

BONNET SHORES DISTRICT MANAGER - MONTHLY REPORT

July 2021

1. Administration –

A. Annual Meeting – As you know, the Annual meeting was held at the end of June. I wanted to note a few things about the meeting as there are a number of new council members (and a new clerk) who may want to “store” the information for next year. This year’s 1 meeting was a **MAJOR** undertaking as it was not only held during a pandemic, but was also held for the first time outdoors at the Community Center **AND** without the guidance/input/support of a District Clerk. To say it was a tremendous undertaking is an understatement. There are many elements involved in the meeting from the “Admin” work needed (ballot printing, newsletter writing, printing & distribution, newspaper advertisement, proxy distribution, volunteer coordination, etc.) to the “Logistical” work (tent, tables, chairs, sound, electricity, lighting, parking, etc.) In the future, if the meeting is to be held at the Community Center, the clerk will need ALOT of help and I would respectfully suggest you may want to form a committee and task members with various duties as it is simply too much work for 1 or 2 people. I would note that while having the meeting at the Beach club was not possible this year, it was MUCH easier, MUCH more manageable and MUCH LESS COSTLY to have it there. If unable to do so in the future I would strongly suggest that planning for the Annual meeting begin 6-8 weeks in advance to allow for all of the work and deadlines that need to be met. I would also note that although more than 600 people attended and there were no major issues, I believe something needs to be done to change/improve the “Check-In” system. The check in could have gone much smoother and faster had there been more clerks to check people in. Currently, by-laws only allow for (3) clerks but I would suggest you may want to look at changing this if possible, and at a minimum, perhaps assign 1-2 “assistants” to help each clerk with the check in process to help facilitate things. Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge all of the time and effort that Janice McClanaghan put into this year’s meeting. She worked long and hard for *weeks* prior and the meeting literally would not have happened had it not been for her!

B. Overgrown Brush/Private residences– I have been working with the Narragansett DPW staff to address overgrown brush at various residences throughout the district. In some cases, the overgrown brush is unsightly while in other cases, it has posed a hazard in terms of vehicular safety. I have issued several notices asking residents to trim/maintain brush and many have obliged. In a few instances, the matter has not been resolved so the Town DPW brought in their own equipment and trimmed bushes and shrubs as needed. I would note that it was brought to my attention today that 2 accidents occurred in the same area of Bonnet Point Rd and Old Town Trail and both resulted in cars going off the road and onto a resident’s front lawn. I spoke to the Town regarding this matter and they advised they had cut back the brush at this intersection just last week (but may have been after the incidents occurred) I asked about the possibility of placing boulders along the road as it appears speeding was also a factor in the cars leaving the road but I was told the town “Would probably not approve the placement of boulders”. I also asked that the DPW staff check the area again to be sure there are no obstructions as you enter/ exit and they did so late today and advised there are no obstructions.

C. Watermain break (Bonnet Point/Col John) – As you may know there was another water main break a few weeks ago at the top of Bonnet Point Road/Colonel John. A few homes suffered flooding damage and notified the district about the fact that this is NOT the first time this same section of piping has broken. As such, I contacted Suez water to talk about the issue on behalf of the property owners (who also contacted them) since the pipes are the sole responsibility of Suez. (NOTE: I also contacted the Town DPW who confirmed they have nothing to do with the pipes). We spoke about the fact that this is not the first time this section has broken and that Suez needs to do a *replacement* of the pipe and not just a *repair* as the residents in the area have experienced significant lose and inconvenience. After my conversation I was advised that Suez will now put this project “at the top of their list” and “will find the money they need to replace the pipe but it may take a few weeks as it was not budgeted”. I will stay on top of the situation as it appears the “District” getting behind the residents had some influence on Suez agreeing to a “replacement” of the pipe rather than another “repair”.

D. “APRA” requests – I had 2 APRA requests which I responded to and provided all requested documents well within the 10 days allowed by law.

E. “MEGA” accident– I received a report that a MEGA trash truck struck a street sign with the automated arm and caused the sign to fall into a parked vehicle breaking the windshield and denting the hood. The resident contacted me to ask if I could get in touch with MEGA as they were non-responsive to his request for reimbursement for the cost of all associated repairs. I spoke to our MEGA rep today who advised she would look into the matter and get back to me. I will stay on top of this and advise accordingly.

2. Facilities

A. Community Center -

1. Rentals – The CC building is now available for rent and has been used a couple of times for events (collations, parties, etc.) For those who may not know, the building can be rented by Bonnet residents for \$350 (\$250 for rental fee and \$100 for cleaning). I have coordinated with our new cleaning company (Oakley Services) to have the building cleaned and sanitized after each use and I am very happy with the job they have done so far.

2. Basketball Court/”Pickleball” – As you know, I received a request from a resident to use the basketball court to play “pickleball”. It’s my understanding this matter will be discussed at your meeting so I would just say that it won’t be any problem administratively to allow for this activity should the council approve it. In terms of “liability”, it’s no different than people playing basketball or using the playground. You have general liability insurance which would cover any accidents/incidents. I will await guidance on this matter.

