

GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION BOARD
OF GOVERNORS
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES DRAFT
SEPTEMBER 2, 2026, 6:30 pm
HELEN LENA CLUBHOUSE
31 WEST PATTAGANSETT ROAD, Niantic CT

BOG Members present: Chip Brienza, Julie Cameron, Joe Dasco, Mary Ann Heenehan, Matt Ravosa, Rich Sullivan, Gerry Van Noordennen

1. Call to Order

President Gerry Van Noordennen called the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Governors to order at 6:34 PM.

2. Presidents Report

Gerry reminded the Board that per the bylaws, the Board of Governors holds the authority to fill interim vacancies on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). ZBA Chair Steve Bruno recently reached out regarding an application involving a neighbor across the street from two sitting ZBA members, which required recusals. To address this, Dwight Carlson and Dave Zuckerbraun volunteered to step in on an interim basis until the annual association meeting next June.

Gerry noted that the bill for the July 4th police presence came in at \$2,100, coming in under budget. He shared that he has been in touch with GNIC regarding signage updates and noted that John Wohler would provide an update on the Port Authority grant. The Board is also currently working on adding clear enforcement language into the bylaws.

Additionally, he noted that Andrew Young and Nancy Anibale would present on recent clubhouse repairs and a pressing insurance issue. Gerry extended a special thank you to Bill Christopher, Larry Corona, and Laurie Corona for repairing the flagpole after it broke during a recent storm.

3. Treasurers Report

Treasurer Lorie Carlson presented the financial report as of September 1, 2026. Bank account balances were reported as follows: Operating Account holds \$121,431; Tax and Assessment Collection Account holds \$100; Reserve Account holds \$51,698; Money Market Account holds \$267,918; and Dock Accounts (combining savings, checking, and CDs) hold \$327,769, bringing total association funds to \$768,916.

Property tax collection has reached a 97.6% collection rate, with 5 properties remaining outstanding for a total unpaid balance of \$3,939. Non-tax revenues collected since the last meeting include \$635 in Dock Account interest and \$2,040 in Operating Account revenue.

Monthly expenses paid totaled \$18,953. Combining the current operating balance of \$121,431 with projected future revenues of \$38,431 brings total projected operating revenues to \$159,862, leaving a current budget balance of \$150,732.

In response to a question raised by Joe Dasco regarding expenses and dock reserves, John Wohler clarified that prepaid dock fees represent an estimated future liability of approximately \$225,000 from 22 members paying 10 years in advance.

4. Approval of BOG Minutes of July 1 and August 5, 2026

A motion to approve the July minutes passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the August minutes passed unanimously.

5. Committee Reports

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

To address the recusal of two sitting members due to an applicant residing across the street, two interim ZBA alternate appointments were formally considered. The motion to appoint Dwight Carlson and Dave Zuckerbraun as interim ZBA alternates was moved by Mary Ann, seconded by Julie, and approved unanimously 7-0.

Port Authority Grant & Dock Committee

John Wohler reported that the Port Authority grant application has been drafted, with two items remaining open: attaching the state DEEP permit application draft and receiving the contractor's formal cost proposal. All applications are due within one month, and approximately \$1.4 million in state funding remains available. Julie inquired about the expected delivery date for the contractor's proposal. Chip Brienza asked whether attaching a formal proposal provides an advantage over submitting an estimated cost figure.

Regarding dock operations, John noted that the dock was omitted during the spring budget process prior to being turned over to the Association. The approved dock fee increase is \$40 per year (a 4% inflation adjustment), raising the annual fee from \$1,000 to \$1,040 for pay-as-you-go slip users starting next season. The 22 members who paid 10 years of dock fees in advance are exempt from this increase.

A motion to increase the annual dock fee from \$1,000 to \$1,040 was made by Julie, seconded by Matt Ravosa, and approved unanimously.

Chip Brienza noted for transparency that his family is among those who paid the 10-year advance fee.

