

Shelter Harbor Fire District Board of Governors Meeting

Saturday, June 18,2022 at the Dunns Corner Fire Station

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

- The meeting was called to order at 9:05 A.M. by Moderator Patrick Kinney
- The meeting was conducted in person.
- Board Members present : Robert Palumbo, Marianne Nardone, Denise Williams, Michael McEntee and Jack Waters Absent: Alex Platt
- Officers present: Glen Berwick, Treasurer, Richard Gregory, Collector of Taxes & Assessor, Paul Eldridge, Clerk
- District Counsel: David Petraca
- Moderator Kinney welcomed all District residents in attendance

II. Minutes of May 7,2022 BOG meeting -Review, Discussion and /or Vote by the Board

- The Moderator asked if Board Members had reviewed the Minutes of the BOG Meeting held on Saturday, May 7,2022. No corrections or additions were made. A motion was made by Michael McEntee to accept the minutes ,seconded by Denise Williams.The motion passed 5-0.

III. New Business -Review, Discussion and or Vote by the Board

A. Finance Committee and Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer Glen Berwick reviewed the Shelter Harbor Fire District Balance Sheet as of June 15, 2022. and Profit and Loss Statement as of May 31,2022.Treasurer Berwick also provided a “best estimate” projection of the amount of money which will be expensed for the remainder of the District’s fiscal year. Assuming no unexpected expenses are incurred during the remainder of the fiscal year, we should end the year with a General Fund surplus of \$7500. Mr. Berwick also provided a statement of the District’s proposed budget for the 2023 fiscal year.

- Mr. Berwick pointed out there has been an increase in the General List of 44.5% for 2023 from 2022 because of upward reevaluations of existing SHFD real property as well as new construction. In addition, the Priest's property was transferred to the SHFD from DCFD. Payroll expenses are up because of increased salaries for life guards and Weekapaug security costs. The 2023 Operating Budget is expected to go up by approximately \$20,000. The 2023 Capital Budget initially was projected to go up \$40,000, \$15,000 allocated for a major tree trimming project, \$5000 for Boat Racks and \$20,000 for the Kyak and Dingy Floating Dock Launch Improvement. There is also a planned \$10,000 addition to the Capital fund and a \$5000 addition to the Litigation fund and a \$2500 undesignated Surplus addition.
- After listening to the Agenda items in New Business, Community Agent Reports and New Business, the BOG made some adjustments to the proposed FY 2023 Operating and Capital budgets. There was an addition to the Capital budget for \$7,500 for new picnic tables for Harbor Field. The Kayak and Dingy Floating Dock Project was reduced to \$18,000. There was an amount of \$18,000 for improving the swim dock at Grove Dock. Also, there was \$5,800 added to the Safety and Security budget in the Operating Budget for Speed Humps and \$3000 for pickleball courts added to the Tennis budget. Also, the BOG agreed to apply the projected \$7500 surplus in the FY 2022 operating budget to the Roads budget. with these revisions, the Finance and treasurers Report was approved on a motion by Michael McEntee, seconded by Bob Palumbo. The vote of the BOG was 5-0.
- B Update On Shoreline Access Legislation.
- Deming Sherman gave the Board of Governors an update to the proposed Shoreline Access Bill (H8055) Mr Sherman explained H 8055 purports to establish the dividing line between private property and the part of R.I. beaches which are retained as a public trust by Rhode Island for its citizens to use for certain purposes(defined as the "privileges of the shore" in the R.I. Constitution.) This dividing line is defined in the bill as the "seaweed line " which is further defined as the "recognizable high tide line" plus six feet". Mr. Sherman outlined why the proposed boundary line was problematic, eg., the seaweed line changes with the tides, is not fixed, is not always clear and sometimes doesn't exist at all. Given the vagueness of this definition it will be subject to interpretation and will inevitably generate conflicts which will make enforcement difficult. Although the R.I House of Representatives passed H8055 , the Senate did not before the end of the legislative session. Mr. Sherman said H8055 will undoubtedly be reintroduced next year.