B. Kelly Beach –

1. Staffing – It was *extremely* challenging to find lifeguards this year (as it is every year) but with the pandemic and all-around work shortage in the country, this year was **exceptionally** difficult. We are fortunate to have enough guards to be open with staff 7 days a week and I hope to be able to continue to do so for the remainder of the summer (barring any staff “issues” or changes). I would note that

“recruiting” this year included our putting together a training class to allow for new guards to get certified and in addition, we included a \$200 sign on bonus, uniform reimbursement, and paid breaks, all of which cost little in the grand scheme of things but has resulted in our having lifeguard protection while lessening liability and exposure for the district. I would also note that we are having our FIRST EVER drill and training session TONIGHT (Tuesday) at 5pm with all lifeguards to practice rescues, missing person procedures, and other important procedures to not only sharpen skills but also to have documented records of the training which would be beneficial in the event of staff related claims.

2. Beach Tags – Beach tags continue to be an “issue”. A number of residents have either lost the tags which were issued a few year ago or are new residents to Bonnet and were not given the tags upon purchase. I have dealt with many people, some of whom have been “less than pleasant” when advised that there are no “replacements” issued for missing tags and that the only option for replacement is a 1 time, 1 tag, \$100 policy. I’m not sure what the plan is for tags going forward but I wanted to share that in addition to many complaints, we only have 50 tags left to distribute which will mean if the program/policy is to continue next summer new tags will need to be purchased.

3. Maintenance and Repairs –

a. Boardwalk - Phil Smith was kind enough to spend a couple of hours this past week building the sand up at the end of the boardwalk so there was less of a “drop” down to the beach. He has done this a few times as the wind and people walking on/off the boardwalk causes the sand to be moved thereby requiring it to be replenished.

b. Flag system – I initiated a new “flag system” at the beach this summer whereby warning flags can be posted to advise swimmers as to conditions. Flags in various colors (red = closed, yellow = caution, red/white = rip currents/rough surf) are now posted at the head chair to not only warn swimmers of conditions but are also a valuable “tool” in terms of limiting exposure and liability for the district. These came in very handy this past weekend when the fog was extremely thick which resulted in guards closing the beach temporarily. I would note this is especially important when the BSBC puts out red flags to close their swimming areas. If we did not do the same, I imagine it could be “used against us” in a court of law.

c. Trash & Seaweed Removal – I met with Mike Rennell (BSBC Manager) to discuss clearing of seaweed and removal of trash at the times the channel is flowing. Mike assured me the club would “find a way” to get the trash barrels emptied and seaweed removed without regard for the stream flowing...and they have. I have personally witnessed the work being done and would like to thank and compliment Mike and the staff at the Beachclub for all of their hard work to keep Kelly Beach clean for visitors!

C. Little Beach –

1. Seaweed Removal – I have been working with Bob Barber to coordinate the removal of seaweed from Little Beach. Bob and I are in daily contact to determine if cleaning is warranted and so far it seems to be working as I have not had a single complaint about seaweed accumulating, rotting or smelling as compared to last year when I received numerous complaints.

2. Stairs – As you may know, the district received a grant to construct new stairs at Little Beach. The grant provided funds to purchase the wood needed and labor is going to be provided on a volunteer basis by Phil Smith. I contacted Phil today to get a “status report” on the construction (as I know there are some who are anxious to see the stairs built) and Phil advised he has been trying to get them done as time and conditions warrant and that he is hoping to build them later this week (after the predicted rains have hopefully past).

D. Battery Park – I received a complaint about “the Battery” being overgrown and in need of maintenance. I forward this matter to Carol (Chair) and anticipate it will be discussed at your meeting. I will await guidance as to how to proceed.

3. Programs

A. Painting Class – We held our first ever “Painting Class” at the end of June. The class was attended by children and adults and all seemed to enjoy themselves. The class was at no cost to the district as all attendees paid for themselves.

B. Spring Cleanup – We held a “Spring Cleanup” whereby 10 volunteers helped to collect trash and do minor landscaping of the community center grounds. We provided gloves, trash bags, and water to volunteers who helped to beautify Bonnet!

C. Swim Lessons – We started our first ever “Swim Lessons” at Kelly Beach. Two of our lifeguards who are certified to give lessons oversee the classes which are held on Monday and Tuesdays. ALL SESSIONS ARE FULL for the summer and the participants (and their parents) all seem to be enjoying themselves. All associated costs are paid by participants so the program is of no charge to the district.

D. Yard Sale – The Annual Yard Sale will be **THIS SATURDAY** (July 24). We have a RECORD number of homes participating (38)! I have placed an ad in several local papers and in addition, I am working to get the event promoted via social media platforms which would significantly increase participation and hopefully result in a successful day for many residents!

E. Bulky Clean Up -The Annual Bulky Clean up will be next Saturday (July 31). A list of prohibited items was sent to Joe to place on the website to help residents in knowing what they can, and cannot, dispose of.

As you can see, it’s been VERY busy over the last several weeks. I’m happy to report that we have not had any major issues to report and in fact I have received a number of compliments relative to operations in the district over the last few weeks. I would like to thank Joe and Steve who have helped a lot lately with the sharing of info on the website and via email blast...we are lucky to have you both!

This report covers the more substantive matters related to the district but if I have forgotten anything or should you need any further information, please don’t hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa DiBello, District Manager