

**GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
MEETING MINUTES**

**April 3, 2024**

**6:30 pm**

**Helen Lena Clubhouse, 31 West Pattagansett Road, Niantic CT 06357**

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

**Absent:** Gerry van Noordennen

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

1. President's Report

Water has been turned on. Heat has been turned on.

Edward Jones account is awaiting signatures.

BOG is in need of a nominating committee.

2. Treasurer's Report

There is a total of \$263,000 in accounts. Revenue is in the savings account interest and rent.

Lou Piscatelli made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Mary Ann Heenehan seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

3. Approval of March 6 meeting minutes

Laurie Corona made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mary Ann Heenehan, and carried unanimously after no discussion.

4. Approval of March 23 meeting minutes

Laurie Corona made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Lou Piscatelli, and carried unanimously after no discussion.

5. Capital Items for the Next Fiscal Year

A. Discussion of the Lakeshore Drive Erosion Project and pond fencing. The Lakeshore Drive Erosion Project involves trenching and planting to prevent land movement towards the pond, with a budget up to \$10,000.

Jim Beaulieu explained that the idea is to dig a 2x3 trench up to 100 ft long, fill it with rock backfill to street level then seed it.

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TOWN CLERK

B. Upper Pond fencing was discussed for geese control, with a budget up to \$2,000. The discussion included the effectiveness of fencing and other methods to control geese population. Jim Beaulieu doesn't believe fencing will solve the geese problem.

There was a discussion of how the lights on the pond have moved the geese to private properties.

Kerry Orshal recalled that the DEEP studied the geese issue several years ago and suggested the BOG pull that report out and see what it said.

There was a consensus to include the Lakeshore Drive Erosion Project in the proposed budget for \$10,000. Further discussion about pond fencing is needed.

#### C. Playground Proposed Budget Item

Mary Ann Heenehan met with Jerry Lokken from the Department of Parks and Recreation and Michael McDuffy from US Playgrounds. It was determined that the surface of the playground is good, and playground equipment is high quality. The biggest hazards are exposed concrete, and the placement of the benches and table. US Playgrounds proposed several options, including adding 8 inches of engineered wood chips and then ADA-compliant matting on top of wood chips. Three options were discussed with different price points of \$26,000 for engineered wood chips covered with clay matting which is replaceable piece by piece if there is damage, \$13,000 for engineered wood chips with matting in key areas, and \$4,000 for just non-toxic wood chips.

There was discussion that currently wood chips wash away into a neighbor's yard.

Mary Ann Heenehan reminded the group that this was the project that over 70% of survey respondents said was a top priority.

Lou Piscatelli suggested adding in the ADA-accessible swing.

There was consensus was to recommend the cost of wood chips in the proposed budget.

**ACTION ITEM #1** Make concrete plans and assess costs.

#### D. Beach Replenishment

There was a discussion about reallocating funds from the \$51,000 beach replenishment budget. Paul Formica suggested reducing the amount by \$15,000. Lou Piscatelli suggested reducing the amount by \$20,000. This would still leave funds for three sand replenishments per year.

There was a discussion about long-term capital planning for the association that would include some forward thinking of problems that might occur over the next couple of decades due to global warming, and how can we best prepare by putting some money

aside or other resources that we can build.

There was consensus to reduce the allocation by \$15,000 to apply to other capital items.

ACTION ITEM #2: Form a committee to plan for long-term capital planning.

#### E. Digitizing GNBA Records

There was a consensus to allocate \$2,500 toward digitizing records in next year's budget, getting through as much as possible, and allocating more money in future budgets to complete the project.

There was consensus to add \$2,500 to the proposed budget for digitizing records.

#### F. ROW Markers

Irene Makiaris was not present. There was a consensus to keep the item in the proposed budget at \$2,300.

#### G. GNBA Emergency Fund

There was a discussion that \$5,000 in the emergency fund. There was consensus to move the budget item forward at \$5,000 and suggest increasing the amount in the future.

#### H. Geese Lights

There was consensus to hold off on presenting goose lights as an option pending further research and discussion.

#### I. Clubhouse Storage/Bathrooms/Wifi

Paul Formica thinks ½ of the bathroom space can be repurposed for storage. There can be a cabinet put in between the two bathrooms. He received a quote of \$14,000 to work on the bathrooms. Paul felt we could implement his suggestion for less. There was consensus to hold off on this project pending further study.

