

GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF GOVERNORS – MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

Helen Lena Clubhouse/Hybrid Meeting Via Zoom

DRAFT

Present: Ernie Annibale, Chip Brienza, Julie Cameron, Paul Formica, Mary Ann Heenehan, Gerry van Noordennen.

Absent: Lou Piscatelli.

1- Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Giants Neck Beach Association Board of Governors was called to order at 6:46 p.m. by President Paul Formica.

2- President's Report

Paul reported that Lou was absent due to the recent passing of his mother. Paul suggested that the Board send condolences on behalf of the Association, either in the form of a donation or a memorial tree. The Board agreed to proceed with sending condolences to the Piscatelli family.

3- Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Lorie Carlson reported that the Association's balances were as follows:

Operations Account: \$74,419

Tax Collection Account: \$100

Capital Reserve Account: \$51,688

Money Market Account: \$238,915

Total Association funds: \$365,122.

Lorie Carlson reported that revenue since the last meeting included \$2,450 in Association cottage rent. Expenses since the last report totaled \$2,702.

Projected future revenue through June 30 is \$10,311, resulting in projected operating funds of \$84,730 against projected operating expenses of \$69,234.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Chip Brienza and seconded by Julie Cameron. The motion carried unanimously.

4- Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the March 4, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Gerry Van Noordennen and seconded by Julie Cameron.

During the discussion, Paul noted that the Dock Committee update is included as an attachment to the minutes and should be considered part of the record.

The motion carried unanimously.

5- Items for Discussion

A. Budget Overview for Fiscal Year 2026–2027

Costa Loukelis presented an overview of the proposed operating and capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Costas reported that the budget committee received input from all budget owners. Total expenses for the current year are approximately \$171,790. The current projected roll-up is approximately \$196,000, which is about \$25,000 higher. There is a favorable 24/25 variance of approximately \$22,242, resulting in adjusted projected expenses of approximately \$174,673 compared to \$172,201 for the current year.

On the revenue side, projected revenue is approximately \$42,400, which is about \$1,500 higher than this year's budget. This includes approximately \$1,800 in anticipated additional revenue.

The overall budget is relatively flat. The mill rate would remain the same, assuming a transfer of approximately \$25,000 from reserve funds; however, it was noted that this amount may not be sufficient given anticipated capital needs.

The clubhouse budget is requesting an increase of approximately \$3,850, including \$1,500 for basement space improvements, \$1,000 for deck repairs, \$700 for pest control, and increases in utilities and maintenance.

Grounds expenses are increasing, including approximately \$3,000 for installing a gabion and additional costs to repair a damaged post.

Board of Governors expenses include \$8,750 submitted for security and safety. Legal expenses are projected to increase (\$7,500 increase included in the numbers above), with the Board discussing raising the legal budget to a \$20,000 increase.

The budget also includes proposed capital and maintenance items, including \$10,000 for dam maintenance, \$5,000 for wall repair, and an approximately \$600 increase for the Lakeshore project due to inflation. Additional items discussed include a shoreline erosion project and dock replacement, both of which remain to be determined.

It was noted that without resolution of these TBD items, the \$25,000 reserve transfer may not be adequate unless the Association is willing to draw further from reserves.

The budget includes a proposed employee pay increase of 7.5%; however, the Budget Committee recommends a 3.5%.

Budget Committee comments included concern about significantly higher electric bills in November and December, likely due to extended seasonal use of the clubhouse. A recommendation was also made to break out insurance costs for the Association cottage to better track expenses.

It was noted that the Association does not currently have a formal capital plan, and there was general agreement that a capital planning committee should be formed to identify long-term needs and priorities.

Paul recommended adding \$4,000 to the budget for installing a fence at the Association cottage property, if needed. Paul also recommended increasing the legal budget to \$20,000 due to anticipated legal work related to charter issues and the Franzoni matter, noting that Robinson & Cole has been engaged to assist with these issues.

A question was raised about whether the townwide revaluation process would affect the Zoning Board of Appeals' costs. It was noted that \$500 is currently included in the budget for ZBA-related notices and that no significant changes are anticipated at this time.

B. Legal Services Update

Paul reported that the Association has engaged Robinson & Cole to provide legal guidance on several matters.

Gerry reported that preliminary feedback indicates that the Association was created by special legislative act and is governed by its charter rather than by general nonstock corporation statutes. As a result, notice and procedural requirements are governed by the charter.

Gerry stated that Robinson & Cole will provide formal written guidance on this matter.

Gerry further reported that Robinson & Cole has been asked to provide recommendations regarding financial oversight, including whether all Association funds and expenditures should be incorporated into the formal budget process under the Board of Governors.

Franzoni Lease - Paul reported that the Franzoni lease expired in June of the prior year and that no agreement has been reached despite prior discussions. He stated that the Association is considering installing a fence along the property line to restrict access if necessary. He noted that survey markers confirm the property boundary. He stated that legal counsel is reviewing the situation and will advise on next steps, including enforcement and potential legal remedies. Paul also noted that the owner of the Franzoni property damaged the apron during construction and that reimbursement may be required.

Costa asked what practical difference it makes whether GNBA is treated as a nonstock corporation or as a special municipal entity created by a special legislative act. Gerry responded that the distinction affects the applicable notice and posting requirements, noting that GNBA follows the requirements in its charter rather than the different requirements applicable to nonstock corporations. Page Heslin commented that GNBA is more accurately understood as a special tax district or special charter municipality and that, if confirmed by legal counsel, that status should be clearly stated because it would help address the concerns raised. Gerry stated that Robinson & Cole will provide formal written guidance on this matter.

