

GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 23, 2024

10:00 am

East Lyme Public Library, 39 Society Road, Niantic, CT 06357

**Present:** Paul Formica, Gerry van Noordennen Wick Mallory, Mary Ann Heenehan, Laurie Corona, Lisa Doggart, Lou Piscatelli, Louise Wilcox

**Absent:** none

**1. Call to Order**

Paul Formica called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

He noted that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the capital projects. There will be no vote. After discussion, the budget committee will have a discussion and bring a proposed capital budget to the association for a vote.

Louise Wilcox gave an overview of the capital account status:

Current Capital Account: \$234,000

Allocated Funds:

- Beach Replenishment: \$51,000

- Pond Project: \$3,700

- Right-of-Way Markers: \$2,300 - BOG Emergency Fund: \$5,000

Unallocated Funds: \$172,000 (minus \$100,000 set aside, leaving \$72,000 available for new projects)

There was discussion of whether GNB can unencumber \$21,000 set aside for a capital project to do with the pond that was not completed and was disputed with the contractor. There was a discussion that the BOG should wait to unencumber those funds until the statute of limitations is up on when the contractor could dispute our non-payment per the contract.

**ACTION ITEM #1:** Locate the contract to determine the date and find out when we should unencumber the funds.

**ACTION ITEM #2:** Louise will go to Bank of America to see what classifications the GNBA has on the original accounts and share that with Edward Jones. Edward Jones to fix the forms so the transfer can go through.

There was discussion of a \$51,000 in the capital budget for beach replenishment, which is separate from beach maintenance (in the operating budget). It is not a regular occurrence and depends on storms. The recollection was it costs \$10,000 per sand application. There will be further discussion at the budget committee level.

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TOWN CLERK

Lisa Doggart and Gerry van Noordennen discussed the proposed capital project of fixing the erosion problem on Lakeshore Drive. The work plan should result in large stormwater passing along a strip along the road so that stormwater would not go directly into the pond. The project consists of digging a trench, creating a berm, making for the drainage to happen in front of the berm, and putting topsoil and seed down. There would remain 5 feet of space between the road and the berm for emergency vehicles to retain access. There are two proposals (not quotes) to fix the problem at \$10,000.

**ACTION ITEM #3:** A final project design will be developed and actual quotes will be obtained and reviewed with the Town Engineer.

There was a discussion about unallocating funds from a capital project. There needs to be a vote by the association to unallocated funds. Just as there is a vote by the association to allocate funds for a capital project.

There was a discussion of the right-of-way markers that are currently in the capital budget for \$2,300. Irene Makiaris states that the right-of-way markers are money left over from when there were other markers put around certain areas of the beach. Irene is not comfortable that \$2,300 is enough because estimates have not been obtained yet.

**ACTION ITEM #4:** Estimates will be obtained.

There was a discussion of \$3,700 that is in the capital budget for the removal of a fallen tree in the upper pond. Is there money allocated for tree removal in both the capital and operating budgets and do we need both?

**ACTION ITEM #5:** Determine if tree removal funds belong in the Capital or Operating budget. Complete the tree removal.

Pandy Wohler said she believed there was money set aside for new fencing around the upper pond. There was discussion that Jim said the new lighting largely resolved the problem with the geese, so the money allocated for fencing had been removed.

Laurie Corona disagreed that the pond doesn't need new fencing. She said that because of the new lights the geese still land in the pond and the problem has not been fixed. The fence needs to remain. Lisa Doggart said she has the binder of all of the recommendations for the pond and a fence is in all of the recommendations. One thing to consider is that the fence should not go all the way down to the ground so as not to trap turtles inside and unable to get to the ground to lay eggs. The budget committee will continue this discussion in April and go back to the pond committee to state that a budget for fencing should be reinstated. It seems there could be \$1,700 allocated to fencing.

There was a discussion of Playground improvements. Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents said the playground needed improvements.

It was suggested that someone touch base with the Town to learn more about what it did to improve its playground.

**ACTION ITEM #6:** Move forward with getting some estimates on the playground and include that in the list to discuss in April.

