

## TOWN OF SCITUATE BEACH COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes: October 12, 2022  
Held Remotely via Zoom

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**Attendees:** Kelly Bower, Richard Beekman, Conor Doherty (*partial*), Kate Dahlstrom  
(*Absent: Andrea Ramsey*)

**Additional:** Geoff Hunt, Brenda Hunt, and Brian Taylor (*partial*)

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1. Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm. Motion by Richard Beekman. Second by Kate Dahlstrom. (All in favor)
2. Introduction of new member Kate Dahlstrom. Kate provided background information on her experience and interest in the Beach Commission. Commission extended a welcome.
3. Meeting minutes from September 14, 2022 accepted. Motion by Richard Beekman. Second by Kate Dahlstrom. (All in favor)
4. Introduction of guests Geoff and Brenda Hunt to discuss Peggotty Beach dunes and fencing. The Hunts live on Peggotty Beach and volunteer to help with maintenance of dunes and fencing. They provided background on their interests and perspectives, namely that they chose to live on barrier land which comes with risk and responsibility. They believe residents have an ownership as well as the Town to maintain the land. They expressed gratitude for being invited to the discussion and noted they would like to see money specifically allocated to the Beach Commission for projects. They indicated they are happy to do physical work (planting, fencing) but would like to see budget allocation for beaches for protection, nourishment, and prioritization of Town activities to replenish the beaches following seasonal storms. Kelly Bower reminded them that the Beach Commission is not responsible for activities such as beach nourishment and the goal is to coordinate efforts between the Town and the residents to optimize outcomes.
5. Coastal Management Update not provided as Corey Miles unable to attend meeting.
6. Introduction of guest Brian Taylor, Environmental Educator for North and South Rivers Watershed Association (NSRWA), to discuss Peggotty Beach beachgrass planting.
  - a) Date has been set for November 5, from 9 a.m. to noon (rain date November 6, 9 a.m. to noon). Ten thousand culms will be delivered in advance; Kelly Bower and Corey Miles will store the plants in a trench prior to planting.
  - b) NSRWA set up a registration page on their web site and provided a QR code. They will promote the event to their community to assist in seeking volunteers. Brian Taylor will provide education at the event. The goal is to build the resiliency of the dune and to help protect the community from the impacts of flooding. Brian suggested that the NSRWA ecologist could assess the site for the best planting area in advance. Kelly Bower shared that a map was established by

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Corey Miles that indicates the area scoped for planting. The Select Board has approved this area. Brian will review the map and align prior to the event.

- c) Kelly Bower spoke with Lorraine Devin who will promote the event on the Town Facebook page to help build awareness; Kelly also shared with local papers, Scituate High School Environmental Club, Boy Scouts, Beach Associations, Beautification Commission, Scituate Garden Club.
  - d) Geoff Hunt asked about timing of planting and whether there was a difference between Fall and Spring plantings. Brian Taylor explained that the species, American beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*), is the same regardless of season and because the roots establish quickly, there is no difference in outcome as long as the plantings are done with enough time to take hold before frost conditions. Geoff reiterated the expectation that some of the grasses will not survive the Winter and Spring conditions on Peggotty Beach. Brian responded that even if the grasses are buried, the plants will continue growing in these conditions. He emphasized that every plant adds to the resiliency of the entire system and that building awareness about the dune systems is equally important. Even if the plants do not survive the year, it is still worth the effort in preservation.
  - e) Brian Taylor will update the Commission on progress in registration numbers.
7. Kelly Bower reviewed the outcomes of the Select Board presentation on October 4, 2022::
- a) Select Board unanimously approved the revised Beach Commission charge.
  - b) Select Board supports the Beach Entrance Signage proposal pending design approval. Board feedback suggested that the design align more closely with existing Scituate signage. Kelly applied for Community Preservation Funds to finance the signs.
  - c) Select Board unanimously approved installation of NOAA Dune Protection Signage at Museum and Peggotty Beaches. Installation planned for May 2023.
  - d) Select Board unanimously approved the Peggotty Beachgrass Planting project and agreed that the Town would fund the project.
  - e) Select Board unanimously approved installation of Cleanup Stations at Minot and Egypt Beaches. The Cleanup Stations are a donation by Scituate Trashed. Installation planned for May 2023.
8. Beach Association Outreach
- a) Kelly Bower proposed a mixer with the Beach Associations. Conor Doherty asked what kind of funding or sponsorship would be available. Kelly indicated that this would need to be determined; she will talk to Recreation about the possibility of funds via the Beach Sticker Revolving Fund. Potential locations were discussed. Kelly talked to Michele Seghezzi about the Maritime Center but

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it is closing for the season. Michele suggested the Library Community Room. Kelly mentioned the Drift In (restaurant leased from town at Widow's Walk). Kate Dahlstrom proposed the Scituate Community Center or Untold Brewing. The Commission agreed that it is important to support a local business. Conor raised the possibility of partnering with Untold Brewing to create a Beach Commission brew to raise awareness for beach preservation. Kate suggested attendees could provide suggestions on naming at the event to engage the Beach Association community in the project. Kelly will follow up with Untold Brewing.

