



BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Middlesex Beach Association
July 20, 2024
Online Via Zoom

President Dave Wiecking called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Board Members Present: Dave Wiecking, Margie Cyr, Bob Wood, Kate Mounteer, Paul Bradley, Don Deraska, Kerry Hall, George Rayburn, and Donna Hugues, Solutions Property Management (SPM). **Not Present:** Holly Fluty Dempsey

Motion re: Recording Meeting: Bob Wood moved, George Rayburn seconded that recording of any type of the meeting except for the Zoom recording initiated by the Board or its property manager is not allowed. All were in favor.

Meeting Minutes: Margie Cyr moved, George Rayburn seconded approval of the June 15, 2024 Board Meeting minutes. One correction and a change were recommended. All present voted to approve the revised minutes.

Property Manager's Report: Donna Hugues reported that the Ocean View Presbyterian Church has been reserved for the August 31 Community Meeting. The meeting will start at 9:30 a.m.

President's Report: Dave Wiecking reported that the modified FCC licenses for our radios have been received and posted in guard shack as required by law. Changes to the address of use and contact persons were the primary changes. Dave will be away from August 2 – August 9.

Treasurer's Report: Bob Wood referred us to his written report that is posted on the website for the period ended June 30, 2024. We are in good shape. A question arose about unpaid assessments, and whether passes should be revoked for those properties. As of today, there are 4 unpaid assessments among residential owners. Decision: Donna will call the four members who are delinquent, and follow up with a tracked email noting that we have the option to revoke passes if payment is not received by August 3.

Committee Reports:

Budget/Finance Committee: Bob Wood reported that the Compilation Report for 2023-24 has been received from our Accountants, and will be posted for the community.

MOTION: Bob moved that we pay for the new metal gate frames (approximately \$4500) from Capital Reserves – as this is a continuation of the fence work done in the past fiscal year, and was part of the same project. George Rayburn seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0.

Building: Margie Cyr referred us to her written report, and noted that it will be a very busy year ahead.

MOTION: Margie Cyr reported that the work at 38 Dune Rd. has been completed, inspected, and found to be in compliance, and moved to return the complete deposit amount of \$9,250. Don Deraska seconded. The motion passed 8-0.

MOTION: Margie Cyr reported that the work at 56 Dune Rd has been completed, inspected and found to be in compliance, and moved to return the complete deposit of \$75,000. George Rayburn seconded. The motion passed 8-0.

Community Patrol (CP) / Security: Kerry Hall referred us to his written report and noted the following:

- Intrusions from our north and south beach boundaries have decreased thanks to the extension of dune fences. A flag will also be planted at each end of the beach.
- The Patrol members who worked the evening of July 4 expressed gratitude for gift cards the community provided.
- Reckless driving by one golf cart driver has been addressed. Dave asked that the CP make notes of any carts or LSVs they suspect are being driven by underage drivers.
- Gate Codes – a discussion ensued about our members sharing gate codes with others, and what should be done about it. We will remind members that these codes are not to be shared.
- Kerry Hall recommended we get a group of Board and non-Board members together over the off-season to discuss and come up with recommendations about golf carts, LSVs and gate codes. It was also suggested that Beach etiquette is a topic worth addressing.
- Dave Wiecking asked for the CP to check on where cars are parked overnight on the streets oceanside to collect data for committee use.

Community Facilities: Don Deraska submitted a written report. He was asked about clearing accumulated sand off Mobi mats, and about the fence that appears to be falling near the pollinator gardens on Beach Plum. These are being addressed.

Landscaping: Holly Fluty Dempsey submitted a written report. We are paying a couple of CP members to water plants, and they have offered to do other landscape work along Beach Plum. Margie Cyr noted the importance of Holly's work regarding native plantings, removal of invasives, and the pollinator gardens, and asked that we continue to support these efforts after Holly leaves the Board. She also asked if the CP members (JoAnn Pappalardo and Christina Meilly) who are doing landscaping tasks could be extended into September if available. Dave stated he hadn't discussed it in detail with Holly but he had asked each of them informally if they might be interested in doing such especially if we installed new plantings after Labor Day and they were each interested.