There was a discussion about Pickleball. Paul discussed with an expert who gave a rough estimate of \$24,000-\$35,000 for various noise barrier treatments. This expert said that anything that is done for noise remediation needs to be controlled by the line of sight. Depending on where the line of sight to the pickleball is where the noise control needs to reach. If you can see the pickleball, the noise cannot be mitigated. Mary Ann Heenehan said that 51% of survey respondents said it was a bad idea to use capital to install noise mitigation, 22% said it was a good idea 27% said not sure. She said that the BOG asked and people said no for a number of reasons, so we need to be careful.

Laurie Corona said she thinks we should wait for any expenditure until we figure out if other things work. She asked about the closure of the fence to keep non-neighborhood people from coming in.

The discussion moved towards requiring quieter paddles and balls and potential time-use restrictions as a first step before diving into major capital expenses. The cost implications of these measures were discussed, with a suggestion to include them in the budget. There seemed to be a consensus on exploring less intrusive and less expensive alternatives before making significant changes.

Page Heslin asked if there's been any further thought about installing a camera on the clubhouse. There was a mention of enforcement issues related to non-neighborhood kids using the facilities and the potential use of cameras for enforcement. There seemed to be agreement that the installation of cameras should be a priority.

**ACTION ITEM #7:** Consider creating a subgroup to manage the Wi-Fi/camera project.

There was a discussion about installing stairs off the deck of the clubhouse. There seemed to be agreement that this is important.

**ACTION ITEM #8:** Get quotes in time for the April meeting.

There was a discussion about geese. Trip Hartigan noted that the money spent to keep geese off the communal property has shifted the problem to private property owners where the geese now go. Mike Heenehan said that the USDA says the only way really to solve the goose problem is to cull them. The USDA gave a quote of \$5,800.

There was a discussion of capital projects for clubhouse improvements. There was a discussion of winterizing, digitizing, and new appliances. Julie Cameron said the bathrooms are a problem, and they should be a top priority. There was a discussion about ADA Accessibility. More storage is needed. Laurie Corona suggested focusing on storage because there is only so much space we can find in the footprint of the existing clubhouse.

**ACTION ITEM #9:** Continue to work on the storage solutions and bathroom issues as a start.

Mario Harris stated that he felt the only resolution to the pickleball issue is to limit the time of play. He doesn't believe pickleball players should be told how to play the game they love.

Paul Formica closed the meeting stating that the Budget Committee will talk about these capital budget items brought forward today for discussion, and then the Board of Governors will have a vote on what to present to the association. There will be a vote on the operations dollars and a separate vote on each capital dollar line item.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting by Wick Mallory. It was seconded by Lou Piscatelli. The meeting adjourned at 11:46 am.

Respectfully,

Annah Perch  
Recording Secretary

## Meeting Summary

### Main Topics Discussed:

#### 1. Overview of Capital Account Status -

Current Capital Account: \$234,000

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#### 2. Discussion on Specific Capital Projects

- Beach Replenishment: Discussed the possibility of reducing allocated funds from \$51,000 due to lower actual spending in recent years.

- Pond Project: Mentioned a need for \$10,000 to address erosion issues along Lakeshore Drive. -

Right-of-Way Markers: \$2,300 allocated but not yet spent; plans for permanent signage discussed.

- Playground Upgrade: Identified as a priority based on survey results. Discussed replacing equipment and base material. Consideration for special needs swing and consulting with the town on materials used in other playgrounds.

- Pickleball Court Noise Reduction: Explored options for soundproofing barriers, with costs ranging from \$24,000 to \$35,000, plus an additional \$10,000 to enclose the fence. Survey results showed majority opposition to the idea.

Follow-up Points - Beach Replenishment: Consider reducing allocated funds and reallocate to other projects.

- Pond Project: Allocate \$10,000 for erosion repair work. Further discussion needed on the scope and getting more quotes.

- Right-of-Way Markers: Obtain estimates for signage costs.
- Playground Upgrade: Gather estimates for equipment replacement and base material upgrade. Include special needs swing in plans.
- Pickleball Court Noise Reduction: Decide whether to move forward with proposal of soundproofing based on survey feedback and cost implications.
- April Meeting: Finalize discussions on capital projects, including playground and pickleball court, and prepare for association vote.
- Budget Committee Meeting: Discuss adjustments to the pond project budget and fencing needs.