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- C Proposal to Buy New Picnic Tables for Harbor Field.
- Rochelle Levins submitted a written proposal to replace the three existing picnic tables at Harbor Field with three new tables with a 20 year projected life, and which offer greater utility and flexibility in handling a variety of different uses. Rochelle noted in her report that there has been a significant uptick in the number and variety of community events using Harbor Field including MahJong and Bridge .The new tables would also facilitate accommodating larger number of attendees for meetings and other community events. The existing tables have a projected three year life span and are deteriorating rapidly and could cause injuries. the tables are also difficult to use for older residents to sit on and get in and out of.The cost of purchasing the three new tables was projected to be between \$6600 to \$7000.The purchase of new picnic tables could not be approved until the 2022 annual meeting approves the FY 2023 budget because there was no money earmarked for them in the operating budget for FY 2022
- D. Proposal to Install Pickleball Courts
- Lisa Pagliarulo submitted a proposal to install pickleball courts. This report was endorsed by an additional 13 Shelter Harbor families. Lisa's report made the case that adding a pickleball option to the existing tennis courts would add an amenity and allow greater usage of a current resource. Ms Pagliarulo had consulted with Westboro Tennis Surfaces to develop two options for installing the pickleball courts on the existing tennis courts.The first option was to install one pickleball court on one tennis court using the existing tennis net.the cost to paint lines was \$850 per court or \$1700 if both courts had pickleball lines painted on them. he second option would be to have two pickleball courts on one tennis court , one on each side of the tennis net. The cost to paint the lines would be \$750 per pickleball court or \$1500. Two portable nets on wheels would also need to be bought at a cost of \$400 each. . the total cost of option two would be \$2300. Adding the pickleball courts to the existing tennis courts could not be approved because there was no money earmarked for it in the FY 2022 operating budget.
- E. Renee Gallagher's Request to Prune Trees On on SHFD Property on Rossini Road
- The request by Renee Gallagher to prune trees on SHFD land opposite her house on Rossini Road was discussed by BOG members. On a motion by Jack Waters and seconded by Marianne Nardine, the Board voted 5-0 to deny Ms. Gallagher's request.
- F, Appointment of Community Agents.(Term Ending at the 2022 Annual Meeting)
Moderator Kinney proposed Paul Eldridge as Database Agent.

On a motion by Bob Palumbo which was seconded by Denise Williams, Paul Eldridge was approved as Database Agent by a Board vote of 5-0.

- G. Community Agent Reports

1)-Light

Richard Gregory had previously reported on a problem which has developed with our LED street lights in several locations in Shelter Harbor. Some residents have complained about light “trespass” from the road into their yards and bedrooms. After investigating alternative ways of ameliorating the problem, Mr. Gregory met with Prism, a nonprofit organization specializing in installing efficient LED street lights in Rhode Island. Prism’s recommendation was to install street lights which have shielding features, which will keep the light on the street where it belongs. The new equipment can be installed at a price of \$400 per street light pole. The installation cost would be paid by homeowners who want the new shielding equipment.

The BOG at our May 7, 2022 meeting directed Mr. Gregory to send an email to the SHFD homeowners explaining the problem and providing an application if a homeowner wanted to have the light shields installed in a street light pole by their house. The email and the applications were sent out to our Community by Alex Platt on May 10, 2022. Mr Gregory reported that he has received seven applications from residents to put street light shields on street light poles near their homes. The following street light poles are slated to have light shields installed: Rossini road poles 23, 17, 21, 9 and Wagner road pole 28 and Verdi road pole 4.

2) Roads and vegetation.- Steve Sweeney’s report contained updates on the condition of the Shelter Harbor Fire District roads and vegetation encroachment which is shrinking the width of our roads. Mr Sweeney’s report indicates our roads are overdue for significant repair and replacement. A major decision needs to be made whether to incur significant sums to adopt a solution which would involve removing the existing asphalt, pack a solid foundation, level and install berms, and apply a type of asphalt which would last for twenty years. The alternative to Mr Sweeney’s preferred plan would be to continue doing what we have historically done which (in Mr. Sweeney’s opinion) is to use Chipseal repairs which don’t last very long, are more costly in the long run, and do not address the accumulating road structural problems. M. Sweeney details in his report.

