

TOWN OF SCITUATE BEACH COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes: May 10, 2023
Held remotely via Zoom

Attendees: Kelly Bower, Katie Dahlstrom, Andrea Ramsey, Richard Beekman

Absent:

Additional: Terry McCarthy, Michael Feehily, Ann Toran, Shawn Sullivan, Seth (Scituate TV), Corey Miles, Jeff (no surname provided).

Minutes:

1. Meeting called to order 6:05 pm. Motion by Andrea Ramsey; Second by Richard Beekman (3/0 in favor).
2. Meeting minutes from 4/12/2022 accepted. Motion by R. Beekman. Second by A. Ramsey (3/0 in favor).
3. Beach Entrance Signage – Abutter Notification: Kelly shared presentation to explain that the beach commission would like to post 6 new signs at the official Scituate beaches. These would be hand carved mahogany, painted white & blue, and feature the Sea Scituate logo. These will be mounted by the DPW on PVC posts. A picture of the proposed design at each beach was shared and abutters asked to bring forward any concerns or questions.
 - Shawn Sullivan (128 Jericho Rd) – Concern: Museum Beach sign looks to be next to the existing sign. This is the entry to the beach walkway. With the proposed size, it may make sense to go further down the street, so the walkway access is not impacted. Kelly said this will be reviewed.
 - Michael Feehily (119 Jericho Rd) – Concern: Traffic at Museum Beach. There is no parking, so people will pullover to load/unload, resulting in congestion. He is wondering if this sign will cause more traffic. Kelly responded that it's difficult to predict if this will draw more people, or if it will simply provide more beauty to the area. Michael stated that Damon Rd is where congestion is highest; and in his opinion a potential dangerous area. There was a no parking sign, but it seems to have been taken down years ago. The sign should perhaps be re-posted to help with parking. Kelly asked if Damon Rd is a common parking spot. Michael stated it is used for parking, but only an issue if cars are too close to the intersection. Kelly will mention concerns regarding the lack of No Parking sign.
 - Ann Toran (7 Holmes St): Question: how did we determine where the sign will be located for Humarock? Kelly responded that the intention is to help identify the beach entrances; It was originally proposed to be on the strip of town owned land at the each beach entrance. For Humarock, the Select Board decision is to identify the parking lot.
 - Terry McCarthy (115 Jericho Rd) – declined to speak.

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4. Beach Cleanups – Ship Shape Day – There was a wonderful turnout and good weather. Some of the beach commission was able to participate. Flyers were posted to announce beach cleanup dates. It was at Ship Shape Day and at the Get to Greenbush event. Potential Community Sponsorships: Kelly is in favor, but wants funding solicitation to be towards specific items. Katie clarified that this is less about funding and more about engagement & awareness to increase community involvement. For example, Funtastics contributed supplies and materials for the beachgrass planting at Peggotty. Other organizations may want to engage. Andrea agrees with Katie that it will help with community engagement. Kelly suggested sponsors provide payment for pizza. Katie proposed that the sponsors would help advertise too. For instance, the town email list only circulates to ~1,500 people; town social media posts are limited circulation. A business such as Funtastics could send an email to all of their clients: it could get more parents / teachers / grandparents / etc to come participate. Kelly would rather this be a partnership than a sponsor. Richard suggested we propose that the business is our partner for the event: the business will advertise the event & pay for pizza. Kelly suggested we have one group per event. All agreed that one partner per event was a good plan. Kelly stated that the current flyer is a Save the Date and she will have individual flyers for each cleanup. Andrea suggested the individual flyers continue to list the future dates. Katie is going to reach out to Funtastics; they were willing to engage with the Beachgrass planting. She thinks Untold Brewery would be willing to help sponsor too. Kelly mentioned that Ship Shape day had sponsors (Untold Brewery was one). Andrea suggested Mullaney's might be another business to approach, and she will reach out.
Andrea asked about delegation of tent / tables / drinks. For June at Minot, Katie will be able to bring something.
5. Katie: update from convo with Andrew Goodrich (Select Board): He wants us to think about removal of seaweed ahead of 4th of July holiday. There have been restrictions to removal in the past. DPW cannot do it because of lack of manpower. Mike Cotter from the Scituate Beach Association may be able to assist (he owns a landscaping company and would have equipment). Andrea asked if this is proposed for the holiday only. Katie responded that per Andrew, there are workarounds for the normal seaweed removal restrictions. Kelly suggested it may be unlawful to remove. Corey – stated she is not aware of legal implications, but the Board of Health has a policy. Seaweed can be removed, but must be agreed upon by Recreation, Conservation, DPW, etc. It would take some effort.
Board of Health Seaweed Removal Policy is attached to meeting notes.

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Based upon initial review the Beach Commission is not part of the process governing seaweed removal, nor would the Beach Commission have influence. Katie will inform Andrew this is outside our scope.