- b) Timing was discussed. The Commission agreed that the event should happen before Thanksgiving to avoid interference with the holiday season. Date tentatively set for Tuesday, November 22, 5 to 7 p.m.
9. Mobi Mats, Mutt Mitts, Trash Cans, Cleanup Stations
- a) Kelly Bower stated that the Community Preservation Funds application for Mobi Mats for Sand Hills Beach was approved at the Special Town Meeting. The mats have been ordered and delivered to Town Hall.
  - b) Kelly Bower gave an update on Egypt Beach status. Three portable toilets were knocked over by the wind in the last storm. Boardwalk, water safety station, and portable toilets have been removed for the season.
  - c) Conor Doherty gave an update on Minot Beach status. Lots of sand blown in – beach quiet, no trash. Trash cans were still present.
  - d) Conor Doherty indicated that he needed to visit Sand Hills to assess current status.
  - e) Richard Beekman gave an update on Peggotty Beach status. Kelly Bower noted that hummocks of seaweed had been pushed in as a result of the recent storm. Richard was surprised that the four portable toilets have not been removed. Trash barrels have been reduced to two. Town has been removing people's trash disposed of there (beach chairs) in a timely manner. Geoff Hunt indicated the sand blowers came today to push sand back to the beach entrance. In addition to the beachgrass planting project, the group discussed the plan that Corey Miles envisions for the redesign of the dune fencing that will help to build resiliency. Currently there are 300 feet of fencing (six rolls @ 50 feet/roll) that will be stored by the Department of Public Works until Spring. This fencing will be used as part of Corey's plan. Brenda Hunt requested money for plantings and money to buy more fencing; Geoff reviewed the needs for fencing at Peggotty.
  - f) Kate Dahlstrom indicated that she needed to visit Humarock to assess current status and complete the Amenity Enhancement Worksheet. Kate has made

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contact with the South Humarock Civic Association through Instagram and will plan to meet with the president and/or members to discuss needs and ideas.

### **10. Sunrise Beach Sticker**

- a) Conor Doherty will take over this project following Deborah Ceccarini's departure from the Commission. Kelly Bower will transfer knowledge and documents. Kelly asked Conor to follow up with Andrew Goodrich as there may be an opportunity to clarify the need and the purpose of the Sunrise Beach Sticker. Conor indicated that once the police transition to electronic scanning of parking stickers, enforcement is likely to increase. Conor to follow up with Chief Thompson and Pam Avitabile.

### **11. Bike Racks**

- a) Richard Beekman indicated that Andrea Ramsey is working on this and will update in the next meeting.

### **12. Floating Wheelchairs**

- a) Richard Beekman spoke to Megan Sommer from the Commission on Disabilities and confirmed that there are four floating wheelchairs, however only three are usable. The unusable wheelchair is in storage. Richard and Megan agreed that if the storage issue at Minot could be solved, one of the wheelchairs could be placed there. Richard needs to follow up with Megan for a more thorough conversation and will update in the next meeting.

### **13. QR Sticker Proposal**

- a) Kelly Bower and Conor Doherty have discussed the need for signage language translations and agree that it should be a Town wide initiative and not just for beach signage. Currently all Town signage is printed only in English. Conor suggested this is an initiative to be done in collaboration with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee with the Beach Commission driving the goal for the Town to follow.

### **14. Amenity Enhancement Worksheet**

- a) Kelly Bower confirmed that the Amenity Enhancement Worksheet will become the new long-term working plan. Kelly would like to walk each beach with the responsible member, taking notes and photos for potential improvements, and will follow up to schedule meetings.

### **15. Bathroom Amenities**

- a) Kelly Bower is in the process of gathering data on possible bathroom options and evidence of need. One option to consider is a prefabricated bathroom. Two toilets are approximately \$200,000 and two toilets and a shower are approximately

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\$320,000. Kelly indicated that the benefit of a prefabricated option is not only cost but timeline to set up as the system is already designed and delivered on 8 inch concrete slab. She emphasized that we also need to consider the impact of construction in this protected area; a prefabricated option would help to minimize this impact. Conor Doherty pointed out that these options do not allow for storage for wheelchairs. Kelly clarified that the initial pricing is simply a baseline for discussion; storage is an option that can be discussed and added to the estimate. Geoff Hunt indicated that PODs come to Peggotty Beach to pick up lifeguard equipment for the winter, which could be a possible long term storage option for the wheelchairs. Richard Beekman noted that the Recreation Center currently houses the wheelchairs long term and the challenge is beach storage during the summer months.

### 16. Schedule next meeting

- a) Members agreed that the next meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday, November 9, at 6 p.m.

### 17. Any other business that could reasonably come before the Beach Commission

- a) Kelly Bower asked if anyone knows what is needed in order to revive the Memorial Program. Other members indicated no. Kelly will follow up.
- b) Kelly Bower proposed a film series titled "Scene In Scituate" – focusing on films that have a connection to Scituate for a monthly movie night on our beaches during the summer months. Richard Beekman indicated that there are other organizations that show movies and he questions the draw for attendance. The Commission agreed to continue discussion.
- c) Kelly Bower raised the idea of "Beachside Chats" – partnering with local organizations to host an educational series on our beaches. Kate Dahlstrom agreed that this could be a great child-focused event, partnering with non-profits to support the educational component and marketing the events through the Scituate Library as well as social media platforms focused on parents looking for activities to do with their children on the South Shore. The Commission agreed to continue discussion.
- d) Kelly Bower raised the idea of making our public meetings accessible via Scituate Community TV Facebook Live and YouTube channel. The Commission is in favor.

### 18. Annual Election of Board

- a) Kelly Bower initiated the discussion to conduct the annual election of the Scituate Beach Commission Board.

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- i. Clerk – Kelly Bower motioned to appoint Andrea Ramsey as Clerk. Richard Beekman seconded the motion. (All in favor)
  - ii. Vice Chair – Richard Beekman motioned to appoint Conor Doherty as Vice Chair. Kelly Bower seconded the motion. (All in favor)
  - iii. Chair – Richard Beekman motioned to appoint Kelly Bower as Chair. Kate Dahlstrom seconded the motion. (All in favor)
19. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m. Motion to adjourn by Kelly Bower. Second by Richard Beekman. (All in favor)