



TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

SANDY NECK BOARD

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Sandy Neck Board Meeting September 14, 2026

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sandy Neck Board was held on September 14, 2026, at 7:05 pm conducted on Zoom, Public Meeting.

Chair:

Thomas O'Neill

Vice Chair:

Peter Sampou

Board Members:

William Carey
William Monroe
Maureen Piccione
Tina Carrington
Rich French

Council Liaison:

Kris Clark

Barnstable

PD Liaison:

Mark Butler

Roll Call:

Board Members present by voice roll call: Tom O'Neill, Bill Monroe (late), Rich French, Bill Carey, Maureen Piccioni, and Pete Sampou.

Board Members absent: Tina Carrington

Staff: Sandy Neck: Sandy Neck Park Manager, Nina Coleman, and Donna Bragg, Operations Supervisor.

Staff Members absent:

Council Liaisons present:

Barnstable Police Liaison:

Public: Wendy Paquette

Act on Minutes: On a voice motion from Bill Carey and seconded by Pete Sampou. the Board, by voice voted on the August 10, 2026, minutes. The vote passed.

Notes from the Chair, Et al: None.

Correspondence: *See attached. Letter of thanks to Gordon Starr has been sent. Letter to Town Manager, Mark Ells regarding fireworks on Sandy Neck has been sent. Kris Clark and Tom spoke about the letter to Mark Ells and will try to set up a meeting between Tom and Mark.

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

- Gatehouse hours are 9am-9pm, daily.
- Gatehouse is selling fall Off-Road Vehicle permits at a reduced rate online @ <https://barnstablema.lymxlog/ndr/menu.php> or barnstable.gov/sandyneckpark/. You can also go to the Gatehouse to purchase your fall permit. We are still in our summer hours.
- Off-Road vehicle beach is opened all the way to 4.5 miles.
- Minimal staff left for the remainder of the season.
- Diamondback Terrapin hatchlings are emerging from their nests.
- Cottage Owners and guests traveling the Great Marsh Trail should keep an eye out for these hatchlings and drive very slowly. We have several buckets of terrapin eggs that are hatching in the garage. Once the hatchling's yolk sac is fully absorbed into their bodies and they are ready to eat, they will be transported to Marine Environmental Affairs building. Once they are stable and eating on their own, they will be doled out to various schools, agencies and other community organizations that will be raising them for the winter.

- Shorebird update: Nina stated that all the ORV Permit holders were emailed about our shorebird situation this summer. After all our plovers were fledged, we were left with four tern nests that were unhatched. Normally those late tern nests are often predated or abandoned. It was entirely too late for terns to be doing a reproductive effort, so Nina made the decision to open the beach to 4.5 miles, knowing there was a slim chance that one of those nests would make it to hatching. To minimize and mitigate the potential pushback from the public if we had to close the beach again; when we emailed all permit holders we indicated there would be a chance we would have to close the Off-Road again due to a nest hatching. Nina said she believed it to be the right decision. The goal was to make the beach accessible to Off-Road vehicle traffic as much as possible. Nina makes a commitment to keep as much of the beach as possible open. When there are eggs on the beach, and no chicks, she can keep the beach open. We were able to get two weekends of the beach being fully opened to 4.5 miles. One tern nest hatched and we had to close the beach back down to 0.9 miles. People were unhappy, which is understandable. We did as much outreach as possible. One chick did survive all the way to fledging so the effort was worth it.
 - We did try to mitigate the situation when the beach was closed to 0.9 miles by escorting campers past and the closure line. We had the ability to escort through our Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) permit. The requirements to escort are very strict. It requires four staff members to facilitate the escort caravans. A staff member would have to sit with the terns all day and Nina did not have the staff to do all that at all. So, the decision was made to escort some campers past the closure line to have more beach for other users who were not being escorted.
 - Nina asked if there were any questions about the closure. Bill Carey said he thought it was a good choice because the campers have the ability to stay overnight(s). Nina said because of staffing she would be unable to escort daytrippers in late August past the closure line. Pete Sampou said it was a fantastic job done with very limited options. Tom said Nina took him through some of what is required through the HCP to do these escorts. He said it is bordering on way over the top but if that is how it has to be done according to the regulations, that is the way it is. He said it is particularly important that the public understands that the team makes every possible effort, even short staffed to go out and do this work. The team always acts quickly and in a smart way with the benefit of the user groups in mind.
 - **Up and coming events: September 16th** from 10am-Noon, Fall Migration Hike. The search for migratory birds.
 - October 11th starting at 9:30am, the MSOA, (Massachusetts Shellfish Officers Association), “Clam Crawl”. This is a run at Sandy Neck over sand, with the proceeds going to scholarships.
 - October 24th from 1pm-3pm, “Truck or Treat” at Sandy Neck.
 - There will be holding the special Deer Hunt held this year at Sandy Neck. We had to forgo last year due to our project. archery meeting is November 18th, and the primitive firearms meeting is on December 9th. This information is on the Sandy Neck website barnstable.gov/sandyneckpark/.
 - Nina showed slide of the multi-agency drill held at Sandy Neck on the Great Marsh Trail to the Halfway House. Bill Monroe was a part of the event and spoke to the Board. He said it was a good event with a lot of learning that took place. Bill said the drill was staffed by six Fire Departments, Sandy Neck Staff, the Barnstable Police Department, Fire Forestry truck, including staff and other resources available. Should there be a structure fire out on the Marsh Trail, the drill was designed to mitigate damage, using all resources available including pumping water out of the ditches on the Marsh Trail to wet down the building and the surrounding marsh grass and other ignitable brush. The drill centered around the Halfway House, the location of the “fire”. They pumped water into tanks from the front beach to bring out to the drill site. Water was also pumped out of the ditches in the Great Marsh. Bill explained all aspects of the drill and how valuable it was to do this exercise. They learned that each department should carry screw-on air downs to facilitate a quick airing down of their tires. Pete Sampou asked about the trails. Bill said a couple of vehicles got stuck but got out right away. The big vehicles help pack down the trails. Sandy Neck Staff were instrumental in helping those attending the drill with tips for driving the trails and hills. Tides were also an issue and knowing the tides is very important. There was a discussion regarding burying tanks and various ways of getting water out there. They also talked about the Cottage Colony, and they are set up very well to deal with fires. There will be more drills in the future.
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- Nina showed some new merchandise we ordered for the fall and winter months.
 - Nina addressed the Board regarding Phase three of the relocation project regarding offices over the garage and opening the Gatehouse to accommodate more merchandise and cut down on overcrowding in the Gatehouse. She showed a few renderings of the different potential designs. ***included in presentation see attached.** The vision for the Gatehouse is to come in and create more of a retail area for merchandise. The partition would come down to open space. The upstairs of the garage would be turned into offices and a conference area. Nina is working with an architect for the design to get people up to the second floor. The

