



TOWN OF BARNSTABLE SANDY NECK BOARD

1189 Phinney's Lane
Centerville, MA 02632

Tel: 508-790-6272
Fax: 508-790-6275

Sandy Neck Board Meeting April 12, 2010

Chairman:

Richards French

Vice Chairman:

William Carey

Board Members:

Barbara Bell
Lynn Heslinga
Nate King
George Muhlebach
Peter Sampou

Council Liaisons:

Henry Farnham
Ann Canedy

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sandy Neck Board was held on April 12, 2010 at the Barnstable Town Hall, Selectmen's Conference Room, 367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA. The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm by Chairman Rich French.

Roll Call:

- Board Members present: Barbara Bell, Pete Sampou, Lynn Heslinga, George Muhlebach, Bill Carey and Rich French.
- Council Liaison: Hank Farnham
- Staff: Nina Coleman, Sandy Neck Park Manager, and Debbie Lavoie, Secretary Pro Tem.
- Public: Wendy Bowles, David Still, Paul Singley, Debra Nourse, Cheryl Letourneau, Mary Moquin, Doug Moquin, H.Lucille Moquin, Jey Smith, Pamela Buck, and Roger Buck.

Act on Minutes:

- On a **motion** by Barbara Bell and seconded by Pete Sampou, the Sandy Neck Board voted unanimously to approve the March minutes as printed.

Correspondence:

- See Old Business – Cottage Colony Guest Parking.

Staff Report:

Nina Coleman addressed the Board:

- The gatehouse is open every day from 9 am to 4 pm. ORV permit sales are “right on par” with last year.
- On March 20th, the Jeep Club helped with fencing. Great job.
- This year there will be more signage and enforcement on the point. Fencing is now up at point. New signs at boat ramps stress (1) no dogs off leach (2) stay off dunes (3) illegal shellfishing (must have Town of Barnstable shellfish permit and only allowed to dig on Wed/Sat/Sunday).
- Staff hired – almost completely staffed. Only need one more shorebird specialist. Almost 100% rehire from last summer.
- Plovers are back. Upwards from 13 birds. Still too early to tell where they will nest. Erosion area not good habitat but still do not know where they will settle. Wait and see. Too early to tell about location. State agencies saw the fencing and did not suggest more or different areas.
- Beach cleanup will be April 25th this year. MBBA will help. Cub scouts and boy scouts will also help. Board Members – wear your “Sandy Neck Board Member T-shirt”.

Old Business:

Bathhouse Update

Rich French addressed the Board:

- On March 2nd Rich French and Nina Coleman went before ConComm. They have the “OK”. But waiting for final approval from NHESP regarding the sidewalk which is in spadefoot toad habitat and within a vernal pool location. More information to follow but looks promising. Still can go forward with bathhouse while waiting for approval.
- Old Kings Highway meeting is on Wednesday, April 14th. [It was not cancelled]. Among other things, the sidewalk and red roof will be discussed.

Marsh Trail Update

Nina Coleman addressed the Board:

- This year's marsh trail work project is complete. Highway worked for three weeks. Big projects. Great job.
- Worked between trails 2 and 4. Had to stop at trail 4. Will do more next year.

The Board asked Rich French to send a note to the Highway Dept. to thank them for the great job done again with year.

Sandy Neck Board Appointments

Rich French addressed the Board:

- Bill Carey and Lynn Heslinga appointments will expire this year.
- Both members signed the paperwork and would like to be re-appointed to the board for three more years.

Cottage Colony Guest Parking Discussion

Rich French addressed the Board and the public:

At the last meeting, the Board voted to change the Sandy Neck Beach Management Policies with regard to guests of property owners. [see March minutes for details.] Three letters were received regarding this decision. (1) Pam Buck (2) Lucille Moquin (3) Cheryl Letourneau (on file).

The following is a brief outline of the Board's discussion:

Bill Carey: Not aware of other issues [that could indirectly affect parking] and perhaps this vote was an oversight. The guest parking has always been free and should continue since Barnstable Harbor has issues that may impact the cottage colony. Some parked at Barnstable Harbor and now may not have that parking available. Can this be put off and not implemented this summer? Are there other alternates? Cottage colony should have been told so they could have commented. Parking is valuable.

George Muhlebach: Is it a money issue? Is it only a convenience issue? Is there an estimate as to how much revenue will be lost by letting the guests use the spaces in the lot that could be for paying people?

Lynn Heslinga: Was a study done to show how many times the guests used the lot. Why are hikers allowed to park at the gatehouse for free?

Nina Coleman: (re: hiker parking) That was an agreement with Sandwich when they purchased a property for conversation; must have a few spaces for hikers.

Pete Sampou: Is free parking allowed for any other users of the beach? Does any other group have this privilege of free parking in the summer?

Barbara Bell: I use the beach with an ORV camper. I paid for my sticker. If I want guests to come, I meet them somewhere else or they pay for parking.

Pete Sampou: This was a privilege that may date back to a time when we had more parking spaces. Why should one user group be treated differently than another user group?

Bill Carey: Some people coming to visit, do not own town property so they do not have stickers or anywhere to park.

George Muhlebach: They can park in other places in town [for free] and get picked up. Like the municipal lots, bus stations, etc. It is not a budget issue – it is a fairness issue. Can we look into the dollar amount?

Pete Sampou: What does it cost to park?

Nina Coleman: The fee is \$15 per day or \$40 per week.

Pete Sampou: Forty dollars is not a lot to park for an entire week. Why should this group get free parking?

Lynn Heslinga: The cottage colony owns real estate and must be able to get their guests there. The vote from last month may have been taken too quickly. We should have more information. If hikers get free parking then so should the cottage owners. Cottagers help with clean up on the beach.

Barbara Bell: The tax payers in the Barnstable and Sandwich pay for their parking stickers. They should be treated fairly. All users need to be treated equally and fairly.

Bill Carey: Are there any additional parking areas? Maybe for this year?

At this point, Rich French opened the discussion to the public:

Paul Stingley asked why this came up. **Nina Coleman** answered that (1) there is an increase in beach usage and an increase in staff, (2) bigger fleet,(3) increased police parking and presence, (3) last summer over busy weekends there were not enough "free" spaces at the gatehouse for cottage owner's guest and they not happy (4) question of fairness to all beach users. Also this is for property owner's guest – not the owners themselves. None of this money goes to salaries.

Lucille Moquin is taking this personally. These are “her parking spaces” and her guests should not have to pay. How many people are we taking about? **Nina Coleman** explained that these spaces are for the marsh trail property owners as well and it is a number of cars per season – not just one or two people.

Deborah Nourse needs a space for her son because he owns the cottage. **Nina Coleman** stated again that this is for property owner’s guest only – not the owners themselves. He will not be charged – he is an owner - not a guest.

Hank Farnham: Stressed this is not taking away anyone’s rights. This is an enterprise account and the budget must be reasonable and attainable. But more important, this is an issue of fairness. Cottage owners are good stewards of the beach. He has reviewed the leases and they are fair and this is not an onerous endeavor. The taxes paid are fair. The Board is trying to maximize revenue in a fair manner. It is fairness issue. The parking can not be increased. That is not allowed by the State. If you [the public] can find a way to increase the parking – please let the Board know. Perhaps you could be part of the solution. The tax payers are not supporting Sandy Neck – it is an enterprise account.

Barbara Bell: Reminded everyone that the ORV sticker prices were increased this year. They are paying a higher portion. The property owner stickers were not increased.

Rich French: Agrees that Barnstable Harbor is undergoing major repairs this year. But there is other places to park and pick up people by boat. “It is what it is for this summer.” There is no room at Sandy Neck for free parking.

On a motion was made by Bill Carey and seconded by Lynn Heslinga to defer the vote of last month and delay implementation for one year. [For the record the vote last month was : **Guests of Property Owners Property** Strike out the sentence: **Property owner guests are always welcome to park at the Sandy Neck Gatehouse during visits.**]

Discussion: Lynne Heslinga would like to look for other parking spaces and see how much revenue would be lost. George Muhlebach stated he would not change his vote from last month. Pete Sampou felt that Bill Carey and Lynn Heslinga have a vested interest since they are cottage owners and he is concerned as to why they are allowed to sit on this issue and perhaps should recuse themselves. This might be a conflict of interest. Bill Carey stated that he personally does not use the spaces even though he is a cottage owner. He also feels the bulkhead problem at Barnstable Harbor may flow over to Sandy Neck.

At this time, Rich French felt there might be a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict. This is a valid concern. This motion was made and seconded by cottage owners. As Chairman, he is taking the motion off the floor. He will ask the Legal Department for a ruling. There will be no more discussion by Bill Carey and Lynne Heslinga until he finds out if there is a conflict.

Rich French asked the remaining Board Members if they would like to vote to defer this issue for one year. Barbara Bell, George Muhlebach and Pete Sampou stated they were not in favor of deferring this for one year and the motion from last month should stay and stand as voted. Nina Coleman stated it is a question of fairness to all users of the beach. She is mindful of the Barnstable Harbor construction but no one knows what impact that will have on the beach. She would support a deferral for one year if that is the decision of the Board as long as there is equity for all.

Rich French asked the remaining Board Members, if someone would like to make a motion to vote to defer this issue for one year. George Muhlebach made the motion but it was not seconded so it did not stand.

The Sandy Neck Beach Management Policies remain unchanged.

Rich French stated that he will speak to the Legal Department and put this cottage guest parking discussion back on the agenda for next month.

Report of the Taisto Ranta Memorial Committee

Barbara Bell addressed the Board

She and Nate King would like to suggest a rock with a plaque to honor Taisto Ranta. Perhaps placement near the new bathhouse. More information to follow.

New Business:

- none.

Public Comment:

Wendy Bowles spoke. MBBA will be at the beach clean on April 25th @ 9:30 am and will be available all day to help.

On May 21 – 23, MBBA will have a spring meet at Scusset Beach. Sandy Neck Board Members and staff are invited to their annual meeting on Sunday, May 22. She asked if Sandy Neck Staff could be present to sell ORV stickers. Nina Coleman will see if she has enough staff available and get back to Wendy.

Adjournment:

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Lavoie, Secretary Pro Tem