Membership Information Request - Paul reported that Robinson & Cole is also reviewing whether full member contact information can be shared. Preliminary guidance suggests that individual member consent would be required prior to the release of such information.

Giants Neck Heights Collaboration- Chip Brienza reported that GNBA has reached an agreement with the GNHA to share police coverage for the July 4 holiday. Paul stated that the Heights will include GNBA in their existing police coverage plan, and GNBA will contribute toward any additional costs.

Paul noted that it has not yet been determined whether additional funds will be allocated for monitoring beach access, given the limitations on restricting beach access. Paul stated that this topic will be discussed further at the June membership meeting.

A member asked how July 4 monitoring would function in practice, including where a GNBA monitor might be stationed, what role monitors could appropriately play at beach access points, and the distinction between observing and reporting activity versus enforcement. The discussion reflected that GNBA cannot deny access to the beach, but could potentially address stopping, parking, unloading, and related traffic issues, with police maintaining a defined role in safety and enforcement.

Costa noted that \$8,750 has been included in the proposed budget for security and safety.

Chip explained that the intent is not only to stop individuals but also to manage traffic flow through the area. Chip stated that safety is a priority and that GNBA would not place anyone in a situation that could create risk. Chip noted that there would always be an adult presence prior to police involvement and that the Board will evaluate how the approach works this season. Chip stated that GNBA is committed to ensuring police have a clear, defined role in enforcement during the July 4 period.

6- Committee Reports

Beach Committee - Mike reported that the committee continues to address erosion concerns at the end of the Griswold right-of-way, where the beach access stairs meet the sand. Mike explained that this location has experienced the greatest erosion and that the committee is proposing the installation of a gabion basket, described as a metal cage filled with stone and buried to function as the last step, as a temporary solution to provide safer access to the beach. Mike noted that a more permanent step would likely require additional DEEP review, so the gabion is being considered as a practical interim measure. He reported that the estimated cost is now approximately \$3,600, higher than originally anticipated because materials suitable for the shoreline environment are more expensive than expected.

Mike reported that spring beach cleaning will take place in early May. The beaches will also be monitored during that work to ensure compliance with DEEP requirements.

Mike revisited the recommendation to limit the number of vessels stored on the beach to one per household. He explained that in some locations, vessels are stacked as many as four deep, creating congestion and making access difficult.

Mike reported that the committee discussed using tags to identify vessels permitted to remain on the beach. He volunteered to help residents register their boats and obtain tags. He stated that if vessels are left on the beach without tags, one option would be to move them under the clubhouse deck until claimed.

Mike also reported that he and Jim Beaulieu will review the prior survey and take measurements to determine how much sand was lost over the winter. He stated that some areas may actually have gained sand this year. After the measurements are taken, the committee will determine whether additional beach replenishment is needed.

Ernie asked whether the vessel-tagging requirement was only a recommendation. Mike Heenehan confirmed that it is a Coast Guard requirement to tag, not just a recommendation.

Mike reported that Old Black Point has received two Connecticut Port Authority grants, one for \$100,000 and another for \$400,000, for shoreline-related projects. He noted that Old Black Point was farther along in the process and had already completed the documentation needed to support its applications.

Paul responded that, based on his discussions with Mike O'Connor of the Connecticut Port Authority, he feels comfortable that once GNBA has its documentation and approvals in place, the Port Authority could move quickly on an application. He stated that this gave him some comfort in planning for future dock-related expenses.

Mike also suggested that the wall repair be considered for inclusion in a future Port Authority grant application.

Ponds and Wildlife Committee - Gerry reported that, after limited success last year clearing vegetation from the children's fishing area in the pond, Lisa Doggart consulted with DEEP for guidance. The DEEP recommended placing large mats over the pond weeds in the fishing area for approximately 6 weeks to kill the vegetation and create a clearer area for children to fish. Gerry stated that the mats had already been purchased and were included in the monthly expenses, and that this approach would eliminate the need to continue raking the area by hand.

PWC- Mary Ann Heenehan reported that the PWC is celebrating its 100th year, and a centennial celebration is planned for July 11. She noted that no tickets will be sold at the door.

Mary Ann also reported that Pandy Wohler contacted Irene Makiaris (GNIC) and Marilyn Jacobs and Jim Ventres (zoning) about placing a children's Little Free Library in the vicinity of the existing library. They had no issues with the placement but suggested approval from the BOG. The consensus was to proceed with installing the new Little Library for children.

Mary Ann reported that an anniversary cookbook is being planned for the centennial celebration.

7- Public Comments

Costa explained that last year the Association opened a money market account and that the funds in that account remain separate from the operating account balance regularly reported by the Treasurer. Costa noted that interest earned on the money market account is treated as revenue in the budget, but the funds themselves remain in the account unless formally transferred. Costa raised the question of whether Board approval is needed to transfer accumulated interest from the money market account to the operating account, so the accounts more accurately reflect the revenue used in the budget.

Lorie explained that when the budget is prepared, all interest is treated as revenue available for operating expenses. She stated, however, that the money has remained in the money market account since Louise opened it in August 2024 and has not been used to pay operating expenses. Lorie reported that the amount currently in the money market account representing this interest revenue is \$14,010. She noted that it is still revenue, but it is not actually reflected in the operating account balance.

The Treasurer uses Excel rather than an accounting program such as QuickBooks.

Questions were raised regarding the legal enforcement of actions related to the Franzoni property, including potential responses if access restrictions are challenged. Paul responded that the Board will proceed based on legal guidance and will take appropriate steps once a plan is finalized.

8- Board Comments

The Board discussed the need to move forward with capital planning and budget development in advance of the June meeting.

9- Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annah Perch
Recording Secretary

The next regular Board of Governors meeting will be held on May 6, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.