



TOWN OF BARNSTABLE SANDY NECK BOARD

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Sandy Neck Board Meeting March 14, 2016

Chairman:

Richards French

Vice Chairman:

Thomas O'Neill

Board Members:

William Carey
Lynn Heslinga
Nate King
George Muhlebach
Peter Sampou

Council Liaison:

Phil Wallace
John Flores

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sandy Neck Board was held on March 14, 2016 in the Selectmen's Conference Room, 367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA. The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm by Chairman Rich French.

Roll Call:

- Board Members present: Pete Sampou, George Muhlebach, Tom O'Neill, and Rich French. Bill Carey arrived late.
- Board Members absent: Lynne Heslinga and Nate King.
- Staff: Nina Coleman, Sandy Neck Park Manager, and Debbie Lavoie, Secretary.
- Council Liaisons present: John Flores and Phil Wallace.
- Public: Wendy Paquette and Diane Lomba.

Act on Minutes:

- On a **motion** by Pete Sampou and seconded by Rich French, the Sandy Neck Board voted to approve the February minutes as printed. George Muhlebach and Tom O'Neill abstained as they were not at that meeting.

Correspondence:

- An email was sent to Rich French and Nina Coleman from Diane Lomba the Sandy Neck Beach Rep. for MBBA. It stated "Good morning all. In past years the MBBA has mailed out letter and cards (to be returned) inviting beach managers to partake in our spring conservation projects. This year we are going electronic. So here is my invitation for our spring conservation project. The MBBA would like conduct the Spring Conservation Project at Sandy Neck Beach on **Saturday April 16, 2016**. We will be available for snow fence work, general clean up and anything else you would need us to do. We will provide lunch as usual as well."
- Rich French invited everyone to attend. Meet at the gatehouse at 9 AM and after the cleanup, the public is welcome to stay for lunch provided by MBBA.

Staff Report:

Nina Coleman addressed the Board:

- The Gatehouse is closed for the season but will open on April 1st for 7 days a week.
- Remember, we are still in "off season" curfew which means you must be off the beach by 4 PM.
- New permit applications went out in the mail and they have started to process. Campers will be reminded that they need an operational carbon monoxide detector and that the use of generators is prohibited from 10:00 PM until 8 AM.
- As a reminder – all dogs must be on a leash at all times.
- Plovers – should arrive any day.
- The new air compressor has been installed and is ready to be hooked up. It will have a timer and shut down from midnight to 6am.

Old Business:

Continuation of the Proposed Sandy Neck Beach Park Management Policies

Adopted by the Sandy Neck Board on February 7, 2005

Revised; March 9, 2009, March 8, 2010, November 14, 2011, April 14, 2014 and March 14, 2016

Complaints concerning policies, regulations, and/or Sandy Neck staff conduct should be addressed to the Park Manager or Senior Natural Resource Officer.

Section 1: Sandy Neck Fees

Sandy Neck user fees are at set rates depending on residency status. Residency must be proven per the Sandy Neck Beach Park Regulations and Sandy Neck Beach Park Policies.

Section 2: No Refund Policy

It is the Sandy Neck Beach Park Policy that no refunds will be granted. Included, but not limited, in this policy are personal emergencies, foul weather, evacuations, limitations on access, beach conditions, insects (greenhead flies, etc.) and water temperature.

The No Refund Policy pertains to any and all patrons that make use of any Sandy Neck Beach Park or Gatehouse facilities. All public beach users, Off Road Vehicle (ORV) day trippers, sticker purchasers, overnight camping and chase vehicles are subject to this policy and must comply accordingly.

Section 3: Parking Lot Policies

3:1 Dogs

Dogs are prohibited from all Barnstable public beaches (Town of Barnstable General Ordinances §403-8) from May 15 to September 15. Dogs are not allowed past the Gatehouse between May 15 and September 15 unless they are contained within a permitted vehicle that is traveling to the Off Road Vehicle beach. Dogs are allowed on Sandy Neck hiking trails anytime of the year as long as they remain on a leash from March 1st through September 15th.

All dogs on the ORV corridor must be leashed unless in the **waters of the Cape Cod Bay** from March 1st through September 15th.

