



# TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

**SANDY NECK BOARD**  
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## **Sandy Neck Board Meeting January 8, 2024**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sandy Neck Board was held on January 8, 2024, at 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Conference Room.

Chair:

Thomas O'Neill

Vice Chair:

Peter Sampou

Board Members:

William Carey  
William Monroe  
Maureen Piccione  
Rene King

Council Liaison:

Gordon Starr  
Kris Clark

Barnstable

PD Liaison:  
Chris Kelsey

### **Roll Call:**

Board Members present by roll call: Tom O'Neill, Maureen Piccione, Bill Carey, and Rene King.

Board Members absent: Bill Monroe and Pete Sampou.

Staff: Sandy Neck Park Manager, Nina Coleman, Natural Resource Officer, Ann Marie Luppino, and Operations Supervisor, Donna Bragg.

Staff Member absent:

Council Liaisons present: Kris Clark.

Barnstable Police Liaison:

Public: Paul Berger, Tracy Hallett, Wendy Paquette, and Rich French.

Guest Speaker:

### **Act on Minutes:**

On a motion from Bill Carey and seconded by Maureen Piccione, the Board voted on the acceptance of the December 11, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes.

### **Notes from the Chair:**

1. Tom O'Neill addressed the Board. We have a Board member vacancy due to the election of the Town Council. Tom has been assured the appointment will be filled soon.

**Correspondence:** Nina Coleman addressed the Board. We received a letter containing feedback regarding the Sandy Neck Deer Hunt that she will bring before the Board next meeting.

**Staff Report:** Nina Coleman addressed the Board. \* See attached report.

- Nina introduced Natural Resource Officer, Ann Marie Luppino who has replaced Josh Kelleher. Josh has just completed the Police Academy and is now an Environmental Police Officer, (EPO). Ann Marie has worked for Natural Resources for several years, part time and has been a full time Natural Resource Officer for a while. She has moved over to Sandy Neck full time. She will be presenting the Safety Solutions report this evening.
- Staff has processed and is up to date on the 2024 Off Road Vehicle applications that have been submitted.
- An email blast had been sent out prior to Christmas to all current permit holders, prompting them to download their information and fill out the 2024 application online.
- A reminder that all 2023 Sandy Neck Off Road Vehicle Permits expire on January 15, 2024.
- Donna reminded everyone that currently the Gatehouse is closed and all ORV Permits will be mailed.
- Gatehouse is open by appointment only. We still have merchandise for sale. Please call and make an appointment.
- Off Road Vehicle Beach opens at 8am and curfew is 4 pm daily.
- No campfires allowed.
- Sandy Neck cold stunned sea turtle count as of 1/8/2024 is 9 Kemps Ridley and 2 Loggerhead.
- Nina as well as Tom and Margi O'Neill went out last night in the storm to look for turtles. None were found. Nina said there was some beach erosion but not too much from the storm.
- There was a Board request for information regarding the various studies that are being conducted on Sandy Neck. Hannah emailed the Board with the list. Nina asked if there were any questions concerning the studies. Nina said there were quite a few studies regarding climate change. Tom asked Nina if there could be a quarterly discussion regarding the findings of these projects. Perhaps some of the folks conducting the studies could come and speak to the Board. Rene thought it would be a great idea and something that children would be interested in. Tom asked if there would be something more that the Board could do to engage younger people. Bill Carey said research was very important and he would like more information about the projects than has been provided. Kris Clark wanted to know if it were possible to put links on the Sandy Neck website with the studies findings at the conclusion of the studies. Nina said that a lot of the studies were done in multiple locations and Sandy Neck is one of many sites where the research is being conducted.

## **Old Business:**

**Conservation and beach erosion along our coastlines.** None.

**1. Economic sustainability.** None.

**2. Public outreach and public use & participation.** None.

**Sandy Neck Beach Reconfiguration Project Update.** Tom O'Neill addressed the Board. There is nothing new to report currently. Tom is going to schedule a call with the project team between now and the February Board meeting for an update. Nina said she has seen a lot of progress. Moving closer to the ninety percent design. They are starting communications with Natural Heritage dealing with the Spadefoot Toad habitat. Tom said he will be inviting Town Manager, Mark Ells to a Board Meeting once we have more information.

## New Business:

**1. Sandy Neck Safety Presentation.** Natural Resource Officer, Ann Marie Luppino addressed the Board.

Ann Marie presented the annual Sandy Neck Safety Solutions Report. **\*See attached.**

The report outlined the number of permits sold in 2023 as well as the number of camping nights.

