

Bonnet Shores Fire District

Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, January 15, 2025
7:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

NOTE: *The Rhode Island Ethics Commission conducted a training session for Fire District officials that began at 6:00 pm and preceded the council meeting.*

Call to Order

Council Chair Carol O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance were council members Leslie McKnight, Faith LaSalle, Jane Duran, Steve Danuszar, John Chereskin and Anthony Girardi. Also in attendance were District Manager Mark Gillooly and Treasurer Laurie McCarthy.

Urgent Business

None.

Announcements

The meeting was accessible via Zoom, but that there was no participation via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

J. Chereskin **moved**, seconded by L. McKnight, to approve the December 18, 2024 council meeting minutes. The motion was **approved**, 6-0, with J. Duran abstaining.

Committee Reports

Treasurer (L. McCarthy): The deadline for the reimbursement for the remainder of the FEMA Little Beach grant is February 1, 2025. The Treasurer indicated that she would like to have the final report in hand from Dr. King prior to any disbursement of funds.

Tax Collector: C. O'Donnell informed the council that Tax Collector Helen Patience had resigned. She stated that the council will appoint a Tax Collector at its next monthly meeting and recommended that the council appoint John Chereskin, as he had performed the role last year.

Land Trust (J. Fandetti): Joan Fandetti reported that the following items had received unanimous support from the Land Trust at its most recent meeting: (1) maintaining the original colors of the Land Trust sign, (2) receiving a statement and color-coded maps from former Land Trustee George Monaghan, (3) removing Laurie McCarthy's name from the Land Trust's 501(c) (3) application and (4) recommending that the Fire District Council dissolve the (501) (c) (3) for the Land Trust. A. Girardi, council liaison to the Land Trust, listed the errors made in the 501 (c) (3) application and stressed that the application must be withdrawn/dissolved because of

those errors, regardless of an eventual decision on whether the Land Trust should have 501 (c) (3) status.

Harbor (M. Gillooly): Season is over and dock is out.

District Manager (M. Gillooly): Submitted written report. Complimented MEGA regarding the removal of the Christmas trees. Reported that maintenance had been performed on the Kelly Beach culvert.

Social: No report.

New and Ongoing Business

Website

- J. Duran recommended that, of the three proposed vendors, Envision would be best because of its more user-friendly content management tool. A. Girardi expressed that there was a need to fix this issue long-term. J. Chereskin expressed concerns about cost. A. Girardi **moved**, seconded by L. McKnight, to select Envision (Vendor #2). The motion was **approved**, 6-1, with J. Chereskin dissenting.

Charter Committee

- Charter Committee Chair F. LaSalle addressed the tight schedule and her concern about getting a proposal to the General Assembly in a timely manner. She explained that the committee had condensed its meeting schedule to address these issues.

Charter Committee Candidates

- J. Duran explained that, at this point, the only appointed member of the Charter Committee was Faith LaSalle, who the council had previously appointed as the Charter Committee Chair. She and C. O'Donnell explained that there were four additional seats on the committee and that the council was seeking a representative from the group of plaintiffs in the original lawsuit from 2020 as well as a representative from the Bonnet Shores Beach Club because the failed 2023 proposal would have disenfranchised beach club members who did not own real estate in the Fire District. J. Duran explained that Robert Patterson had resigned from the prior Charter Commission, but then attempted to rescind his resignation. Other candidates still interested in serving on the Charter Committee at the time of the meeting were Jane Duran, Louise Healy, Kevin O'Brien, Michelle Dunne and Lois Pierce. C. O'Donnell gave each candidate an opportunity to address the council. Jane Duran, Louise Healy, Kevin O'Brien and Michelle Dunne addressed the council. Donna Stephens spoke on behalf of Lois Pierce, who was not in attendance at the meeting. Louise Healy was the candidate recommended by the Bonnet Shores Beach Club from its membership.
- F. LaSalle **moved**, seconded by S. Danuszar, to appoint Louise Healy to the Charter Committee. The motion was **approved** unanimously.
- A. Girardi **moved**, seconded by F. LaSalle, to appoint Robert Patterson to the Charter Committee. The motion was **approved** unanimously.
- L. McKnight **moved**, seconded by C. O'Donnell, to appoint Jane Duran to the Charter Committee. The motion was **approved** unanimously.

- C. O'Donnell **moved**, seconded by J. Duran, to appoint Lois Pierce to the Charter Committee. F. LaSalle expressed support for Lois Pierce. J. Chereskin expressed support for Kevin O'Brien. J. Duran expressed support for Michelle Dunne. After council discussion, C. O'Donnell **withdrew** her motion to appoint Loise Pierce.
- J. Duran **moved**, seconded by F. LaSalle, to appoint Michelle Dunne to the Charter Committee. The motion was **approved**, 5-1-1, with J. Chereskin dissenting and A. Girardi abstaining.

Public Comment

- Terry Beatty expressed his support for the Land Trust having a 501 (c) (3) designation.
- Nancy Cordy expressed her support for the Land Trust having a 501 (c) (3) designation.

Adjournment:

J. Chereskin **moved**, seconded by L. McKnight, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was **approved** unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Ratified on February 19, 2025