3:2 Drive-Thru(s) and Drop Offs

Parking lot business hours are from 8:00 AM to 3:30PM **5:00 PM** Memorial Day through Labor Day (exception: from Memorial Day to approximately the third weekend in June, parking lot business hours are only on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays).

All vehicles traveling to the public beach during business hours must have a Sandwich or Barnstable Beach Parking **Permit** Sticker or a valid Barnstable Public Beach Day, Weekly or Landlord Pass. Vehicles without one of the above attributes are not permitted to travel to the parking lot. This includes any dropping off of vehicle occupants or participation in any activity that does not involve parking.

3:3 Full Parking Lot

Per requirements of the Sandy Neck Board, only five vehicles are permitted to wait in line once the parking lot is full. This is mandatory procedure because of the need to keep the road clear for off-road and cottage owner vehicle access and to allow emergency personnel to get to the beach unimpeded.

The lot will re-open once five spaces become available and the five vehicles in line can fill the vacant spaces. The next five vehicles that arrive at the Gatehouse are then eligible to wait in line.

The Gate Attendant Supervisor or the Park Manager, for safety purposes, may deem that it is necessary for the parking lot to remain closed.

When the parking lot is full, no vehicles are permitted to travel to the parking lot for dropping off occupants, even if the vehicle has a Sandwich or Barnstable Beach Parking **Permit** Sticker or a valid Barnstable Public Beach Day or Weekly Pass.

Section 4: Proof of Residency

Sandy Neck provides discounted Off Road Vehicle (ORV) **Permits** Stickers to residents and/or property taxpayers of Sandwich and Barnstable. Proof of residency is defined in the regulations as:

*Proof of residency is required in order to obtain a Barnstable or Sandwich ORV **Permit** sticker. Residency can be proven by:*

1. Tax bill,
2. Minimum one year property lease,
3. Vehicle registration with a street address (PO Box is not sufficient),
4. Other legal documents such as a deed or will (this does not include utility bills, excise tax bills, etc.).
5. College students may provide a tuition bill with a Barnstable or Sandwich address.

*Barnstable and Sandwich residents wishing to obtain an ORV **Permit** sticker must have their vehicle registered in their name (or the name of a person residing year-round at the same address) unless:*

1. They have written permission to use a company vehicle.
2. Proof of ownership of the company on the vehicle registration.
3. A minimum one year vehicle lease agreement.

To clarify, the **Barnstable** resident/taxpayer must be the applicant. The vehicle must be (1) in the resident/taxpayer's name (2) in the name of a person living year-round at the same address or (3) in the name of the company that the resident/taxpayer owns or works for (with written proof).

Section 5: Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Permits

Barnstable General Ordinances Chapter 177, Article I, §177-2 requires that all over sand vehicles on Sandy Neck must have a current ORV permit. Only official vehicles (as determined by the Park Manager) are exempt from this requirement.

5:1 Spare Tire

Intermediate size spare tires may be acceptable at the discretion of Sandy Neck staff.

ORV permits are non-transferable. Permits may be re-issued to the same beach patron (or someone residing at the same address) providing the original permit is returned or there is documented proof that the permit was destroyed.

Section 6: User Conduct

All users of Sandy Neck Beach Park are expected to behave in a civil and responsible manner. Verbal abuse and/or aggressive behavior toward Sandy Neck Staff or other beach patrons will result in the violator's removal from the beach for not less than 24 hours. In addition, violators may have their ORV Permit stickers revoked, incur fines for obscene language in accordance with Town of Barnstable General Ordinances

§147-1 and/or be issued trespass orders.

Section 7: Property Owner Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Permits

7:1 Eligibility

Property Owner ORV Permits will be issued to Sandy Neck property owners, Sandy Neck property lessees (minimum one year lease) and immediate members of their family. Immediate family members include father, mother, sister, brother, husband/wife **or partner**, son and daughter (**including stepson and/or stepdaughter**).

7:2 Proof of Eligibility

It is the responsibility of the applicant to prove ownership or lessee status.

Immediate family relationships can be proven by a legal document such as a birth certificate, marriage certificate or notarized letter.