6. Coastal Management Update: Corey Miles:

- Minot Beach Renourishment: The engineer is doing a revised design based on the funding we have. When material is first deposited on the beach –it will be a darker, brownish tan color; with time it will be bleached by sun and waves. It is compatible with the current sand material, but the visual may be of concern to some residents. For an example go to the Duxbury Beach Reservation – they just did a beach renourishment project and it looks amazing. It was the first time she had seen this mixed sediment size & it turned out wonderful. (The Duxbury Beach reservation has been proactive on dune restoration & renourishment.)
- Cole Parkway redevelopment: They are waiting on the topography data & will then hire an engineer to design improvements: drainage system, regrading of the parking lot, and raising of seawall. There is a significant amount of work to be designed / engineered prior to action. The scope of work is being finalized now.
- Pier 44 project: CPC funding received at town meeting. There was some objection to funding being awarded based on vehicular parking: the new park will reduce the number of spaces. Striving for a balance between parking spaces allowing resident access and open area for people to use. A significant amount of permitting & engineering will be needed. The permitting will start next month – which could take nearly a year. It is hoped construction will commence fall 2024, pending permitting. We're improving the site & removing some impervious surface, which will help.
- Other projects: Peggotty Beach has a homeowner that is moving half of their house to another location; Splitting the house in half.
- Sand Hills Seawall: this is hung up with permitting because CZM needs town commitment to do beach nourishment in front of the seawall. The town scope is causing delays.

7. Beach Reports:

- Peggotty Beach: Richard's Update: Mutt Mitts are in full supply. We've talked about neighbors taking sand: he recently took video of a huge vehicle taking sand from behind the house & moving to the front of the house. The beach is clean and the seagrass looks good. Corey stated some of the residents have permission to move sand from behind their house to the front of their house (to clear parking). They are supposed to get a permit. As an fyi, the Coastal Advisory Commission has discussed sending letters to homeowners about

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unpermitted sand movement. But the role of the commission is to advise the Select Board, not to enforce rules with residents. Enforcement needs to be from Conservation or Police. Richard also noted that new No Parking signs and new Dune Protection signs have been posted.

- Minot: Andrea's update: Beach is clean, but there are no mobi matts or trash cans yet. The mutt mitts are also empty. It's not prepared for summer yet.
 - Humarock Beach: Katie's update: Humarock looks good. It is not fully set up yet either (no mobi matts). She recently connected with Ann Toran (Head of South Humarock Association) and had an excellent conversation. The Humarock Beach Improvement Association is no longer in existence (it ended with Covid). The South Humarock Association is going to try to be a community association for all of Humarock. Ann stated the association would like to start doing more civic activities: they are interested in cleanups, beachgrass plantings, etc.
 - Mutt Mitts Update: Andrea connected with the Friends of the Scituate Dog Park. The mutt mitts available at the Scituate Dog Park are self-funded and self-filled by Friends of Scituate Dog Park. Katie added that Ann mentioned Humarock teenagers might be willing to do waste bag filling as part of their community service hours.
8. Resident Survey: Kelly revised per our suggestions. She would like more review prior to publishing. She is unable to add open fields (except for Other) in the free version of Survey Monkey. Richard looked at Google Forms and believes it's a good alternative and may be more robust. Richard will be willing to take survey and input into Google Forms. Katie found a mention of a previous survey done in Aug 2016 that might have information we can use if we can find the results.
9. Sunrise Beach Sticker Proposal: Katie connected with Andrew Goodrich (Select Board). This was an idea between a few Select Board members to support local businesses, rather than a revenue driver. He thought to limit to ~100 stickers and make them cheap: the pass would allow parking from Sunrise to ~9 am. His other thought was to have a cool design, that people would see on a car; it would advertise Scituate. Katie also discussed with him if there is a need for off season or early morning parking. Both agreed that enforcement of the beach sticker parking was a separate discussion. They also talked about a Day pass. Andrew wasn't even aware that Peggotty Beach had a day pass (which allows Tuesday or Thursday parking for the day at Peggotty). Katie connected with the Harbor Master; 8 passes were sold last summer. Andrew believes there will be resistance if we expand a Day pass to the weekend, but suggested reviewing weekday (Monday through Friday) and enable access to all beaches. Katie also researched Airbnb reviews and observed there are lots of critical reviews of people

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who rented and were unaware they needed a town sticker to use the beach. Many complained of getting ticketed as the signage is unclear, etc. Andrew agreed that he has heard this complaint from landlords and noted the rental business in Scituate is a big business. Both agreed this could be an opportunity.

