

Bonnet Shores Fire District

Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, October 17, 2018
7:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Council Chair Michael Vendetti called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm. In attendance were council members Janice McClanaghan, John Pariseault, Daniel Johnson, Christopher Mannix, Natalie McDonald and Anita Langer. Also in attendance were Treasurer Mary McGinn, Tax Collector Richard Mercier, District Manager Lisa DiBello and Harbormaster Michael Tortolani.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

M. Vendetti led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence for members of the military.

Urgent Business

J. McClanaghan moved to approve the plans for 125 Colonel John Gardner Road, contingent on state and town criteria begin satisfied. The motion was seconded by J. Pariseault and approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The council discussed approval of the August 15, 2018 meeting minutes, but came to a consensus to postpone their approval until the November 2018 monthly meeting.

Public Comment

- Mary Mercier commented on the lack of respect toward and among the council at recent meetings. She stated that people have different opinions and to realize that people have a right to those opinions.
- Don Belanger discussed his dealings with CRMC when building his house. He urged the council to focus on CRMC's written recommendations and that conversations between BSFD representations and CRMC representatives are important, but do not override what is in writing from CRMC.

Committee and Other Reports

Beaches/Security (J. McClanaghan): The committee received the bill for the beach bus and is currently disputing it. The security measures are ongoing.

Harbor (N. McDonald): The Harbor Management Plan for the Fire District is due to CRMC and DEM for their comments. The BSFD Council will vote on the plan later tonight. Volunteers will remove the dock at Little Beach in a few weeks. Sand testing is also underway at Little Beach. Bill DelGizzo inquired about the mooring waiting list and its turnover. N. McDonald

responded that there are 67 mooring holders and the committee can review the waiting list and other procedures at its next meeting.

Pond (J. McClanaghan): The dredge of the pond, covered by the DEM grant, is still scheduled for late November. CRMC has approved sand testing. Communications are underway between the consultant, CRMC and DEM. The grant will support the dredge only and not other projects. The consultant will attend the next BSFD Council meeting to share his report.

Public Works (J. McClanaghan): A blast email was sent to 800 addresses regarding clearance of shrubs and vegetation. The email responses are currently being reviewed. The goal is to increase public safety. J. McClanaghan is the Vice Chair but looking for a replacement after Chair J. Pariseault's resignation from the committee chairmanship.

Trash (M. Vendetti): Patriot Disposal's contract with the Fire District expires in March of 2019. Patriot is seeking to pass on the tipping fee increase to the Fire District. The Fire District is currently in talks with the town regarding the refunding of recycling monies. The committee is also preparing RFP's for a new trash contract.

Bonnet Days (D. Johnson): Bonnet Days 2018 included 38 adult and 18 youth participants. Thank you to our sponsors for supporting this successful event, which essentially broke even this year. Special thanks go to volunteers Angela Yingling, Lindsey Amore, Nick Amaral, Laurie McCarthy, Mary Beth Murphy, Kathy Kelleher, Marlene Bellini, Jan McClanaghan, Dan Johnson, Chris Mannix, Pat Mannix and Lisa DiBello for their commitment to making this event fun and memorable.

Walkway (M. Vendetti): The council voted to create a Walkway Committee last month. M. Vendetti stated that the council needed to have a Reorganizational Meeting to appoint a chair for both the Walkway and Roads Committee, which currently is without a chair as well.

Treasurer (M. McGinn): The Fire District is in a strong financial state and under budget. The recyclables need to be paid for in the Spring of 2019. A discussion ensued regarding the \$40,000 in the capital budget. B. DeGizzo asked for an outside accounting firm, rather than council member N. McDonald, to look at the dredge and other items. M. McGinn stated that N. McDonald has done a great job as a volunteer for the Fire District and is professional and objective.

Tax Collector (R. Mercier): The collection rate is at 96.5%, with approximately \$365,000 out of \$379,000 collected at this point. PAST DUE notices have been sent out. If we have another tax sale, the hiring of an attorney to handle the tax sale should be placed on next month's agenda.

Land Trust (L. Mercier): The Land Trust held its meeting last night. The Trust is waiting to hear from Attorney Martha Day regarding the conservation easements on the Audobon properties. Audobon is in no rush to complete the transfer process and the Land Trust wants to make sure it does its due diligence. The Land Trust's 501(c)(3) certification was revoked on September 17, 2018 for failure to file in recent years. This revocation does not affect the Land

Trust's tax-exempt status. N. McDonald cautioned the Land Trust to talk with a professional before attempting to reinstate the 501(c)(3) status.

District Manager (L. DiBello):

- Currently soliciting bids for ceiling tiles, HVAC.
- Some floodlights do not work. Will get a quote to fix them.
- The Ocean State Road Race is scheduled for October 28, 2018.
- During Phase II of the Town's road repairs, some roads may widen a little bit.
- The office phone is currently not working. Will fix this issue with Verizon.

