

GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL AUGUST MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SATURDAY AUGUST 15, 2026 9:00 am

THE HELEN LENA CLUBHOUSE

31 WEST PATTAGANSETT RD Niantic CT

Board of Governors present: Gerry Van Noordennen, President; Julie Cameron, Vice President; Chip Brienza; Mary Ann Heenehan, Secretary; Matt Ravosa; Joe Dasco; and Rich Sullivan.

Call to Order

President Gerry Van Noordennen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed for members who had died or were suffering.

President's Report

Gerry reported that the survey had been finalized and would be distributed shortly. He encouraged members to respond, explaining that the results would help guide Association priorities and decisions about how tax dollars should be used over the next several years.

The Connecticut Port Authority grant application remained on track for the September submission deadline. Gerry noted that the dock represents a potentially significant future expense; a more detailed grant update was provided later in the meeting.

A Strategic Planning Committee has been formed to identify long-term capital needs and financial risks. Lou Piscatelli will serve as chair, with Rich Sullivan and Chip Brienza as the Board representatives. The committee will consider such issues as eventual replacement of the clubhouse roof, uninsured storm damage, and whether the Association's reserves are adequate.

The Court Committee has been reconstituted, with Mary Ellen Donegan serving as chair. A pickleball tournament is coming up, and the committee plans to offer more recreational activities for children next year. Gerry also noted that this year's July 4 parade may have had the largest children's turnout the Association has seen.

The Coast Guard will provide additional identification stickers and has offered to host a water-safety class next summer.

Gerry reported that GNIC reviewed the shoreline area in front of Chris Lafond's property using photographs spanning more than 100 years. The review indicated that the material now

eroding is historic fill. The current approach is to allow that fill to wash away naturally rather than spend Association funds rebuilding an artificial bank that was not historically present.

The Association will continue revising the enforcement provisions in its ordinances so that speeding and other recurring violations can be addressed more consistently.

Following a change in insurers, an inspector identified approximately ten items for attention. The Association plans to address the recommendations, including replacement of certain electrical outlets and exit signs. It will, however, question the recommendation for center railings on some beach stairways because Town officials advised that those railings are not required.

Treatment of the pond was reported to have substantially reduced the lily pads. Members have seen birds returning to the area, including ospreys and an eagle.

Pandy Wohler asked about installing outlets outside the clubhouse. Julie Cameron said she would notify Nancy Annibale. Andrew Young reported receiving a quote of a few hundred dollars and suggested coordinating the work while the electrician is already on-site.

Gerry closed his report by assuring members that the Board listens to their comments and is working to make Giants Neck Beach better for everyone.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lorie Carlson reported the following account balances: operating checking, \$123,214; tax collection, \$100; reserve account, \$51,697; money market, \$267,192; and dock funds, \$327,134, for total cash and designated funds of \$769,337.

Of the \$165,954 in property taxes levied, 90.4% had been collected. Eighteen properties remained outstanding and would receive letters reflecting the applicable interest.

Lorie also reported current revenue of \$7,143 and projected future revenue of \$51,743. The approved budget was \$206,523, projected future operating funds were \$174,957, and projected operating expenses were \$165,833.

Mike Heenehan asked how far under budget the Association had finished the prior year. Lorie estimated approximately \$19,000 but said she was still finalizing the figures.

Approval of July 18, 2026 Annual Meeting Minutes

Tina Bettera moved to approve the July 18, 2026 Annual Meeting minutes. Angelo Bettera seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Removal of Items Left on the Beach

Gerry reported that on Thursday morning six kayaks, along with boards and beach chairs, were removed from the beach and placed under the clubhouse. Most had since been retrieved. He

said the Association was helping the Beach Committee enforce the rules and estimated that approximately 90% of members were in compliance.

There was discussion about the need to identify kayaks and other equipment. Identification stickers are available in the clubhouse, and Gerry said the identifying information may be placed wherever it is practical on the item. Members suggested including a secondary telephone number and noted that owners could also make their own durable tags. Gerry explained that identification is especially important after storms, when police, fire personnel, or DEEP may find equipment in the water and need to determine whether a person is missing.

Gail Shea expressed concern that stacked boats are taking up too much beach space. Mike Heenehan thanked the Beach Committee for its work and said the committee had considered racks. Jim Beaulieu said the GNBA charter states there is a one boat limit. Joe Dasco did not agree that was the case.

Peter Knaus asked the Association to use a softer approach to enforcement, particularly for chairs and children's items kept beside his property. He said his family would comply by moving the items onto private property but felt that advance notice or a warning sticker would have reduced the conflict. Chip Brienza said the point was well taken: enforcement had gotten everyone's attention.

Mary Ann Heenehan said they had received many calls about conditions on the beach and that many members were pleased to see an enforceable rule applied. She also noted that members who do not live along the wall do not have the option of keeping equipment nearby on their own property. Robin Knowles said the policy should seek to do the most good for the greatest number of members. Angelo Bettera explained that he stacks his two kayaks to reduce the amount of wall space they occupy.

Linda Hotarek asked about dogs on the beach. Mike said he had heard complaints and described an incident in which a dog owner refused to leave even though another Association member was extremely afraid of dogs. Members were reminded that dogs are not permitted on the beach before October 1.