Sunrise sticker: Katie suggested that maybe we could share with another town. Could help with awareness. Andrea disagrees with this premise. The beaches are well known locally, and the 9 am end time won't help businesses. Individuals may purchase a coffee, but would not be able to go shopping or dine in restaurants. The sunrise sticker is useful for surfers or fishermen. Richard had talked with Conor about the new police scanning program – this new way of checking passes is in a pilot program this year; if the police are checking and ticketing, these special passes could work well. Andrea mentioned non-resident parking spots at Peggotty are always filled. Katie suggested we could explore and perhaps pilot a small number of weekday passes to see how it works. It is very easy to discontinue if the program has issues. We need to decide the scope of the sticker: sunrise vs day pass. If the goal is to provide an economic incentive – the day pass is a better solution to that. Kelly is in favor of day pass. She also questions the sunrise sticker usefulness. Richard likes that the day pass would include other beaches beyond Peggotty. Andrea suggests we exclude holidays such as the week of 4th of July. Corey suggested we contact the Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Commission; they might have recommendations and/or help support. Kelly suggested connecting with the Scituate Visitors Center too. Katie will draft some bullet points to capture the basis for the pass and then run by other groups. Kelly to send template for presentation for Katie's use.

10. QR Sticker: Richard talked with Conor. The DEI Commission said "keep us posted" and didn't want immediate involvement. The QR sticker could be both a translation tool for the beach rules and provide more information about the beaches (historical and/or scientific). Portuguese and Spanish and English (for learn more). We'd need QR code permission and a host for the form. He's reaching out to the town to determine if they will host. All agree a historical or scientific perspective is an awesome addition.
11. Floating wheelchair: Richard is now the Expert! He went to the Recreation department and overheard a phone call request for a floating wheelchair in July. He was able to speak with Nick Lombardo. Per Nick, the recreation department normally receives 10-12 requests per year for all 3 wheelchairs. The quantity of floating wheelchairs is sufficient; however promotion of the floating wheelchairs would be appreciated. Humarock's floating wheelchair is the oldest; it looks worn but is in full working condition. To use: a floating wheelchair must be signed out (for liability purposes) and

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be called into the Rec Department 1 day in advance. People have picked up themselves and Rec has also delivered.

Visibility / Promoting: when the Humarock wheelchair was originally purchased, the Town advertised, but they have not done further advertising. The Rec department is not worried about too many applicants. Rec department would recommend replacing Humarock wheelchair prior to adding another chair. Based on this discussion, Richard has not re-approached the Disabilities Commission. Kelly thinks we need to figure out a way to promote awareness. Katie & Andrea agree. Katie suggested an easy promotion would be to send a flyer to all beach associations; as the town email isn't well circulated. Andrea suggested that the Disabilities commission may have some ideas to improve awareness of the availability of floating wheelchairs.

12. Bike Racks: Andrea met with Nancy Werner to review potential bike rack locations at Peggotty, Egypt, and Minot. (Nancy is working to form a Scituate Bike Commission and currently working on the charter for the Select Board to approve.) We reviewed locations and also the type of bike racks. As a group we need to decide if we want a more utilitarian bike rack (commercially made model) vs an aesthetically unique bike rack (Vocational School fabricated). Andrea is working on pricing to help us make an informed decision.

Egypt: already has 3 bike racks in good shape. If additional were added the cross hatched Northeast corner is a good location. However, it is utilized by the port-o-potties in the summer months. Katie added that the port a potties came up in her conversation with Andrew. The Select Board may pilot at Egypt a rented bathroom that is more typical to an outdoor event. There is a company in Hingham that would provide 3rd party cleaning. If this is successful at Egypt, it could be expanded to other beaches. Andrew stated the beach sticker pricing would likely be impacted if the bathroom pilot is successful, as that would be the funding source. Jim Boudreau is currently working on a rental contract.

Peggotty and Minot: the best location in each parking lot is currently occupied by designated Lifeguard parking spaces; they have the best parking at both beaches. Nancy is going to approach the Recreation Department to discuss if one of the Lifeguard spaces could be adjusted at each parking lot to allow for bike rack placement. The desire is to have bike racks with close proximity to the beach. If Recreation is amiable to a modification, we will review with the DPW and Conservation.

Nest step – Andrea has a meeting set up with DPW to review costs / labor / participation / potential locations.

13. Beach Association Social: Katie solicited Ann to gauge if they are interested and received positive feedback. Ann offered the Humarock clubhouse. Kelly appreciated

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the offer, but thought Humarock's location may deter participation. She still likes Peggotty Beach as a location. Katie noted that parking in Humarock is difficult as well. Richard raised a concern with alcohol if the social is held at the beach. Katie is still looking at sites: she plans to contact Untold Brewery or another business with a cash bar. The target date is Thursday, 6/29. Kelly also announced that the budget approved last year (\$100) may no longer be valid. At present we are hoping the beach commission could sponsor appetizers and attendees could purchase beverages themselves.

14. Next meeting: June 14 at 6 pm via Zoom.
15. Meeting closed 7:36 pm. Motion by Kelly; Second by Kate (4/0 in favor).