Mr. Sweeney also pointed out roadside vegetation overgrowth has become a nuisance and a pedestrian safety issue in some areas. Mr, Sweeney reminded everyone that most of the right of way vegetation overgrowth is on SHFD owned property. The BOG should encourage property owners to voluntarily cut back their plantings that prevent safe access to the right of way on their property. (allowing

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three to five feet of safe space near the asphalt) If necessary, the Board should issue direct requests to landowners to cut back vegetation encroaching on the right of way. After discussion, the Board consensus was they were not adopting the recommendation to spend \$750,000 to commit to a plan to tackle all our road issues at once. Instead, the BOG opted for a short term and long term plan. The short term plan would address road issues which needed to be done “yesterday”.(eg., road erosion on Bach road between Verdi and Rossini roads) and vegetation cut back. The long term plan was to add additional funds to continue to make road maintenance and vegetation trimming a priority.

3) Community Functions- Marianne Nardone reviewed the schedule of 2022 Independence Day community events.

4. Tennis-Mary DiCecco’s report provided four comments on the proposal to install pickleball courts. First, that our excellent tennis courts be preserved as well as possible during the process of adding pickleball courts. Second, that the pickleball lines be installed on only one tennis court until we know that there is enough interest to justify using both tennis courts. Third, we should anticipate and plan for the likelihood that satisfying the demand for court time for both tennis and pickleball players will become greater than our capacity to satisfy both groups. Fourth, that costs of installing the pickleball option should be covered by additional funds allocated in the Budget rather than from funds already allocated for tennis.

G. Old Business

1) Approval to Replace Rhododendrons Destroyed By Vandalism - The BOG after a short discussion approved replacing the rhododendrons destroyed by vandalism in the garden adjacent to the SHFD tennis courts.

2) Update on the Proposed Kayak and Small Boat Launch Improvement for Grove and Point Docks and Harbormaster Report- Richard Ferris updated the BOG on the following items: 1) Three large “no wake markers” have been repaired; 2) Mr Ferris purchased anchors ,chain line and hardware for two markers;3) The additional wood edge in the Grove dock swim area was repaired . Also Grove Dock wooden swim dock was repaired and repositioned the cement slab at Point Dock boat ramp; 4) water hoses were set up at Grove and Point Docks with new nozzles.

- Mr Ferris updated the Board on his discussion with Ninigret Landing Marina to work up cost estimates to improve safe access to the water for small boats and kayaks. There is a second option being explored which in addition to the first option would improve dock safety by replacing the existing slippery cement with a dry ramp surface to walk on and a kayak launch accessory to stabilize the boat or kayak

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during launching. These features would be removed at the end of each season and stored at Grove Dock.

- Additionally, the current 8'by 8' swim dock attached to the cement at Grove Dock has to be repeatedly repaired because of frequent storm damage. The pilings are showing excessive wear and it will have to be repaired or replaced in the near future. Ninagret Landing Marina is working up costs estimated to accomplish all of the following projects as part of a comprehensive plan or individually and alternative time schedules to complete the work. CRMC approval has not yet been received.
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- H. Discussion and Comments from SHFD community members
 - 1) Gail Mallard is concerned we only vote on the budget for the next Fiscal Year at the Annual Meeting in total, without any opportunity to vote on line items in the budget which the majority of voters if given the opportunity would not support.
 - 2) Rochelle is very concerned with the emerald ash borer beetle infestation on a tree on the McFadden land which needs to be addressed before it spreads.. Rochelle also renewed her request that the Beach Bus Route be changed to make it easier for residents of the western side of SH to utilize the bus. Rochelle suggested a proposed change in the bus route which she believed would accommodate her concerns.(see comment section of minutes of May7,2022 BOG meeting.). Rochelle also offered the services of her son who is a civll engineer with extensive experience in road construction and maintenance as an unpaid consultant.
 - 3) Susan Carter requested we be careful not to over do the foliage trimming.
 - 4) Art Weiner commented he believed the BOG should review whether we should retain our current attorneys or hire new ones.
 - 5) we also had comments questioning why some contractors don't want to work in Shelter Harbor, comments endorsing the safety issues at the docks, and one on road safety issues. Finally there was a comment that the CRMC has rules which prohibit trees within a hundred feet of the water.and signs to be put up to indicate work or other activity is taking place.

IV. Adjournment

Moderator Kinney thanked everyone for attending the meeting and then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Marianne Nardone and seconded by Bob Palumbo.The vote in favor was 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 P.M.

Meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted June 22 ,2022

By Paul W. Eldridge-Clerk