

Town of Kennebunkport
Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee Meeting
July 19, 2021 ~ 6:00 PM
Virtual Meeting (Via Zoom)

A virtual meeting of the Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee was held on July 19th, 2021.

Members participating were Kate Bauer Burke, Jon Dykstra, Carol Sherman, Barry Engel, Joanne Gustin, Paul Hogan, Jennifer Wasserman

1. Call to Order

Chairman Kate Burke called the meeting to order and performed a roll call of all members of Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee.

2. Approval June 17, 2021 minutes

Mr. Hogan made a motion to approve the amended minutes from the June 17th, 2021 Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Gustin seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

3. Public comments (items not on the agenda)

Before opening the meeting to remarks from the public, Ms. Burke commented about two recent incidents of vandalism at the beach: 1.) the removal of all the new dog ordinance signs, and 2.) the damage inflicted on the handicap wheelchair that is available for use by all at the handicapped entrance to the beach. Ms. Burke expressed her deep disappointment at the two acts of vandalism and asked if anyone has information regarding either event to please contact the Police Department.

Mr. Hogan reported the handicapped chair has been partially repaired but it is up to the Heath Council if they wish to cover the expense of replacing the tire that was destroyed. Mr. Hogan also noted there is a second handicap chair available through the Kennebunkport Recreation Department for use for a fee and is stored at the Tides Inn.

Ms. Burke opened the meeting up for comments from the public.

Ms. Susan Hanlon of Abbey Road commented there have been other acts of vandalism at the beach as an artist friend of hers has had items stolen from the gift shop at the Goose Rocks General Store. Ms. Hanlon also inquired as to why the meeting minutes from previous Beach Advisory Committee meetings were not posted on the town website. Ms. Sherman explained the minutes will be on the town website in the near future.

Mr. Bill Casey of the Resort at Goose Rocks suggested if there was a need for funds to cover the cost of repairs to the beach wheelchair, he is sure there are many of folks who would be willing to donate. Mr. Hogan suggested donations could be made to the Kennebunkport Health Department and those interested could contact the Committee at grbadvisorycommittee@kennebunkportme.gov and they will be directed to the appropriate venue to donate.

Mr. Bill Leffler of Proctor Avenue asked if a second trash barrel could be added to the public entrances to the beach as has been the case in past years. Mr. Leffler also commented he has noticed a number cars parked along Kings Highway with no beach parking stickers and have not been issued parking tickets from the police.

Lastly Mr. Leffler asked if the town could potentially control the increasing number of dogs on the beach through licensing and to enforce consequences to those dog owners who do not pick up after their dogs. Ms. Burke responded there is a town ordinance requiring owners to clean up after their dogs and it can only be addressed by the CSOs if they witness such a violation.

Mr. John Downey of Prescott Drive addressed the Committee to talk about people's respect for one another. Mr. Downey noted there a few folks who use the handicap ramp as their personal mat to store their shoes and sandals which would obstruct others from traversing it especially if one was in a wheelchair. Mr. Downey also commented about the increase in noise pollution from people's radios/music players and the number of items left on the beach overnight such as tents, tent frames, volleyball nets & poles. Ms. Burke responded there is an ordinance stating no items are to be left on the beach overnight and the CSOs are aware of that. Mr. Hogan added the town has a general noise ordinance but there isn't one specifically relating to the beach.

Mr. Bill Van Benthuyzen of Winter Harbor Road raised the issue of dogs on the beach and suggested asking the CSOs if they could not patrol so close to the waterline but rather in the upper beach areas where people are camped out. Mr. Van Benthuyzen also pointed out that folks who purchase parking stickers from kiosks those tickets are to be placed on their dashboard and not on the rear windows which may be why Mr. Leffler made his comment about many cars not having stickers.

Ms. Ann Corbey of Wildwood Avenue asked what recourse do the CSOs have when they find people in violation of the dog ordinance or other beach ordinances. Ms. Burke replied the CSOs have authorization to issue parking tickets but on the beach the Police Department in general would like to deal with violations in an educative way first rather than a punitive way.

There were no further comments.

4. *Update on Animal Control Ordinance*

This subject was discussed earlier in the meeting.

5. *Update on beach campfires*

Ms. Burke announced the Board of Selectmen decided to adopt the conditions set forth by this Committee with the one proviso that this is a trial period and would like this Committee to revisit the issue in the Fall. Ms. Burke then asked Mr. Dykstra to review what the new rules are for beach campfires.

