

**GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022
35 Griswold Road, Niantic, CT and ZOOM**

Present: Page Heslin, Lee-Ann Berger, Wick Mallory, Peter Knowles, Bill Christopher

Absent: Lili Plisic, Lou Piscatelli

Also Present: Louise Wilcox, Annah Perch, John Ranelli, Pandy Wohler

1. Call to Order

P. Heslin called the meeting to order at 7:38 PM.

2. President's Report

P. Heslin reported that five more assessment payments have come in, so that there are now only six outstanding. She further reported that the Franzonis have asked about fixing the apron of the driveway. There are a couple of potholes that have been filled with gravel. We are on the list with Northeast Paving and they will tack it on to an existing job at some point. This is the only cost-effective way to do it because it is such a small job.

L. Piscatelli was unable to attend the meeting, but emailed his thoughts on the issue of potentially installing kayak racks on the beach or right of way that he had been asked to look into. He does not believe that installing racks is a good idea – they are expensive and there is no really good and convenient place to put them. He noted that many Towns charge money (\$250+ per season) for the right to store canoes, kayaks etc. on the beaches, and there is a lottery each year for available spots. His recommendation is to note the problem to the Association, express the hope that people will limit stored boats to one craft per household and remove them when not in active use (such as when away from GNBA home), and explain that if the problem persists we will consider implementing official rules and charging to keep boats on the beach. Following discussion, the Board agreed to communicate the problem to the Association (too many boats on beach making it unsightly and taking up valuable beach real estate, many of which are rarely used; people stacking boats on top of other's boats making them hard to access, etc.), and request that: 1) all boats should be marked with the name(s) and phone number(s) of the owner(s); 2) only 2 boats per household should be stored on the beach; 3) boats should be removed if owners are going to be away for period of time (e.g. during vacations, if away during week, etc.); and 4) a household with multiple boats should group their boats together on the wall, but should not put their boats upon any unrelated member's boat. We will monitor this season and consider additional measures if necessary.

3. Treasurer's Report

L. Wilcox provided the Treasurer's Report. There is only one property that has still failed to pay its 2021 property tax bill. Following up on discussion from last meeting concerning potential to allow payment of property taxes electronically, she reported that Bank of America has confirmed that it is OK for the Association as a municipality to

allow tax payments to be made via zelle. There are no associated fees. She proposes having a spreadsheet available on the website where a member can look up the amount of their tax bill. This would make everyone's tax bills visible to the entire membership. Louise pointed out that comparable information is already publicly available through the Town website. The Board will consider further.

4. Update on West Beach

- A. Groyne: No update – W. Mallory will discuss with Docko to see both whether we are allowed to make any repairs to the groyne, and whether it is advisable to do so even if permitted. The issue is that the concrete cap is breaking up and the underlying rocks are beginning to fall away.

- B. Curb: L. Wilcox will follow-up with the Town re rebuilding the curb to address water run-off issues. They have said we are on their list “for the Spring.”

