

Town of Kennebunkport
Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee Meeting
August 15th, 2022 ~ 6:00 PM
Goose Rocks Beach Fire Station, 2 Winter Harbor Road, Kennebunkport

A meeting of the Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee was held on August 15th, 2022.

Members participating were Paul Hogan, Pam Czekanski, Carol Sherman, Barry Engel, Thomas Ferrara, Paul Hayes, Fred Stafford, Jon Dykstra

1. Call to Order

Mr. Hogan called the meeting to order and asked the Committee members to introduce themselves. Mr. Hogan noted since there is no internet connection at this location, this meeting is not being held on Zoom.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ferrara made motion to approve the minutes of the July 18th, 2022 Beach Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Hayes seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

3. Public comments for items not on agenda

There were comments or questions currently from the audience in attendance.

4. Committee reports

For the Public Safety Sub-Committee, Mr. Engel reported they will be meeting again in the next week and will have a few recommendations to bring before this Committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Hogan commented the Committee heard back from the town that they will be doing some speed counts on roads as requested. Mr. Engel added that Dyke Road and the west end of Kings Highway will be added to those areas where the Police Department will be conducting speed tests if time permits.

Mr. Stafford reported there is was nothing new to report from the Communications Sub-Committee to date except the bird signs have been removed. Mr. Stafford added one of their goals on the new signage is to have the dog rules signs to be interchangeable like the current water quality signs.

Ms. Sherman reported this year's piping plover population increased from last year with Goose Rocks Beach hosting 12 pairs, with 24 chicks. Ms. Sherman also noted the least terns did come to the beach but there is no data from the Maine Audubon Society yet and when it is available it will be posted on the Facebook page and through Constant Contact.

Mr. Hogan added there was nothing new to report from the Natural Resources Sub-Committee.

Mr. Hogan expressed his compliments to the Conservation Commission for tackling the removal of the invasive species at the beach and discussed the possibility of doing a native plant demonstration garden in the future.

5. Old Business

a. Follow-up on questions regarding unauthorized storage of gear on the beach

After reaching out to the Police Chief, Mr. Hogan relayed the following message from Chief Sanford regarding equipment being left on the beach: *"I looked at the area and saw the boats and equipment with tags on them and also saw the paddle and wake board. The paddle and wake board were in the outline of a dinghy telling me that they were stored under it and now the dinghy is out of the water. They are not in any area that would create the tripping hazard as described. The boats and equipment observed were all in the very soft sand in or near the 25-foot area where no one walks on a regular pleasure walk, even at high tide. As for the town taking control of private property, I am unfamiliar with any commitment by the town to take possession of private property for non-police actions. We would become responsible for such property and have no facility to store them safely and securely. As always, we will respond when made aware of a possible issue but in some instances, there may be nothing that can or should be done. If a beach signer has a specific issue with something in their 25-foot area, they are encouraged to call immediately and not wait to talk with someone else days later."*

The Committee and a few audience members had a brief discussion on rights of signers of the Beach Use Agreement, items on the beach signs that aren't enforced, and the increase of items being left on the beach.

Mr. Hogan offered he is still having discussions with Tom Bradbury of the Conservation Trust about the kayak racks and will bring to his attention the concerns expressed tonight. Mr. Hogan also offered in other towns, unclaimed items left on the beach or elsewhere in town were auctioned off once a year with the proceeds going to a local charity. As the Board of Selectmen representative, Mr. Dykstra took notes and offered to address their concerns with the town officials.

6. New Business

a. Questions over the Tide's usage of the beach and the Beach Use Ordinance

Mr. Hogan stated it has been brought to the Committee's attention that the Tides Inn is utilizing a large portion of the beach beyond their 25-foot section and concerns over other guests from their other properties being bused in as well. Mr. Engel added people are concerned it is becoming a commercial area.

Mr. Stafford also noted the visual the Tides area creates with the chairs being spread so wide apart it is having a much bigger footprint on the beach to give the public the idea that the area is all private beach area. Mr. Hogan stressed the Tides' rights end after the first 25-feet of beach which is mostly filled with their storage of equipment.

Mr. Justin Grimes, of the Kennebunkport Resort Collection, addressed the Committee stating only guests from Hidden Pond are bussed to the Tides Inn and not from any other KRC properties.

Mr. Engel asked how many shuttles are circulating between Hidden Pond and the Tides Inn per day. Mr. Grimes explained the shuttle buses run on demand and there is no timetable and is not an hourly operation.

Ms. Czekanski asked how many rooms are there at the Tides Inn and Hidden Pond. Mr. Grimes responded the Tides has 21 rooms and Hidden Pond has 46 structures equating to 56 keys.

Mr. Hogan asked if there is a reason the shuttle drop-off can't be on the Tides Inn property, so traffic isn't stopped on Kings Highway. Mr. Grimes responded the shuttles should be dropping guests off at the parking lot behind the Tides Inn and not on the street. Mr. Hogan asked Mr. Grimes to check that is what their shuttle drivers are doing.

After some discussion, Mr. Hayes asked Mr. Dykstra to find out what the understanding or agreement was made between the town and Tim Harrington at the time the Beach Use Agreement was being composed with respect to taking people from Hidden Pond and other KRC properties to the Tides Inn.

Mr. Stafford offered his opinion that visually, the layout of the Tide's chairs gives the impression of an exclusion zone by creating a line of demarcation with the grooming of the sand and brushing the seaweed to the perimeter of the area.

After a brief discussion, the Committee members agreed to hold their next meeting on October 17th, 2022 at the Kennebunkport Village Fire Station which will be a hybrid meeting conducted both in person and on Zoom.

7. Adjournment

Guest Speaker: Ed Hutchins, 5th Generation Lobsterman