7:3 Property Owner ORV permit privileges

The Property Owner ORV Permit affords access (via open Sandy Neck trails) to the applicable cottage only. It also allows vehicle use of the front beach (open sections only) for recreational purposes and use of the air compressor. In addition, the cottage owner may use the Sandy Neck dumpster to discard ORV and household trash. Dumping of construction debris, hazardous waste, discarded equipment, or any other items that are not ORV or household trash is strictly forbidden and will result in fines.

7:4 Guests of Property Owners

Guests of property owners may park in the Sandy Neck Parking lot. However, in-season guests are responsible for appropriate daily fee or parking permit for the entirety of their stay. Guests may park in the parking lot out-of-season at no cost. If the guest intends on driving to a cottage, he/she must purchase the appropriate Sandy Neck Non-resident or Barnstable or Sandwich ORV Permit. Sandy Neck staff will issue a trail pass only after the Cottage Owner has alerted the Gatehouse that a particular individual can access their cottage.

Section 8: Halfway House Usage

8:1 Intent

The purpose of this recommendation is to provide clear direction and consistency for the Park Manager and the potential users and/or advocates interested in maintaining the special nature and use of the Halfway House.

8:2 Eligibility

The Halfway House has a long and stable history of educational and research based occupancy (spanning more than 30 yrs). It was regularly used by the Barnstable High School as part of a coastal ecology program. For the last twenty years the Halfway House has been used as a college level research station. However, there are groups of people besides scientists that can impart a lasting benefit to the ecology and unique nature of Sandy Neck and the community of greater Barnstable. These groups must receive no monetary benefit from access to the Halfway House rather they might request to access this shelter because of the uniquely serene and beautiful environs the Halfway House offers. For a set fee (or another form of donation acceptable by the Sandy Neck Park Manager) certified non-profit groups that run art or nature based educational programs should have the ability to visit and/or stay at the Halfway House. In addition, the Halfway House should continue to be used by science based educators and researchers in exchange for services and/or monies that these groups have traditionally provided to Sandy Neck.

While the Halfway House can always provide emergency shelter for youth groups, it is not the intention of these policies to suggest that young people (who can make use of the existing camping facilities at Trail 4) should have access to the Halfway House unless there is a reason that camping is not feasible. Requests from such groups will be considered on their respective merit and judged by the Sandy Neck Park Manager on a case by case basis.

8:2 Permit Requirements

Interested non-profit educational, scientific and art groups may apply for consideration for use of the Halfway House. If selected, the organization would be granted a Special Permit that will set fees and usage guidelines. In addition, insurance and liability waiver requirements will be set forth under a Sandy Neck Beach Park License Agreement.

DISCUSSION *Proposed Sandy Neck Beach Park Management Policies*

- The Regulation and the Policies are different documents. The policies are the day – to – day rules. They are handed out when patrons get their ORV permit. Proposed changes are in red.
- These policies were discussed last month and continued to tonight to allow the public time to review the information.

A **motion** was made by Pete Sampou and seconded by Tom O'Neill to accept the proposed Sandy Neck Beach Park Management Policies as presented to the Board on February 16, 2016 and this evening (March 14, 2016). All voted yes.

Old Business:

Update from Erosion Solutions Subcommittee

Pete Sampou reported things are going as planned. The date for the public outreach workshop will be soon – probably in late March to early April. If any Board Member wants to see the information prior to the workshop, contact Nina who will set up a time to go to the gatehouse.

New Business:

Marsh Trail Repairs

Nina Coleman reported the marsh trail repair has started. The crew has worked up to and around the Halfway House and fixed patches by the Old Winders Cottage and they are raising the grade on either side of the Halfway House. They are using river rocks where there are marsh areas on both side. Other areas have sandy fill and gravel.

2016 SANDY NECK NATURE HIKES AND EVENTS

Meet at the Sandy Neck Gatehouse unless otherwise noted.

Whale Walk at Sandy Neck: Saturday, March 26th, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Cape Cod is one of the finest spots on earth to view cetaceans from land. In winter, critically endangered North Atlantic right whales come to Cape Cod Bay to feed. In late spring & early summer, humpback, fin & minke whales arrive. Join Barnstable Land Trust and Jesse Mechling from Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies to look for these gentle giants as they feed in the surrounding waters. Meet in the Sandy Neck upper lot. This hike is \$5.00 per person.