5. Update from Clubhouse Grounds Development Committee

L. Wilcox reported on the work that the committee has done during the past winter. She reported that its primary goals were to: 1) provide safe access to the “short-fence side of the court” and adjacent grassy area; 2) provide shade near the court; 3) provide a multi-generational games field; and 4) provide landscaping and playscape enhancements. The proposals to address these issues are not interdependent and therefore do not need to be done all at one time. The issue with access to the far side of the court is that there is a steep slope down to the playground at the clubhouse end. The committee proposes constructing a retaining wall and bringing in fill to create a more level walkway around the end of the court. With respect to shade, the committee proposes building an open-sided pavilion on the grassy area opposite the entrance to the court on the far side. This would provide shade and a gathering/viewing area for both the court and any games areas on the remainder of the grassy area. We could have some chairs and picnic tables under cover of the roof. Alternatively or in addition, we could hang removable canvas shades between the clubhouse and end of court. In addition, to the retaining wall/improved pathway to far side of court and new pavilion, the committee noted that if we want to tie the clubhouse in to the playground and court areas more seamlessly, we could expand the deck at the rear of the clubhouse and have steps and/or a ramp down to the new path. This would provide more deck space above, as well as the ability to enter/exit the deck from the rear rather than only through the clubhouse. This would also include repair/replacement of the existing lattice work surrounding the area under the current deck, which is in severe disrepair. The committee considered creating various dedicated game areas in the remaining open grassy area behind the court. There are some complications due to the significant slope down to the playground on the clubhouse end. In addition, there will need to be significant clearing of brush in the area adjacent to the basketball end of the court. Discussion followed about whether we want to have specific permanently-installed structures for games such as badminton, bocce, horseshoes, etc. There is not as much room as it may seem to allow for multiple defined areas and structures and room to walk between/among them. Choices may have to be made. This can be done as a separate project once the sitework for new pathways/pavilion etc. is

constructed (if approved by Association). With respect to potential playground enhancements, L. Wilcox noted that: 1) the mulch is often in disrepair and requires constant replenishment and maintenance; 2) the current playground benches are in poor repair; and 3) the current playground boundaries are poorly defined and sloped. To address these issues the committee recommends: 1) replacing existing mulch with a permanent, rubberized surface; 2) defining the southern end with a retaining wall with steps to the court area (can be done as part of the pathway project discussed above); 3) replacing two benches; and 4) adding “beach-friendly” landscaping to appropriate areas. The committee has solicited bids for the various proposals to get a sense of potential cost for purposes of making a proposal to the Association. Contractors were unwilling to give fixed prices given constantly fluctuating prices and ongoing supply-chain issues but did give some non-binding estimates for certain elements of the potential projects as follows:

A. Installing retaining wall/levelling slope at far end of court and building walkway to pavilion at far side:	\$28,050
B. Pavilion on foundation of pavers:	\$16,640
C. Deck expansion and upgrade:	\$52,800
D. Bocce pit	\$20,000
E. 3” rubberized material for playground	\$ 2,300

The Board thanked L. Wilcox and her committee for all of their hard work. It will review, discuss, and consider what to propose to the Association. It may make sense to prioritize and make proposals in stages, both financially and substantively. We should expect that costs may increase somewhat given the time it will take to obtain Association approval for any or all of the above projects, but we can get multiple competitive bids once we have an approved initial project scope. To be discussed further at regular May meeting.

6. 2022-2023 Budget Planning

On behalf of the Budget Committee, P. Wohler reported that they are in the process of getting proposed operational budgets from the various committee chairs. As an aside some committees still do not have any chairs – we need to solicit volunteers. Following discussion, the Board agreed to hold a special meeting on May 3, 2022 at 8:00 PM to walk through the proposed budget once the Committee has finalized a draft. P. Knowles noted that he will not be able to attend the Annual Meeting.

7. Holiday Weekend Security Coverage

Discussion whether to hire an off duty police officer for one or more holiday weekends this season, either independently or in conjunction with the Heights. Last summer it was rainy most holiday weekends and coverage wasn’t really needed. Following discussion consensus was that Memorial Day is too early and Labor Day is too late, but we should offer to split cost of July 4th weekend coverage with the Heights if the officer will spend some time up at our beach as well. L. Berger will discuss with S. Whittaker and let Budget Committee know if expense should be included in budget.

8. Committee Reports

T. Hartigan reported on behalf of the Court Committee that the court has been open for play since April 1st. He installed the nets and John from Classic Turf will be coming over

Saturday to do a quick inspection. The online reservation system is up and running. The free system is called Skedda and can be accessed through the web or via a mobile app. Russ Moore will issue credentials to any members requesting access. An email will go out to Association Members within the next week or so with instructions on how to access and use the system.

9. Comments from the Public

None.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: (Berger/Knowles) to adjourn at 9:13 PM.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,
Page Heslin, President and Acting Secretary