Other members asked that any flexibility regarding chairs or equipment be applied fairly to residents who live farther from the beach. It was noted that an accommodation had been made for a 96-year-old resident. Gerry said the comments would be recorded and the Board would review the enforcement approach.

Dock Committee Update on Port Authority Grant Application for Dock Repairs

John Wohler reported that, as directed by the Board of Governors in July, the Dock Committee's checking account has been transferred so that the funds are now managed through the GNBA Treasurer rather than controlled independently by the committee.

The grant application is being finalized with the Town of East Lyme as the official applicant. The Town is prepared to sign when the application is complete. GNBA must provide its financial information, and the committee is awaiting bids from two contractors. It was reported that the Port Authority awarded approximately \$3.6 million in the prior round and that an estimated \$1.4 million may remain available.

The program can fund up to half of eligible project costs. The current working estimate is approximately \$400,000 for the project, which could support a grant request of approximately \$200,000.

Joe Dasco asked what the strategy would be if GNBA does not receive the grant and requested an opportunity for the Board to review and approve the plan. John Wohler said the final project configuration may not be known until the permitting, grant, and bid processes are further along.

Gerry relayed a concern about whether the proposed pilings would be large enough for today's heavier boats. John said that issue could be addressed through the line configuration. Lorie Carlson asked whether floating docks had been considered; John said contractors advised that floating docks do not hold up well under the area's continuous wave action.

Paul Formica reported that he had spoken with the Port Authority's director and received encouraging feedback about an application of this scale. Paul did not know whether funding would remain available for another round next year. The discussion also noted that separate grant opportunities may be available to help address the eroded area near the Lafond property.

Angelo Bettera asked about installing ramps to improve beach access. Gerry said he had looked into ramps, that the cost appeared to be only a few thousand dollars, and that the safety improvement was on the Association's project list.

Discussion on Whether to Restrict Short-Term Rentals

Gerry opened the discussion by noting that short-term renters had been blamed for several large beach parties. He asked whether GNBA should address properties that are operated primarily as short-term rentals and whose owners are rarely present. He said his initial research and conversations with the Town showed that nearby beach communities use minimum rental periods ranging from seven to thirty days.

Joe Dasco urged the Association to consider the issue broadly rather than focus only on a few current properties. He said GNBA presently has no clear short-term-rental policy and that continued silence could allow rental activity to alter the character of the community over time. Paul Formica discussed the role of Town zoning and the possibility that existing rentals could become nonconforming uses if regulations change.

Pandy Wohler said she understood the concern but cautioned against a hard-and-fast rule that could unintentionally eliminate off-season rentals. She suggested providing owners with a clear

set of GNBA rules to place in their rental homes. Lisa Doggart said a good-neighbor guide had already been created and posted on the website, but agreed that it should also be placed directly in rental properties. Another member suggested contacting all property owners to ask whether they view short-term rentals as a problem.

Jeff Knaus described short-term rentals as a rapidly evolving issue that many municipalities are now considering. He said GNBA must balance the rights of homeowners who depend on rental income with the rights of residents to enjoy their homes and neighborhood. In his view, very short stays can function like a hotel in a residential area, and a thirty-day minimum would allow renters to become temporary neighbors rather than weekend visitors. He also questioned whether after-the-fact police calls are enough to prevent repeated disruption.

Mary Ann Heenehan noted that the membership survey asks whether respondents rent their homes and gives members space to comment on short-term rentals. One member suggested that the Fire Marshal could be contacted about occupancy and parking concerns, while another member questioned whether that was accurate. Jim Beaulieu and Joe Dasco also discussed what the charter may permit and agreed that the legal and regulatory questions need further research.

Mike Heenehan encouraged members to report specific illegal or disruptive activity to the Board or police rather than allow problems to continue. Jeff responded that residents shouldn't have to be on guard for enforcement nor does enforcement after an incident does not fully address the broader question of homes being purchased primarily for short-term rental use.

No motion was made and no vote was taken. Members were encouraged to provide detailed feedback through the survey so the Board can continue evaluating possible approaches.

Committee Reports

The Beach, Dock, Court, Strategic Planning, and GNIC matters were addressed in the reports and discussions above. No additional committee reports were offered.

Member Comments

Linda Hotarek asked whether parking and signage problems at a particular property could be addressed. Gerry said the matter would be reviewed as part of the Association's broader work on recurring parking issues. Mike Heenehan said he had contacted the police about a particular parking situation and that the police had responded. Linda also asked that a Board member speak directly with the homeowner.

Board Comments

Mary Ann Heenehan said the membership survey would be announced on Monday, August 17, and distributed electronically on Wednesday, August 19. Paper copies would be mailed to the

thirteen properties for which the Association does not have email addresses. The survey will remain open for two weeks, through September 2, and includes an open comment field. Results will be tallied after the survey closes. Mary Ann thanked Annah Perch for assembling the survey.

Matt Ravosa encouraged anyone commenting on short-term rentals to state the specific minimum rental period or number of days they support.

Adjournment

Gail Shea moved to adjourn the meeting. Phyllis Berger seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

The next Board of Governors meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 2, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annah Perch

Recording Secretary