Old Business

- **ROADS COMMITTEE.** The council is seeking a new chair after J. Pariseault's resignation.
- **BEACH PASS FEE.** J. McClanaghan requested a vote regarding the replacement fee for beach tags. She also is seeking to order additional tags. C. Mannix moved to charge a replacement fee of \$100.00 for missing tags, to order 150 additional tags and to allow one replacement tag, with the total cost not to exceed \$400.00. The motion was seconded by J. McClanaghan and approved unanimously.
- **MICROPHONES.** A. Langer indicated that the Fire District will use the wireless conference system, recommended by Steve Carraccia.

New Business

- **HARBOR PLAN.** N. McDonald indicated that she had distributed the Harbor Management Plan to the council and that there were no substantial changes from the last iteration. C. Mannix moved to approve the Harbor Management Plan and submit it to CRMC and DEM. The motion was seconded by J. McClanaghan and approved unanimously.
- **HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION – WORKSHOP.** R. Mercier mentioned that this was a follow-up to last month's conversation. N. McDonald stated that we are not required to follow the town's exemptions and that applying them in the Fire District will shift the tax burden in the Fire District. A. Langer stated that she did not think it was necessary to apply the exemptions to Fire District taxes. Some residents expressed an interest in exploring the issue further. A. Langer indicated that the issue be tabled. The council took no action on scheduling a workshop on this issue.
- **WALKWAY COMMITTEE.** D. Johnson indicated that the first meeting had more than 20 people. The committee is currently putting together a mission statement. The keys for the committee were feasibility and affordability. He stated that the council may need to put in its own walkway application since the Land Trust is no longer interested in pursuing the project. The committee is made up of D. Johnson, A. Langer, Terry Duffy, Dave Stenmark, Nancy Cordy and Brad Sellon. M. Vendetti indicated that the committee still needs to officially be organized by the council, including the selection of a chair. Pat Mannix indicated that the Land Trust did not want the walkway under its purview anymore. Nancy Cordy stated that the Land Trust application should be pulled and the project sent back to the council. George Monaghan stated that the Land Trust thought the walkway was going to be under the purview of the Roads Committee and that the project should be under the purview of the Fire District Council and its committees, not the Land

Trust. M. Vendetti expressed his concern with the letter from the Concerned Residents seeking to link the sewer project to the walkway project. He stated that the Walkway Committee should not be working in concert with the Concerned Residents because the Fire District signed an easement agreement with the Bonnet Shores Beach Club regarding the sewer project. He said the Walkway Committee needs to report to the council and not act on its own, just like other Fire District committees. He expressed concerns about opening up the Fire District to liability if it appears that the Fire District is not living up to the provisions of the easement agreement that it signed. D. Johnson indicated that the walkway project and sewer projects are separate projects. N. McDonald indicated that Dave Stenmark is a member of the Concerned Citizens and sending messages on its behalf and is also on the Walkway Committee. She indicated that a letter from the Concerned Citizens expresses the opinion that the walkway and sewer projects be linked. A discussion ensued regarding membership on the committee and private groups, such as the Concerned Citizens. M. Vendetti indicated that the Fire District is a co-applicant for the sewer project and again expressed his concern about liability. He indicated that the Walkway Committee needs to behave like other committees and report back to the council.

- **RENTAL FEE – RICHARD MERCIER.** During budget season, R. Mercier suggested that the council may want to look into assessing a rental registration fee. L. DiBello indicated that Michelle Caraccia had worked on the rental registration system several years ago. There had been a \$5.00 registration fee. R. Mercier suggested using the monies potentially collected to pay for more security. J. McClanaghan stated that the Fire District could hire a constable, as it had in the past. T. Lupino indicated that the enforcement by the police has not been strict enough. J. Pariseault asked whether the problem was getting worse. M. Vendetti indicated that the council can look into the prior rental registration program and other issues to enhance security.
- **VOTE TO ACQUIRE AUDOBON LAND.** J. Pariseault indicated that he was pleased with L. Mercier's land trust report. G. Monaghan indicated that the Land Trust was waiting for Martha Day's review and would bring a recommendation to the council.
- **NOVEMBER MEETING.** The council discussed changing the date of the next monthly council meeting to Monday, November 19th because it was currently scheduled for the day before Thanksgiving. The council needed to check everyone's schedules to select a new meeting date. The council decided to hold its Reorganizational Meeting to appoint Walkway and Roads Committee chairs on Saturday, October 20th.

Adjournment

N. McDonald moved to adjourn the meeting. J. McClanaghan seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Matthew M. Mannix
Bonnet Shores Fire District Clerk