Sandy Neck Spring Wetlands Walk: Friday, April 15th, 5 pm – 7 pm

Traverse through the rich and diverse wetlands of Sandy Neck Beach from shallow dune swales, to the cranberry bogs of old maritime forests. Look for signs of early spring activity including plants, invertebrates, and breeding amphibians. We will also be on the lookout for evidence of the rare and elusive Spadefoot Toad. Rain/Muck boots and bug spray highly recommended. Be prepared to get muddy. For more information call the Gatehouse: 508-362-8300. This hike is free.

Spring Beach Clean-up: Saturday, April 16th, 9 am - noon

Join the Massachusetts Beach Buggy Association for this yearly event. Activities include trash pick up and dune fence installation. Meet at the lower parking lot and spend the morning giving back to your favorite beach. Meet at the Sandy Neck lower lot. For more information call the Gatehouse: 508-362-8300.

Signs of Spring on Sandy Neck: Tuesday, April 19th, 10 am – noon

Sandy Neck awakens in April as Ospreys return to rebuild their bulky stick nests atop poles. Endangered Piping Plovers scour the vast beach for the ideal spot to scratch their simple nests. Rare Spadefoot Toads rush to breed in ephemeral pools in the dunes. Ian Ives of Mass Audubon's Long Pasture and Sean Kortis, Sandy Neck Natural Resource Officer, will be your guides through this spectacular landscape. *Programs are \$7 for members and \$9 for non-members/ \$5 and \$7 for children. Pre-registration **not** required. For more information, call Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary at 508-362-7475 Ext 9355 or online www.massaudubon.org/longpasture*

Sandy Neck Spring Flora & Fauna Hike: Wednesday, May 25th, 10 am - noon

Hike 1.5-miles through Sandy Neck's Great Marsh and sand dunes to explore barrier beach flora and fauna with Barnstable Land Trust and Sandy Neck Manager, Nina Coleman. You'll learn about ongoing efforts to protect and restore these and other sensitive natural communities. Wear sturdy hiking boots to walk over sand and uneven terrain. This hike is free.

Searching Sandy Neck For Wildlife: From Ospreys and Piping Plovers to Diamondback Terrapin

Turtles: EVERY Monday (except July 4th) 9 am – 11:00 am from June 27th to August 29th

Join MA Audubon naturalist Chris Walz and walk along the salt marsh, dunes and beach seeking signs of wildlife from wading shorebirds to mammal tracks to swooping swallows. *Programs are \$7 for members and \$9 for non-members/ \$5 and \$7 for children. Pre-registration **not** required. For more information, call Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary at 508-362-7475 Ext 9355 or online www.massaudubon.org/longpasture*

Sandy Neck Plover Walk: Wednesday, June 8th, 10 am – noon

Discover hidden Piping Plover nests along the front beach with Barnstable Land Trust and Sandy Neck Park staff on a one-mile hike through the dunes of Sandy Neck. Explore barrier beach ecology. Learn about the Piping Plover's life-cycle and conservation measures being taken to protect these endangered shorebirds. Wear hiking boots for sand/uneven terrain. This hike is free.

Sandy Neck Junior Ranger Program: Five Tuesdays, 9:30 am – noon, from July 5th – August 2nd, Ages 9-13

Come explore the Sandy Neck barrier beach ecosystem as a Jr. Ranger. Jr. Rangers will earn their badge by participating in outdoor hikes, identifying local plants and animals including endangered species, learning how to rescue marine mammals such as dolphins and seals, and most of all having fun. Junior Rangers must be able to attend four out of five sessions to be eligible for the program. Space is limited to ten however more sessions may be added if needed. \$40 for each Jr. Ranger. For more information on enrollment call the Barnstable Recreation Department 508-790-6345.

In Search of Diamondback Terrapins on Sandy Neck: Tuesday, July 12th, 10 am – noon

In summer, rare Diamondback Terrapins emerge from the Great Marsh to lay their eggs in the dunes of Sandy Neck. Join Sandy Neck Park staff and Mass Audubon's Ian Ives as we search for signs of nests and tracks of these amazing and mysterious turtles. Learn about the headstart program helping the tiny terrapins. *Programs are \$7 for members and \$9 for non-members/ \$5 and \$7 for children. Pre-registration **not** required. For more information, call Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary at 508-362-7475 Ext 9355 or online www.massaudubon.org/longpasture*

Sandy Neck Summer Flora & Fauna Hike: Wednesday, August 17th, 10 am - noon

Hike 1.5-miles through Sandy Neck's Great Marsh and sand dunes to explore barrier beach flora and fauna with Barnstable Land Trust and Sandy Neck Manager, Nina Coleman. You'll learn about ongoing efforts to protect and restore these and other sensitive natural communities. Wear sturdy hiking boots to walk over sand and uneven terrain. This hike is free.

