) spoke about agenda item #4 Voting Rights Workshop Follow-Up. The workshop solicited input from the Beach Club and chose not to participate, to have the Beach Club Attorney make suggestions seems disingenuous, having a mediation for the parties to agree on a decision is a legal expense, this issue has been going on since 2019. Ms. Doherty suggested that the Council demonstrate it's good faith.

Brett Mistofsky and Renee Mistofsky (30 Salem Trail) addressed survey motion being approved at last month's meeting regarding adjacent lot to their property. B. Mistofsky was not aware of meeting and received no notification otherwise would have attended. Stated wetlands is his concern as well and has reached out to CRMC and not aware of any violation. R. Mistofsky addressed that she did not believe survey should be completed as discussions had regarding looking at reinforcing bars on property in fall to determine survey lines. B. Mistofsky provided satellite photo of his property of 2008 which has not changed or modified.

Nancy Cordy (240 Bonnet Point Rd.) requested Council reconsider vote of the survey that was approved last month. Impressed with the agenda and the items the Council is moving forward with. Would like to see the strategic plan in the future and to see the agenda put out before the 48 hours so community members can show up if they have something to say.

Nilza Sylvestre (24 Camden Rd) stated as the Clerk she agreed that the agenda be sent out earlier to post on SOS and posting locations.

Announcements:

Chair Chereskin will be designating Council Members to serve on seven committees as follows:

Beach/Safety
Communications
Finance
Harbor
Land Trust
Social
Trash

New and Ongoing Business:

1. **Approval of meeting minutes**
   a. **June 17, 2026**
   b. **July 8, 2026**
   c. **July 15, 2026**

The Council took up consideration of approval of the draft minutes of the June 17, 2026 Monthly Council meeting, the draft minutes of July 8, 2026 Organizational meeting and the draft minutes of the July 15, 2026 Monthly Council meeting that were distributed to the Council members before the meeting.

K. O'Brien made a motion to approve the June 17, 2026 Monthly Council meeting minutes and seconded by M. Jenkins. Motion approved 5-0 (J. Chereskin, T. Girardi, M. Jenkins, L. McKnight, K. O'Brien)
2 Abstain (J. Hill and M. Mannix)

M. Mannix made a motion to approve the July 8, 2026 Organizational meeting minutes and seconded by K. O'Brien. Motion approved 7-0

M. Mannix made a motion to approve the July 15, 2026 Monthly Council meeting minutes and seconded by J. Hill. Motion approved 7-0

2. **Reports**

Treasurer's Report – The Treasurer's report was submitted prior to the meeting. Raised $50,000.00 in revenue against $100,000.00 in expense and not go into capital reserve. A Land Trust bank account was established with their own EIN number now that they are a 501c3. In the Land Trust account they have $5,000.00 that rolled over and donations. Due to sorting out Land Trust and our bank accounts the bank suggested we should have a collateral agreement which all towns and municipalities that collect taxes have as additional insurance due to money we collect is largely tax dollars from the public and there is no cost to us and no real change. Working closely with Tax Collector on tax collection process from moving from checks to deposits and email strategy worked well. Camp revenue was $18,500.00 and will have final next month and some strategies going forward. Have reconciled the bills on Mega contract and the bills match to when the contract ended. July bills over $1000.00 were discussed.

Tax Collector's Report – Tax Collector delivered his report. Tax bills went out August 3, 2026 and as of this date 25 batches of checks received to date and processed in the amount of $227,269.51 and processed with Treasurer for bank deposit. An uptick of payments will most likely occur around mid September before the interest starts. Chair Chereskin will work with Tax Collector C. Mannix on a report he designed that will give Council a good snapshot of collections.

Land Trust Report – Land Trust Chair J. Fandetti delivered her report. Final two benches dedicated to the Marciano and Armstrong family at Little Beach have been completed and there is no more bench space at Little Beach. Tree limbs on Lake Road were cut and cleared due to windstorm. Attempting to fabricate a removable ramp for Camden Landing as has been discussed with CRMC. Once a plan is devised, specifics received it will be presented to Land Trust and Council for approval. As allowed Phragmites were cut twelve inches around the landing on all four sides. T-shirt sales were great and as of this date playground donations are around $18,000.00.

District Manager and Harbor Report – The District Manager submitted a written report and updates on District operations. Little Beach has been cleaned twice to date and will be cleaned every couple of weeks. The Harbor Master was present and Council had no questions regarding his report and feedback from Council was his report was excellent and very detailed. T. Kane had no questions for the Council.