The report summarizes various incidents that occurred over the 2023 season at Sandy Neck. Examples including: Incidents of aggressive behaviors to staff and between patrons, police responses, medical incidents, violations of regulations; both verbal and written. Ann Marie noted the trends for 2023. Off Road Vehicle Permits were down as well as camper nights. Much of this had to do with the weather as it rained almost every weekend during the summer. The report charted data from 2013 through 2023. There have been more staff patrols and training, which the statistics show resulted in more verbal warnings. The number of times Barnstable Police were called to assist was also up as staff was trained to be more pro-active in asking the police department and officers on the beach to help in the de-escalation of situations before they got out of hand. EMS responses have gone up as staff initiates 911 response at the onset of an incident. Staff is very pro-active in responding to potential medical situations. Sandy Neck has a good relationship with West Barnstable Fire Department.

Sandy Neck has a good working relationship with several agencies. Barnstable Police Department, with Chris Kelsey as the Sandy Neck liaison, as well as police training and summer details on the beach. West Barnstable Fire Department provides year-round medical and emergency response services. Also providing training for Sandy Neck staff in public safety and CPR/AED training and an emergency response, in-person drill yearly. Barnstable Harbor Master provides support for all water related incidents as well as staff training for the Sandy Neck emergency response jet ski. The International Fund for Animal Welfare responds to stranding at Sandy Neck and has begun to use Sandy Neck to safely release dolphins when other areas of release are not possible.

Sandy Neck has several public outreach educational programs. Topics include, public safety, EMS equipment, field work, Diamondback Terrapin and Shorebird walks and talks.

2023 Safety Solutions implemented: Antonio Mancha promoted to full time Natural Resource Officer; splitting his time between MEA and Sandy Neck. Natural Resource Officer, Ann Marie Luppino designated to full time at Sandy Neck. Full time Harbor Master and full time Sandy Neck staff completed jet ski training. Patrols were conducted hourly on Bodfish Public Beach. We added two portable toilets at the Trail 4 campsites for all user groups use. Tire pressure checks were conducted at the Access Trail to ensure patrons airing down so as not to get stuck or degrade Access Trail. Designated staff was assigned daily for jet ski response.

Several traffic solutions were implemented. Cutting back of vegetation for visibility throughout the park, spray painting cracks in parking lot to prevent tripping, and place orange cones in the larger potholes to prevent tripping and vehicle damage. Rip tide signs were put up as a public warning when needed. A multi-agency emergency training drill was conducted in June.

A Chevy Tahoe is being purchased for emergency rescue as well as transporting groups for educational purposes. The Sandy Neck fleet vehicles have been standardized with medical equipment. All vehicles have been equipped with either mounts or slings for fire extinguishers.

Looking forward to 2024. Ann Marie will be a certified EMT. Staff will be developing jet ski policies to support safe use in rescue situations. A First Aid outpost shed to be put on the ORV corridor to assist with public emergencies. Update weekly vehicle equipment and monthly AED procedures. Replace/upgrade handheld radios to better communication with Gatehouse and staff. Continue to develop training for seasonal and full-time staff. Continue to reevaluate and develop safety solutions.

Questions: Kris Clark asked who pays for West Barnstable Fire Department responses. Nina said it was part of West Barnstable Fire Department's budget. Rich French said that when someone is transported to the hospital, all services are billed through Com Star and the party's insurance company, or the party is responsible for payment. Bill Carey asked how much use the Jet Ski gets. Ann Marie said we are still developing the program and the jet ski will be used for emergency response and possibly patrols. Nina said we did not have life guards this season and this being the first year we had the jet ski it was a layer of safety. Paddleboards and kayakers who are floating out due to offshore winds are accessible due to the jet ski. Tom said it may be helpful to use ratios in the report. Rich French said that Barnstable Fire Department is responsible for the Cottage Colony and that should be worked into the report next year. Kris Clark asked about the stranded turtles. Nina said that you have to look at the total strandings. Around 700 for the Cape. Nina explained the process of turtle rescue. Rene said that it could

be a great program for children that could be part of the process of turtle rescue. Rene spoke about the possibility of a certified life guard class in Barnstable High School.

**Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bragg, Secretary Pro Tem

Attachments:



2023 Sandy Neck  
Safety Solutions.pdf



January 8th – Staff  
Report.pptx