

The Beach Stipend Committee
July 16, 2014; 7:30 PM
Old Lyme Town Hall Meeting Hall

In attendance: Keith Coakley; Fred Callahan; Wendy Gavin; Rich Dakin; BJ Bernblum; Bonnie Reemsnyder. Beth Cote was absent

1. **Introductions** were made and each member indicated if they were from a private beach association, a private association or neither.
2. **Review FOIA requirements:** First Selectwoman Bonnie Reemsnyder reviewed the FOIA requirements, which this committee is subject to, and includes posting of meeting times, agendas, and minutes. All meetings are to be open to the public.
3. **Review charge of committee:** First Selectwoman reviewed the charge of the Committee, which is attached to these minutes.
4. **Review history of stipends and amounts:** First Selectwoman Reemsnyder explained the history of the beach stipends and the need for the committee. The stipends were first given to some of the beach associations sometime in the 1920's in an effort to defray the cost of road maintenance and security on the beaches. Over the years, the amounts of the stipends have changed, with some increases. In recent years (10 or more) there has been little change in what has been budgeted for the associations. In the last budget process for FY 2015, the Board of Finance questioned the stipends, and a small BOF sub-committee attempted to apply a "standard" to determine the amount of stipend to be given to each association. This committee also researched the history of the stipends, though there is little documentation on specific purposes for the stipends. Ultimately, the Board of Finance requested that the Board of Selectmen weigh in on the continuation of the stipends. The Board of Selectmen determined that it would be best to form a committee to research and review the practice of allocating funds to private beach associations.
First Selectwoman Reemsnyder reviewed the document that the BOF sub-committee presented at one of the budget meetings to demonstrate an attempt to "standardize" the amount of the stipend to be given to beaches. In the end, it was difficult to find a viable standard for determining the stipend without adjustments and subjective factors being used.
5. **Election of Chair and Secretary:** A motion was made by Keith Coakley, seconded by Rich Dakin, to table the election of the Chair and Secretary until the next meeting. So Voted.
6. **Discussion on process:** The committee discussed the process that should be used to develop a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. There was concern that the beach stipends that have been allocated in the past were not done with transparency and knowledge of all tax payers. The committee felt that they should document the tax base of those receiving stipends and distribute this to all members. Rich Dakin agreed to research the number of all private associations within the Town of Old Lyme. Keith Coakley and Fred Callahan agreed to research other communities to determine if others allocated money to associations to support their

budgets. Bonnie agreed to research the historical minutes of the BOS and BOF for any reference to the beach stipends.

7. **Schedule future meetings:** There was some discussion as to how often to schedule meetings. Every two weeks may be difficult, but only once a month may not be enough. The next meeting is scheduled for Wed., Aug. 6th at 5 PM in the Meeting Hall.
8. **Public Comment:** Scott Boulanger, Pres. of Fed. Of Beaches, and a member of Miami Beach Association, thanked the committee for their willingness to serve, and offered any historical information that was available through Miami Beach Association.
9. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM