

The Beach Stipend Committee Meeting Minutes

Aug. 6, 2014; 5:00 PM

Old Lyme Town Hall Meeting Hall

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

1. **Introductions** were made and guests in audience welcomed.
2. **Approval of Minutes of Jul. 16, 2014:** Motion by Keith Coakley to approve minutes, seconded by Rich Dakin. So voted.
3. **Communication:** There was no communication since the last meeting.
4. **Discussion on tasks from previous meeting:**
 - a. **Associations:** Rich Dakin reported that he tried to identify all the associations within the town of Old Lyme, and that this was more difficult than he expected. He visited Town Hall and spoke to various offices trying to get information. There are a range of associations, from small neighborhood associations to chartered associations. He reviewed some, and it was agreed that we should focus on associations that were formed to address privately owned roads. Beth Cote agreed to review the list of private associations as well.
 - b. **Report on other communities:** Keith Coakley searched online to look into associations along the shoreline with special taxes Branford, Clinton, Groton, Niantic, Stonington, Old Saybrook, Westbrook. Some had private roads, but only a few. Fred Callahan spoke with East Hampton regarding Lake Pocataaug, where they have private roads. The Town plows their roads but does not give a stipend. They do patrol their streets and handle any calls for police services. In Groton, the Town Charter requires the town to maintain the private roads in Groton Long Point, and they pay 50% of the police budget of the association, though there is no mandate to do that. The Town feels that 50% is better than 100%, if they had to maintain police services within Groton Long Point. No answer from Old Saybrook yet. There was discussion about Groton Long Point being different than what exists in our community.
 - c. **Historical Minutes:** First Selectwoman Reemsnyder shared some historical Board of Finance Minutes from 1955 through some of the 60's. There were many references to the Beach Associations and requiring the associations to send in their budgets for police and nuisances. There was no clear indication of what "nuisance" referred to, but consistently, there was an amount in the budget each year. There were also comments questioning whether or not the town should be funding certain items. The committee would review the historical minutes to see if anything was helpful. There was further discussion on the justification of the stipend and what it should be used for. Because the beach associations have a private beach within each one, it becomes an attraction to anyone looking for access to the beach. Without private security, the residents within the beach associations feel they would have more trespassing, and thus would be calling the police for enforcement much more often. Fred Callahan said that he met with a member of the OL police department, who indicated that he felt if they had to police the beach areas, it would likely require the hiring of two additional police officers. It was clarified that the police do patrol within the beaches now, but the question is whether or not they would need to increase patrols if the beaches did not have their private security.
5. **Discussion on process:** The committee felt that it would be helpful to have the beach associations who currently receive a stipend submit their budget for review, and meet with the committee to answer questions. Fred Callahan made a motion to request the budgets from the beach associations who were currently receiving a stipend. Second by Rich Dakin. So voted.
6. **Election of Officers:**

- a. Fred Callahan and Keith Coakley agreed to serve as co-chairs. Rich Dakin nominated Fred and Keith as co-chairs. Second by Beth Cote. So voted.
 - b. Wendy Gavin agreed to serve as secretary. Beth Cote nominated Wendy Gavin. Second by Rich Dakin. So voted.
- 7. Schedule future meetings:** It was agreed that 5 PM was okay for everyone. The committee agreed to have a meeting on Aug. 14th at 5 PM, and one on Aug. 21st at 5 PM. The Beach Associations would be invited to speak to their budgets – 4 on each night, giving them about 15 minutes each to do a presentation and answer questions.
- 8. Public Comment: Doug Whalen**, 41 Old Colony Rd. and Chairman of Old Colony Beach Association said that any filings done are now filed with the Town Clerk, rather than the state, which identifies the officers of the association. He also wanted to make sure that this committee does not view the stipends as dollars going to private associations, but rather as dollars going to associations with municipal powers. They have powers that most typical associations don't have – such as the power to have their own building inspector, or zoning officer, etc. He feels that this is why we are looking at this, and that the committee needs to review the charters of each of the associations, which represents 35% of the voters in Old Lyme. They have powers that most typical associations don't have – such as the power to have their own building inspector, or police department, etc., but they choose to work with the Town of Old Lyme. Mr. Whalen feels that they help the Town of Old Lyme, as they are only seasonal, but have lots of expenses each year. Without the security that the beaches pay for, there would be more illegal parking lots within the private associations that the police would have to enforce. He offered to give whatever help the committee needs. **Louisa Grogan** of White Sand Beach Association questioned why this was being discussed, as the Town has been giving stipends for many years, as far back as the 50's, as we discussed. She said that the precedent had been set. She also offered to be of assistance. **Sandy Garvin** of Hawks Nest Beach had some questions about the total amount of the stipend and any increases over the years. She felt that the nuisance reference may have been about fallen trees and debris within the private associations each spring.
- 9. Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 6:08 PM by Fred Callahan. Second by Rich Dakin. **So voted.**

Respectfully submitted

Bonnie A. Reemsnyder