



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

March 12, 2012

Chairman:

Richards French

Vice Chairman:

William Carey

Board Members:

Barbara Bell
Lynn Heslinga
Nate King
George Muhlebach
Peter Sampou

Council Liaisons:

June Daley
Ann Canedy

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sandy Neck Board was held on March 12, 2012 at the Barnstable Town Hall, Hearing Room, 367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Chairman Rich French.

Roll Call:

- Board Members present: Barbara Bell, Nate King, Pete Sampou, Bill Carey, George Muhlebach, and Rich French.
- Council Liaisons: June Daley and Ann Canedy.
- Staff: Nina Coleman, Sandy Neck Park Manager; Douglas Kalweit, Natural Resources Supervisor; Matt Gough, Natural Resource Officer; and Debbie Lavoie, Secretary Pro Tem.
- Public: Many people were present but did not sign in. Those who did - are identified in these minutes.

Act on Minutes:

- On a **motion** by Barbara Bell seconded by Nate King, the Sandy Neck Board voted to approve the February minutes as printed. George Muhlebach abstained as he was not present at that meeting.

Correspondence:

- Open Meeting Law Correspondence from Ruth Weil, Town Attorney was distributed to the Board Members and is on file.

Staff Report:

Nina Coleman addressed the Board:

- The current stickers are good until April 15th. The new sticker applications went out and they are processing them now.
- Gatehouse will be open seven days a week starting April 1st.
- The beach looks good – which means it is “also good” for plovers – too early to tell – but be prepared.
- Most of the seasonal staff is returning. Hiring some new gatehouse staff and shorebird staff.

Old Business:

Marsh Trail Repair

Nina Coleman reported that work has started and must be completed before April 1st. They are using a different truck this year – need to see if it works well on the trail. Project is divided into two separate tasks. Good weather and tides predicted – time will tell.

ORV parking proposal for 2012

The PowerPoint presentation from last month's meeting was again explained by Nina Coleman. See February minutes for complete details. In summary, Nina Coleman explained that with the existing conditions, the campers and day trippers park on both sides of the ORV corridors. Some of the current problems are (1) Campers arrive before the weekend (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) and choose to park, for the most part, on the berm. (2) The majority of day trippers arrive on Saturday and have limited berm parking. (3) Day trippers are crossing the ORV corridor to reach their vehicles. She is proposing that the campers park along the rope and the day trippers park on the berm. The benefits of this arrangement are (1) Greatly reduces the amount of pedestrian/vehicular interactions as day tripper and camper's with families do not have to cross the ORV corridor. (2) Improves esthetics as campers obscure the ocean view. (3) Reduces high tide problems at night as campers are in a better location to avoid water. (4) Provides greater equality amongst user groups as it limits camper use to a fixed amount that is equal to day tripper use. Plus there will be a Family Camping Area (for families with children) after the ORV corridor where no vehicles will be driving. She is not in favor of one user group over another but rather looking for what is fair to all.

Public Comments:

Rich French asked for public comment regarding the parking proposal.

- Attached at the end is an email from **Diane Lomba**. She also spoke. She is not pitting one user group against another. She stressed that many people cross the ORV corridor and it is dangerous.
- **Michael Rolfe:** (1) parking on the dune side also put kids in danger, (2) speeding is a major concern (3) awnings in the ORV corridor is a concern, sometimes they are actually in the roadway and people have to weave around them.
- **Mark Dwyer:** (1) why are "day tripper children" treated differently than "camper children" as far as safety issues.
- **Pat Paquette:** (1) is there data about children (2) the layout for the family area looks small and not meaningful (3) alcohol is the number one issue on the beach (4) is there data for accidents and speeding (5) overcrowding is a major concern (6) more people from the public need to be involved in this discussion – could more information be given to the beach users before a decision is made – the entire beaching community needs to give their input (7) all children's safety is of concern.
- **Rebecca Emerson:** (1) speed is a big issue (2) she wants to park wherever she wants along the beach (3) do not put people in different user groups – it will cause animosity (3) not sure about family area.
- **Bob Cram** (1) leveling the camper along the dune will be an issue
- **Wendy Paquette:** (1) parents need to educate children regarding safety and crossing the ORV corridor (2) there is more traffic now than ever before (3) lower the speed limit (4) perhaps you should organize the chase vehicles better (5) does not like the family area – why should there be a separate area – families should be allowed anywhere (6) do not separate day trippers and campers – they should be together.

Sandy Neck Board Comments:

- **Nate King:** (1) when you park campers up near the dunes it is horrible at night - there is no breeze and it gets hot (2) could both the campers and day trippers be parked together in two lanes so no one would be crossing the corridor.
- **Bill Carey:** (1) corridor parallel to the dune would make sense – parking double or triple may make better use of the beach (2) if campers are in a congested area, people should know to slow down - but that is not happening – is more staff needed (3) safety is a major issue and needs to be addressed.
- **Rich French:** the speed limit needs to be looked at along the beach.
- **Matt Gough:** the regulations say the speed limit is not more than 15 mph however, but the limit is 5 mph along the access trail and along the ORV corridor. There are many big signs posting speed limits. Speed is a major issue - but staff can not be everywhere – people should continue to call the gatehouse if there are problems.
- **Rich French:** If there is a problem – call the gatehouse when it is happening – not after the fact.
- **Doug Kalweit:** (1) back in the 1970s there were no plovers and people parked all along the dunes (2) there are a lot of people at the beach and it could be overpopulated but you have to start somewhere – you are not going to solve all the problems but you cannot compromise safety (3) speeding is an issue (4) it is not just campers or day trippers – more is involved. (5) safety is the main issue.
- **Pete Sampou:** How many days is the beach overcrowded and no more vehicles are allowed on the beach?
- **Nina Coleman:** In response - All the weekends in July and most weekends in August and all of the July 4th holiday week. There are just too many vehicles on the beach and there will have to be some sort of restriction. This proposal is more equitable to all user groups. The suggestion of having different areas for day trippers and campers so that they can come and go and not be shut out because of crowding may work. She would have to look into that idea. She stressed that not all parents watch their children and that is another problem.
- **Ann Canedy:** (1) alcohol use on the beach is the major issue (2) asked if more staff could be hired.

- **Nina Coleman:** Staff can not be everywhere. This is only one issue staff deals with on a day to day basis. All staff is paid from the enterprise account - no staff is paid from the general funds. Barnstable Police Officers are hired for beach patrols on weekends over the summer.
- **Rich French:** Summarized (1) there is an issue that needs to be addressed (2) feedback is good [thank you] (3) this is a work in progress (4) alcohol is a problem and should not be allowed (5) speeding is an issue
- **Nina Coleman:** Will bring the new options to the next meeting which are: (1) all the vehicles on the berm and corridor would be up against the ropes and (2) portion of the beach for day trippers and portion for self contained.

New Business:

Cottage Colony Concerns

Rich French read the following email:

Last Thursday morning I met with Dan Horn and Joe Gibbs to discuss policy and safety issues related to the channel and mooring field near the Sandy Neck cottage colony. The meeting was very beneficial.

We managed to come up with an action plan that should be in place before the 2012 boating season. The plan will include a visit with cottagers to review the issues and various action steps to report violations, as well as designing a strategy for enforcement, when needed. We will also work to educate the cottagers on the jurisdictional issues confronting the harbor master.

On behalf of the Sandy Neck Colony Association, please alert the Sandy Neck Board that we appreciate your efforts, the efforts of the Harbor Master, and the efforts of the Board.

Steve Heslinga, Sandy Neck Colony Association, President.

Public Comment:

- Pat Paquette stated that not just big charter boats but also operators of small skiffs do not always operate their vessel properly. It is a busy channel.

Nina Coleman thanked Matt Gough for his service to the Town and Sandy Neck. He is going back to the west coast. He was an amazing worker and educator. Good Luck.

Adjournment:

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Lavoie, Secretary Pro Tem

Dear Nina and Sandy Neck Advisory Board,

Speaking as a beach user, I'm writing to you on the matter before for board for the proposed ORV parking policy.

I understand there is a serious parking problem on the beach the way things are now. However, I do not believe the proposed policy will make the situation better, is just seems to reverse an existing problem.

I would like you to take another look at what the problem really is.

The problem seems to be the section of beach between the access trail and trail 2. This is where it is extremely congested and safety seems to be in issue.

I understand at the beginning of the season, this is the only part of the beach that is open, making the situation much worse until the beach is able to open up further.

I have been out on the beach when this area looks more like a parking lot. I also notice, users are sometimes parked 3 or more deep on the water side of the ORV corridor.

I believe this is where safety is of the utmost concern. There is a row of self-contained vehicles (SCV) closest to the water. Then there are chase vehicles, day trippers and friends who park with no rhyme or reason. There are cars parked at all angles. A lot of times they are very close to the ORV corridor, making driving down the beach unsafe. Beach goers, being able to park every which way, are where the safety concern comes in. Although I'm a firm believer that parents need to be responsible for watching their children, it makes an unsafe situation where children have to weave around cars to get to the tracks to cross. I believe the problem isn't where the campers are parked but by the way vehicles are parked around them.

I would like to see the staff be more aware of this and implement a standard of parking that works and that will have to be enforced.

Moving the campers to the dune side will not solve this problem if all the non-campers are still allowed to park every which way.

I do have a few points I would like to make about why I would not like to see the new proposed policy put into effect.

If campers are on the dune side, where do they get to have their camp fires?

How do they open awnings without the fear of them getting hit by vehicles traveling down the beach?

What happen when a child or a dog comes out the door of the camper and the road is only feet away?

Campers do have to pay an extra fee for staying overnight.

Users with campers tend to go back and forth from the water to the camper more so then day trippers.

Day trippers tend to unload their stuff and a lot of times don't even go back in their vehicle until they are packing up to leave. They cross the corridor only to use the bathrooms throughout the day

Whereas people with campers are in and out of there campers all day for bathroom use, food or what have you. Every one with a camper is self-contained, and never has to cross the corridor at all. But by putting the campers on the dune side, now all these people need to cross back and forth all day, every time they need something and ultimately have the potential to cause more foot traffic in the corridor.

Although a family parking area at the end seems like a great idea, I don't think it's fair to have a place set aside for either families or non- families. The location of where people park should remain on a first come first served basis.

Thank you for your consideration

Diane Lomba South Yarmouth, Ma

Jeepgirl_90@yahoo.com