Social: Kate Mounter Many thanks to Linda Uhas, Mary Beth Hendrick and Val Peizer for their roles in organizing the 2nd Annual Happy Birthday America Block Party. We are

working on finalizing plans for the 65 Summers Celebration over Labor Day Weekend, including a catered buffet dinner party on August 31, community photo on the beach, Lanterns on the beach in lieu of bonfire, and Middlesex Plunge on September 1.

Commercial: Marty Shecter Some of the fencing along Beach Plum behind commercial properties is in poor condition, particularly between Bridge and Addy. There are questions about who owns the fencing, whose property it is on, what type of new fencing should be installed, and how it should be paid for. Margie Cyr noted that there are records about this, and offered to share these with the Board. Dave, Marty and Don will meet to discuss how to move forward on this issue.

Beach Patrol: Mark McCulloh presented a mid-summer update. It has been a quiet season thus far with about 20 pulls or medical assists. Our team is great, and relationships with Indian Beach, where we provide guards, have been excellent. Competition for hiring guards will remain a real concern.

- Middlesex will host the Geoff Myers Invitational competition on August 1. This team competition is unique. Please buy t-shirts to support guard travel to Nationals. We will send 3 guards this year, and have raised \$1,000 thus far (in addition to MBA budgeted support.)
- Guards have asked about doing a bonfire or car wash fundraiser. No plans to date. Mark asked if there would be any issue with doing one of these in the future.
- Congratulations to guard Declan Burke, who has won a Ben Carlson College Scholarship. (Carlson was a heroic lifeguard in California who lost his life in a rescue attempt.)
- Junior Lifeguard Program – Mark asks the Board to consider more funding for the Junior Guard program next year, for example to purchase uniforms, as this is a major pipeline for future guards. The days of getting college kids to guard our beach is past due to the high cost of living in the area.
- It was suggested that we might want to install a couple of self-help buoys that could be used to assist struggling swimmers when guards are not on duty.
- There was discussion about extending guard hours to 5:30. This might be possible with some schedule changes. (Though guards don't favor the idea, nor does supervisor, Holden Wingate, they don't think there are enough swimmers that late in the day.)

Sand: Dave Wiecking noted that he had received materials from committee chair, Steve Larsen, but has not reviewed them yet.

Nominating: Paul Bradley reported that Bob Wood and Kerry Hall will run for re-election. Holly Fluty Dempsey and Don Deraska will not run. Paul has not yet received any other nominations. The deadline for nominations is August 11, with a candidates' forum scheduled for August 19. Nominations are accepted from the floor, but many ballots will already have been mailed in.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Bylaws:** After receiving input from Board Members, Paul Bradley has submitted a draft of proposed Bylaws revisions. One of the changes is a proposal to change the fiscal year. He suggests the next step be to ask our attorney to review the proposals to be sure they comply with our Covenants, Articles of Incorporation and Delaware law before discussing them more completely with the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Pickleball, outdoor activities, quiet hours:** Do we need to revise our quiet hours to account for pickleball and other outdoor sport activities? It was suggested that we take a look at outdoor lighting, hours permitted and soundproofing materials for outdoor courts. There are a number of law suits against HOAs because of noise from pickleball courts. A group should investigate these issues and come up with guidelines.
- **Community Meeting, August 31:** Materials should be mailed no later than August 16, and therefore finalized by August 14. Accordingly, Committee Reports capturing annual highlights should be sent to our board secretary by Sunday, August 11. Also, members should copy the full board so people can see each other's reports.
- **E-mail Blast:** A suggestion was made to alert the Board and Committee Chairs before these go out so that they may submit information. These typically go out about every two weeks, and Margie is happy to take information to be included.
- **Geoff Myers Invitational, August 1:** Mark McCulloh could use more volunteers to help sell shirts. Overflow parking will be directed to Pineside streets, but kept to a single side of each street. Visitors should not park in any of the commercial lots.