3. The Never Dunne Foundation Request

Michelle Dunne (17 Fairport Ave) founder of the non profit Never Dunne Foundation provided proposal to counsel. First 5K held on May 31, 2026 and goal was met of 200 people and looking to make it an annual event. This event is a great opportunity for the Foundation, the Fire District and the community come together. M. Dunne requested that Council extend the use of Bonnet Shores Community Center on a complimentary basis. Motion motion made by M. Mannix to approve the event at a reduced rate and seconded by L. McKnight. M. Mannix made an amended motion to approve the event at a reduced rate of $200.00 and seconded by T. Girardi. Motion approved 7-0

4. Voting Rights Workshop Follow-Up

M. Jenkins asked for a point of order about the agenda item as it was not clear as what would be voted on as item is lacking detail and suggests Council not vote on this item. K. O'Brien stated that he was appointed by the Council to address this topic and the attachment is the Council topic that provides a lot of detail of the 4 diverse groups in the community: Residents, the Beach Club, a Plaintiff from the original court case as well as Seasonal Reidents who are constituents in this community. The committee update of options for the Council to consider is based on the April 2, 2026 Strategic Planning Workshop. Motion made by K. O'Brien to vote on the four things on the attachment. Motion was not seconded. No action taken.

5. Little Beach Access

Chair Chereskin asked the Land Trust to work on coming up with solutions for Little Beach. L. McKnight stated that CRMC will allow us to use the original drawings, renderings that were originally prepared by an engineer for the original ramp that was installed and use those specifications and

reapply to rebuild. Contractor, John Villanis was provided those specifications and presented to Council the diagram that could be rebuilt. Discussion had regarding ADA compliance, steps, ramp, temporary structure and back-fill. Anything outside the original design would have to go through a more intensive application with CRMC that could be lengthier. Chair Chereskin will reach out to Land Trust to come up with a proposal for engineering and estimate on the cost for next meeting. Due to obtaining an assent from CRMC this may be a lengthier process.

6. **Land Trust Grant**
    a. **Status of current Phragmites Study**
    b. **Possible additional Phragmites grant**

The Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund grant of $75,000.00 was awarded in fall of 2025 with a contribution in-kind of 25% ($25,000.00) from the Bonnet Shores Fire District which was executed on September 26, 2025. RFP submitted to DEM in November 2025 and awaiting response to use the Master Purchase Agreement for Rhode Island from DEM to post, select committee and choose a certified vendor and move forward.

A federally funded grant by U.S. EPA for reduction of Phragmites is Section 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Program Solicitation and is available in the total amount of $750,000.00 to be distributed to applicants who submit request with a deadline of October 16, 2026. P. Brousseau, Vice Chair of Land Trust informed Council that grant is going to address specific ponds, one being Wesquage Pond. The Phragmites removal would be done with no chemical solutions that can be quite expensive and Council would need to match 40% in-kind of the grant. Discussion had and M. Mannix made a motion to authorize the Land Trust and the Fire District to pursue the DEM grant with the October 16, 2026 application deadline and seconded by T. Girardi. Motion approved 6-0. M. Jenkins abstained.

7. **Replacement of District Manager**
    a. **District Manager job description**
    b. **Extension of September 15th end date for current District Manager**

Request for volunteers to participate in Search and Screen Committee was sent out. Received six volunteers. Two Council members, Treasurer and three from general public. Committee responsible for preparing job descriptions for two positions (District Manager and IT Administrator). It was decided to proceed with the District Manager position first. Review of the current job description was reviewed and a final draft job description was developed for feedback and to be posted. Motion made by K. O'Brien to approve and post the draft executive summary and the draft job description for District Manager and seconded by T. Girardi. Motion approved 6-0. M. Mannix abstained.

Discussion had regarding extending current District Manager's resignation date beyond September 15, 2026. Discussion had regarding on-boarding new hire or utilizing volunteers in interim of new hire. Current District Manager M. Gillooly stated he wants to stay on and is open to have has position extended 60-90 days with a requirement of his planned vacation and consideration of compensation. Chair Chereskin made a motion to have current District Manager stay on for an additional two (2) months at a compensation of $500.00 per month increase from what is being paid as of today. Seconded by T. Girardi. Discussion regarding the resignation date being the resignation date and there can be no conditions, if looking at volunteers to fill in interim it should be an elected official due to liability and out of country and in country vacation also addressed. Motion on table to have current

District Manager stay for an additional two (2) months at a compensation increase of $500.00 per month. Motion approved 4-3. Approved: J. Chereskin, T. Girardi, L. McKnight and K. O'Brien with J. Hill, M. Jenkins and M. Mannix dissenting.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by M. Mannix and seconded by K. O'Brien. Motion approved unanimously 7-0 and meeting adjourned.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Nilza Sylvestre, Clerk