Clubhouse

Nancy Annibale reviewed recent clubhouse maintenance and repairs. Exterior window/door trim has been painted, the exterior was power-washed, and over 400 lbs of trash/old bins were removed during crawl space remediation. Pest entry points across 12 cinder block openings were sealed, a new access door was installed, safety locks were added to the refrigerator and thermostat, and keys were placed in a kitchen lockbox.

For insurance compliance, emergency lights were installed, a downspout was fixed, GFI outlets were installed in the kitchen, and crawl space lightbulbs were replaced. Outstanding maintenance items include painting the shed, installing a solar light, repairing a window that dropped 1/4 inch, and addressing water intrusion in the chimney, which Julie noted appears to originate from the stone exterior.

Insurance

Andrew Young presented findings regarding event insurance for clubhouse rentals. Reaching out to Bouvier Insurance and Smith Brothers confirmed that standard homeowners liability policies rarely cover off-premise event liability, leaving the Association vulnerable. The Board reviewed clubhouse usage across GNIC, non-chartered groups, the Men's Club, and PWC/Recreation activities. Andrew recommended updating the rental policy to drop the homeowners insurance proof requirement and instead require private event insurance (approx. \$150–\$175 per event through carrier platforms rated A or higher), explicitly naming both GNBA and GNIC as additional insureds.

Lorie noted parking-only usage by members holding events at private homes generates \$425 in fees. Chip suggested utilizing liability waivers similar to parking garages, though Andrew noted waivers protect against general property damage claims but do not replace liability indemnity for third-party injuries. Gerry and Andrew debated co-sponsoring club events through the Recreation Committee, with Andrew cautioning against a municipal association co-sponsoring private or gender-restricted clubs due to discrimination and liability risks. Joe and Mike Heenehan inquired about distinctions between member-only gatherings and non-member/alcohol-focused events, and Mike urged requiring private insurance for any outside group using Association grounds. Andrew requested that Board members compile feedback so a formal decision and website step-by-step guide can be finalized by January.

GNIC

Irene reported on discussions with property owner Chris Lafond regarding coastal erosion on his land. Mr. Lafond plans to evaluate private remediation options and coordinate with the Association.

GNIC is working with a sign company to produce three boundary signs for Point Road, the Vecchiareno property and Cook property on Point Road, and at the right of way at the end of Giants Neck Road

based on A2 survey data. Challenges include a utility pole at the beach stairs that restricts sign placement and ensuring messaging reflects private property boundaries rather than public access. Irene also reported plans to update the Association map posted on the website.

Beach Committee

Mike Heenehan reported on the sand erosion at the Griswold right-of-way staircase. Rather than using gabions, two large stepping stones were purchased and scheduled for installation by Sandy Sweepers to serve as a temporary lower step, backfilled with sand to create a gradual beach slope.

Sandy Sweepers offered an optional post-Labor Day beach cleaning. Joe recommended saving funds unless needed. The Board agreed to leave the decision on an additional cleaning to Mike's discretion.

6. Public Comments

Andrew Young expressed gratitude for Mike Heenehan's work on beach maintenance. He advocated for conserving beach maintenance funds for future storm recovery rather than optional end-of-season cleanings.

7. Board Comments

Mary Ann reported that the community survey closes tonight, with 98 of 303 surveys returned, expressing disappointment in the low response rate given the effort involved.

Joe asked about follow-up to the membership meeting where short-term rentals were a big concern and garnered a lot of discussion. Gerry noted that the Board is waiting for survey feedback and confirmed the Town of East Lyme is not taking action. Gerry plans to form a committee with experienced community members to draft a proposal for Giants Neck Beach, and Joe offered to assist.

Joe encouraged a softer approach when enforcing rules at the beach. Mike Heenehan noted the pressure of enforcing rules without clear boundaries and offered to step down from enforcement if needed. Gerry clarified the scope of authority, noting Association bylaws and ordinances can be enforced directly by officers, whereas state laws fall under public law enforcement, making members concerned citizens. Gerry offered to handle enforcement calls directly to assist Michael.

8. Adjournment

The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM to enter into Executive Session. The next BOG Regular Monthly Meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2026, at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annah Perch
Recording Secretary