Executive Session Minutes: Margie Cyr moved, Don Deraska seconded that Minutes of the Executive Session held June 15, 2024 be approved. All were in favor.

Adjournment: Don Deraska moved, Kerry Hall seconded that the meeting adjourn. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

Kate Munteer, Board Secretary

Upcoming Meetings: August 17, August 31 –End of Summer Community Meeting

Middlesex Beach Association Committee Reports – July 2024

Community Patrol, Kerry Hall

Staffing One employee injured his back (while off duty) and resigned last week. He also resigned last year mid summer due to recurring back issues. Other staff are covering his shifts temporarily and Gary is exploring a potential replacement referred by Bill Williams (current staff member).

Landscaping (Holly) offered an opportunity to work additional hours watering community plants and 2 of our staff (Joanne and Christina) accepted and have been performing these duties over the last few weeks. (This comes from the Landscaping budget.)

Incident Reports Nothing significant since last meeting. A homeowner's unlocked bicycle was stolen from the bike rack at Addy/Dune. The security camera captured the perpetrator riding past the guard shack. The homeowner was provided the opportunity to pursue further and declined as the bicycle was located abandoned and returned by the Delaware State Police within 24 hours of the theft. We will continue to evaluate whether to add additional cameras in the future: perhaps a Beach Cam, or a camera on the Pineside which may be useful in identifying serial litterers.

July 4th The community was at or near capacity over the Holiday and we did not experience any issues. Gary leveraged his personal relationship with the Captain of the "Bethany Fire Police" (division of the BBVFC) who provided 3 volunteers and lighting to control the Bridge Road entrance for safe pedestrian traffic both before and after the fireworks.

Gary also scheduled himself, Assistant Supervisor Darren and four other staff members to work that evening keeping things safe on the beach and in the community. I received many reports from community members voicing their appreciation for their efforts that evening ranging from helping rescue staged beach chairs from an unexpected high tide, removing dogs from the beach, stopping a few isolated incidents of unauthorized fireworks both on the beach and on the pineside, as well as helping get everyone off the beach safely at the conclusion of the fireworks.

On behalf of the Board and Community I purchased DeFebo gift cards for the 6 individuals that took time away from their families and worked that night. Total expenditure was \$220 and well within the CP compensation budget.

Other New this year, CP was asked to focus the night shift on the beach from 5-8pm to patrol the beach on the Polaris, picking up trash, enforcing the no dogs on beach rule, etc. after the Beach Patrol leave duty. Based on feedback to date this has been viewed favorably by the community.

To date I have been very happy with CP's performance this year under new leadership by Gary. The staff seems happier as well.

As always welcome any additional feedback, both positive and constructively critical.....such feedback has led to changes such as the beach presence of CP after 5pm which was suggested by one of our vocal community members.

Social Committee, Kate Mounteer

Report submitted by Linda Uhas:

Happy Birthday America Block Party 2024!!! What an amazing evening! We were thrilled to see over 161 attendees gather on Beach Plum Road on July 1st. Families, kids, and seniors alike enjoyed a delightful night filled with music, games, and prize bags. Children had a blast with activities like Walk the Plank, Hot Lava, Boat Races, and Face Painting while adults stayed entertained with Ax Throwing, Lawn Jarts, and Squirr the Cup. Everyone contributed delicious snacks and desserts, from chip bags to brownies and fresh fruit, ensuring a festive atmosphere of laughter and camaraderie till the very end.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the volunteers who dedicated their time to set up, oversee activities, and clean up afterward. Val Peizer and Mary Beth Hendricks were true team players in preparing for the party. The enthusiasm and hard work of everyone were instrumental in making the event a resounding success! Additionally, we extend our gratitude to the Middlesex Board for their support. It was truly a fun night that brought joy to our entire community.