Hiking for Terrapin Hatchlings on Sandy Neck, Tuesday, September 13th, 10 am – noon

This fall we will be searching Sandy Neck for tiny tracks of hatchling terrapins with Natural Resource Officer Sean Kortis and Mass Audubon's Ian Ives, as the quarter-sized newborns make the treacherous journey from their sandy dune nests to the safety of the marsh. *Programs are \$7 for members and \$9 for non-members/ \$5 and \$7 for children. Pre-registration not required. For more information, call Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary at 508-362-7475 Ext 9355 or online www.massaudubon.org/longpasture*

Sandy Neck Fall Migration Hike: Saturday September 24th, 9am – noon.

Sandy Neck is a popular resting place for many migratory species on their way south along the east coast. The forested areas along the trails are made of a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees packed with high-energy food for the traveling birds. Additionally, many migrating birds linger on Sandy Neck shores, delaying their flights south for as long as possible. These birds tend to concentrate near their favorite food source before continuing on their journey. Join us for a migration hike as we welcome fall and the migratory birds that are leaving, returning, or just passing through. This hike is free.

Coast Sweep 2016: Sunday, September 25th, 9 am - noon

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management and coordinated by the Urban Harbors Institute, thousands of COASTSWEEP volunteers remove debris that would otherwise pollute our oceans, beaches, lakes, and rivers. Participants collect bag after bag of trash and debris, and record their findings onto data cards. The data is sent to the Ocean Conservancy and entered into a massive marine debris database. This information is then analyzed and used to identify the sources of marine debris, which helps to prevent the problem in the future. If you're interested in volunteering, **contact** Donna Bragg at Sandy Neck Gatehouse at **508-362-8300** or email us at sandyneec@town.barnstable.ma.us

Fall Cape Cod Pathways Walking Weekend: Sunday, October 9th, 1 pm – 3 pm

Experience a variety of habitats including the salt marsh, expansive sand dunes, swales and freshwater wetlands, and the intertidal along the front beach. At this time of year, we may have the opportunity to see rare migratory birds as well as diamondback terrapin hatchlings making their way towards the marsh. A fairly strenuous hike through soft sand. Good hiking boots, sunscreen, and plenty of water are recommended. This hike is free

Talk: Area of Critical Environmental Concern: Friday, October 14th, 6 pm –8 pm

What are Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and why are they so important? In 1978, the Sandy Neck Barrier Beach was designated as an ACEC and since then the Town of Barnstable has preserved over 8,000 acres in this zone. Join us and learn the history behind the ACEC and how the Town of Barnstable has worked through the years to preserve this natural resource. This talk is free talk. Location TBA.

Walk: Area of Critical Environmental Concern: Saturday, October 15th, 10 pm – noon

The Sandy Neck Barrier Beach is a state designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). With hundreds of species of birds and numerous rare and endangered species, this zone is one of the state's best examples of biodiversity. Join Barnstable Land Trust and a Sandy Neck Park staff on this walk to explore this unique habitat. This hike is free.

The Hunt for Red October: Saturday, October 15th, 1pm – 3 pm

Hike the dunes of Sandy Neck in search freshwater cranberry wetlands with MA Audubon Long Pasture's Ian Ives and Sandy Neck Manager Nina Coleman. Learn about wetland ecology and have an opportunity to pick fresh Sandy Neck cranberries for your Thanksgiving table. *Programs are \$7 for members and \$9 for nonmembers/ \$5 and \$7 for children. Pre-registration not required. For more information, call Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary at 508-362-7475 Ext 9355 or online www.massaudubon.org/longpasture*
All Sandy Neck hikes are considered strenuous in difficulty.

Public Comment:

- none

Adjournment:

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Lavoie, Secretary