Mary Ann Heenehan researched the costs of installing wifi in the clubhouse. She proposed using Xfinity to add wifi to the clubhouse for \$132 per month. Spending is \$390 between now and the end of the fiscal year and \$1500 the following fiscal year. Wifi will be for up to three devices.

Mary Ann Heenehan made a motion to use \$390 in the current budget for the installation of wifi in the clubhouse. Lisa Doggart seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEM #3: Install wifi in the clubhouse.

### 6. Multi-Use Court Use Times Action

There was extensive discussion on pickleball court use, including noise concerns from

neighbors and potential restrictions on play times. Paul Formica suggested removing the basketball hoop, having 2 pickleball-free days, changing the hours from 9-6, installing no parking signs, and encouraging quiet rackets.

Each BOG member commented on Paul's suggestion.

MaryAnn Heenehan suggested changing the Skedda app so there can be nothing on the court before 9 am or after 7 pm. She suggests 1 pickleball-free day, locking the courts and adding a camera as a deterrent. She felt the GNBA should spend the money on the quiet rackets as a good-faith effort to help the neighbors who are complaining of the disturbance. Mary Ann is not in favor of a user fee.

Lisa Doggart felt there should be reduced morning hours and pickleball be an evening activity between 4 pm and 8 pm.

Lou Piscatelli suggested starting later in the morning and having hours from 9 am – 5 pm, shut down from 5-7 down at dusk, mandating quiet paddles, buying paddles for players to use. He also suggested that there are mufflers for the paddles that currently cost around \$40. Lou said we can't have a community divided over pickleball. Wick Mallory agreed with Lou. Thinks it's a good idea to avoid the dinner hour.

Laurie Corona agreed to limiting the time for playing paddleball to 9-5, then 7-dusk. Fewer hours on Sunday. Laure had concerns about paying for paddles.

The BOG discussed the pickleball-free day and agreed that Thursday would be a good day. They also agreed that encouraging decorum is important.

Russ Moore, chair of the court committee said the thought the issue is noise reduction. Why limit hours if the noise gets reduced? He suggested first trying to see if noise reduction works to satisfy everyone. Russ agreed with taking out the basketball hoop.

Kerry Orshal strongly objected to eliminating the basketball hoop. She would like to see limiting the hours for basketball first. She suggested looking at the skedda app data to see when the court is the most heavily used. Kids already only play basketball when the court is available.

Mark Berger stated that it is fundamentally wrong to have a court like this in this space. The court should be closed after 5 pm.

Mario Harris thinks eliminating the basketball hoop is a bad idea. Tom Doggart agreed.

Alan Pease used a sound meter to measure the decibel levels and recorded 80 dba with quiet balls.

Mary Ellen Donegan is part of the Grounds and Improvement Committee. She felt the GNBA needs to try using the quiet paddles. She does not believe it should restrict hours, yet. She disagrees with taking down the basketball net.

Trip Hartigan reminded the group that the agenda for the meeting doesn't mention basketball. He said that it was agreed a long time ago that the GNBA would try incremental steps to get to a solution. The first step was to mandate quieter equipment. He stated that 8 am is the most popular time for paddle ball. Trip said there needs to be better communication between the BOG and the Court Committee.

Rena & Joseph Deagosto asked to remove the basketball net.

After listening to all public comments, the consensus was to take action on mandating quiet paddles only at this time. Sound testing will be conducted over the next few weeks and results will be evaluated at future meetings.

Mary Ann Heenehan made a motion to mandate the use of quiet paddles. Lou Piscatelli seconded and the motion carried.

Jim Beaulieu stated that BOG has a constitutional duty. He asked the BOG to concern itself with what the charter says.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annah Perch  
Recording Secretary

Next meeting: May 5

Page 1 #3 (2 seconds)

Page 2- Kerry Orshal

Department of Parks and Recreation

- no dollar amount set for handicapped swing
- re playground, I thought consensus was to send it to the budget committee for wood chips only
- Lou suggested 20 and Paul suggested 15k

Page 3

Row Markers remained at 2300 i think

- I thought consensus was to keep the emergency fund and perhaps increase it?
- the clubhouse committee got the quotes; Paul felt we could do his suggestion for less
- not 3 modems; the system will support 3-5 devices

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Laurie (not Laure)

Mark Berger  
Tom Doggart  
Donegan

Page 5

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