Other news: Happy Hours continue, as does the planning for 65th anniversary celebrations over Labor Day Weekend. Included in the activities are a Saturday evening dinner picnic, community photo on the beach, "Lanterns on the Beach" (in lieu of bonfire), and "Middlesex Plunge" on Sunday, another photo op.

Community Facilities Committee, Don Deraska

General: Thanks to Dave Wiecking for installing split rail fencing on the corner of Dune & E. Addy Rd. Folks have been parking golf carts on the private property - much to the annoyance of the owners. It doesn't seem to have eliminated all of the thoughtlessness but I suppose that'll be more a function of parking pressure...when spots are limited, courtesy tends to take a back seat!

Roads: We've added additional yellow markings along East Errett Rd to try to make it more obvious to people parking there to avoid blocking the driveways. Many thanks to Joedy & Carol Smith for their help & patience.

We'll be replacing faded & worn signage around the community (about 7 or so) and have standardized the signage at the intersection of Beach Plum Rd. & all the pine side roads re: "no outlet," etc.

Drainage: No new reports of sinkholes on driveways since last month's meeting! We'll have to review our "culvert inventory" to decide on when to systematically replace these (and which street to start on), however we believe Evergreen Rd has the most number of steel (oldest) culverts that should be replaced),

Guard Shack area: AC is installed. Will be repainting door trim and continue with other maintenance as needed.

Beach Walkways/Dunes: We believe that the beach grass that has grown into the walkways IS invasive Japanese sedge grass so it is NOT appropriate to transplant it. I've been in touch with Mike Jandzen about this - he confirmed that this grass is effective at dune stabilization because of its deep roots (similar to Cape American dune grass), but unlike Cape American dune grass, it has a low profile so is less effective at trapping sand and growing dune height. This COULD be considered more desirable to the oceanfront homeowners since the lower profile is less obstructive to sightlines (and our dune heights are fine), however there is a concern that the sedge will overtake the native Cape American dune grass and ultimately change the appearance.

Beach signage re: umbrella use & positioning @ the discretion of MBA Staff will be up (if not done already by today's meeting!).

Fencing: We have the metal frames in hand to be able to replace all of the gates. Priority is the west end of Bridge Rd so that we can replace the temporary gate & lock there.

Still looking into replacing the post & chain @ the west end of Addy Rd leading to Pine Rd with a vehicle-width gate.

Building Committee, Margie Cyr

The Building Committee has approved the demolition and the new house build at 11 Dune to begin immediately after Labor Day. Under consideration are large project renovations for 25 Short and 32 E. Short. We have also received an inquiry about a possible demolition and new house build also on Short. New kitchen renovations will begin after Labor Day at 27 Addy and 31 E. Errett.

This is a friendly reminder that the revised Rules and Regulations for Construction and Other Work do not take effect until after Labor Day, 2024.

Landscaping, Holly Fluty Dempsey

Dave and I took a Middlesex tour on Monday for a status review and to identify areas for mid summer course corrections.

- Due to heat and lack of rain Chester River has not been in the community for mowing for two weeks but Solutions reported they did mow and trim today (7/19). Following the inspection on Monday that identified tall grass in several areas, Solutions communicated to them on Tuesday that mowing was requested.
- Community Patrol members Jo and Christiana are superior at watering as evidenced by our plants surviving the heat and drought conditions. We met on Wednesday and discussed weeding and installing some replacement plants in the four priority areas this coming week.
- The buckwheat is doing really well as a cover crop and needs to be cut soon before it goes to seed.
- *Chester River intends to have a plan and accompanying budget for the four priority areas ready for the Board at our August meeting.
- With my upcoming departure from the Board a focus will be on budget expenditures to date/ planned in addition to hand over notes for the incoming Landscaping Committee chair.