Mr. Dykstra shared a summary on the screen of the newly adopted permitting process for beach campfires that is in effect for the 2021 summer season. The changes are as follows:

New GRB Permits

- *Changes from previous years...*
 - *A maximum of 6 permits will be issued on a given weather-appropriate day – 3 permits for the public on the east end and 3 permits for beach-front property owners for the beach in front of their property.*
 - *Fires must be confined within a metal container. The metal container must be carried on and off the beach the same night. Dumping of ashes, embers, or partially burned wood on, or buried within, the beach sand is strictly prohibited.*
 - *The permit security deposit will be raised from \$50 to \$250*
 - *The fire site must be at least 20' from any dune grass and at least 100' from any posted bird nesting site.*
 - *There must be a water-filled bucket at the fire site to be used for emergencies or extinguishing.*
 - *The permittee must sign a statement acknowledging that he/she is responsible for any fire spread, including suppression costs and damage to other property.*

6. *Dinghy Point*

Based on personal observations, Ms. Burke noted she does not see an issue with excessive boats or items being stored at Dinghy Point. Ms. Gustin agreed with Ms. Burke's observation.

7. *Kayak storage*

Ms. Burke thanked the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust and all the volunteers who helped install the kayak racks.

On the West End of the Beach, Ms. Sherman noticed there has been no incidence of kayaks being stored on the dune grass since the stake and twine has been installed and found there is one dinghy currently on the Rachel Carson property which she has notified them of that.

8. *Subcommittee Reports*

- *Communications*
 - *Signage*

Ms. Burke noted the issue of signage pollution at the beach is a high priority for this coming year and the Communications Subcommittee will be working on that in the off-season and asked if anyone would like to volunteer, they are very welcome. The other item the subcommittee would work on, Ms. Burke commented, is to review all the different mechanisms of communication from the BAC and determine where there is overlap and whether that overlap is necessary. Ms. Burke asked for a volunteer(s) with more advanced technical knowledge and was willing to help with streamlining the BAC's communication efforts.

- *Natural Resources*

- *Dune grass*

Mr. Hogan reported the subcommittee discussed where to install the stake and twine next year and will draft a policy statement to include best practices to provide for folks next year.

- *Endangered birds*

Ms. Sherman read the plover report as of July 15th noting the following:

- Goose Rocks Beach has had 9 breeding pairs of plovers
 - 10 chicks are currently running all over the beach
 - Goose Rocks Beach has already had 12 plovers fledge.
 - The number of breeding pairs and chicks has increased from last year across the state of Maine.
 - There are approximately 12 active pairs of least terns at the beach but there is no official count on chicks.

Ms. Sherman also stated she will enquire with Maine Audubon what the criteria is to no longer be considered an endangered species and report back to the Committee.

Ms. Burke reminded folks to please fill in your holes before leaving the beach to ensure plover chicks don't fall into them and perish.

- *Goals for 2021-22*

Mr. Hogan acknowledged the Committee members often get asked by homeowners where they can dispose of debris found on the beach usually from storms. To answer those questions, Mr. Hogan reported the subcommittee will put together some information on the BAC webpage to make it simpler.

Mr. Hogan also reported that Mr. Dykstra will draft a proposal with recommendations for distribution of funds available from the Covid Relief Fund.

The subcommittee also discussed putting updates on the Goose Rocks Beach Facebook page regarding relevant topics such as native living species of the beach, preservation, etc. A notice for the next sub-committee meeting will be sent out shortly.

- *Traffic and safety*

Mr. Engel stated an official sub-committee meeting has not occurred as of yet and invited any members of the community to please get in touch with him to offer your ideas and suggestions. The Committee members had a brief conversation regarding the increased traffic at the beach, pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicular, in addition to the landscaping trucks parking on the road. Ms. Gustin relayed a suggestion presented to her that perhaps in place of speed bumps along Kings Highway, the town repaint the crosswalks at the public entrances to make them more noticeable.

9. *August meeting*

- *Date*
 - *Format*
 - *Speaker*

Ms. Burke announced the next meeting will be August 16th at 6:00pm at the Goose Rocks Beach Fire Station.

After much discussion the Committee members decided to have a guest speaker from the Kennebunkport Climate Initiative give a presentation at the August 16th meeting. The presentation would be the first part of the meeting and last no longer than 30 minutes. After the presentation, Ms. Burke stated she will officially open the Committee meeting and proceed through the agenda allowing for public input at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Dykstra will compose a description of the topics the guest speaker will discuss to be included in the public notice. Ms. Gustin will also include the speaker description in the Constant Contact notice of the next meeting.

10. *Other business*

Ms. Sherman asked Mr. Dykstra to report on the progress of the town's curbside recycling program. Mr. Dykstra explained there were several plastic bags of recyclables that resulted in fines for contaminants. Mr. Hogan added as a reminder that styrofoam and soft bubble wraps or plastic fillers are also not recyclable and will cause contamination in the recycling stream. Mr. Dykstra also added padded envelopes and clothing are not to be placed in the recycling containers either.

11. *Adjourn*