drawings she showed were not the final iteration of what it would look like, but she wanted to give the Board a basic idea. The design phase has been funded through the Sandy Neck enterprise account. This is a project Nina wants to take on this winter. Nina asked if anyone wanted to get involved in the project as we usually have a building committee. She asked for questions and thoughts regarding the project. Bill Carey wanted another look at the Gatehouse and Nina explained the orientation of the building where everything is located. Nina did not have the most up to date rendering as the newest one eliminates one of the restrooms as well. This will allow for more space. Bill Carey asked about the design for merchandise. Nina said that would show up in the final design. Expanding for retail. Nina said we would have to have one bathroom for staff, and the Gatehouse is a public space. The bathroom must be handicap accessible. Pete asked about customer parking as it is tight around the Gatehouse for parking spaces. Nina said we have two parking spots, a handicap spot and parking along the whole right side of the road to accommodate patrons. In addition, people can park at the garage or the hiking area and walk up to the Gatehouse. There are eight spots for patron parking. Tom said it doesn't appear the Gatehouse would need exterior construction. The garage would. Will there be dormers installed or would it be done in the interior of the upstairs of the garage? Nina said one rendering had dormers and one did not. Tom said if there were dormers with windows and staff there would be a lighting question regarding the surrounding neighborhood. Tom said potentially put the dormers on the other side of the building. He also said that for years the Board has been talking about the Bathhouse and the potential of putting offices up there. Getting rid of the Snack Shack and using that space. Nina said we should talk about it. Right now, we have a three-year contract with the vendor renting the Snack Shack. There is a lot of money invested in the Snack Shack and a lot of equipment put in by Sandy Neck. Nina said she has seen a lot of people using the food truck model instead of a Snack Shack. Bill Carey asked Tom if he was saying that the food concession is not a viable business? Tom said it doesn't make any money for Sandy Neck, and it is a convenience for patrons. Would it make more sense to have food trucks that swing in for two or three hours a day. Tom said if the concession area is not viable, the space could be used for other things like retail space or classrooms. Bill Carey said for many years we wanted to think about an interpretive center and that didn't work out so maybe we could revisit something like that. It is dependent on the Snack Shack vendor making money and being satisfied. Bill Monroe asked about the room on the north side of the Bathhouse with the red cross on the outside of the building. Nina said it is the lifeguard room, and we must provide an area for the lifeguards and their equipment. Bill asked if we had lifeguards this summer and Nina said no. We had them last year, but it has been sporadic. We used the room this summer for our staff. The concessionaire also needed more space for his supplies and he used the room. Nina said space is at a premium and we are jamming all the staff into a very small area. Tom asked if Nina was envisioning the new space over the garage as office space and classroom/conference area and she said she was. Rich French asked if anyone has a rough idea of the cost of the renovation? Second question, would this be paid out of the enterprise fund or would we seek other funding? Nina said certainly we could look for a grant for the education piece but not for merchandise or staffing needs. Nina does not have a figure for the renovation through the enterprise account. Tom volunteered to be part of the building team. Bill Monroe also said he would volunteer. Bill Carey said we want to look at all the buildings and purposes, and he volunteered to be on the building committee.

- Nina spoke about an incident at Sandy Neck where we had two ladies and a grandchild who got in trouble swimming on Sandy Neck. The papers reported that good Samaritans rescued them. They did a great job and Nina said Sandy Neck was very grateful. Nina wanted to point out that Sandy Neck had an action plan, and staff deployed the jet ski with a lifeguard on board as staff are trained lifeguards. The jet ski was within ten feet of the rescue. Also responding were Sandwich Police, the Barnstable Police, Harbor Master, West Barnstable Fire Department, and Environmental Police were all coming towards our direction with vessels and other pieces of equipment to help us handle that situation. She wanted everyone to know that she debriefed with West Barnstable Fire Department, and all systems were working during the event. The incident happened right off the front beach right off the public beach.

- **Old Business:**

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

- **Economic sustainability.** None.

- **Public outreach and public use & participation.** Bill Monroe addressed the Board. Going back to the drill on Sandy Neck, Bill said he was pleased to be a part of it. Watching the interactions of all the agencies that came together, and in an emergency, all these agencies work well together. This is a good support system not only for Sandy Neck, but for the whole town. The experience they receive while doing these drills is invaluable for the continued protection of the town and can do nothing but benefit us down the road.
- **Sandy Neck Beach Reconfiguration Project Update. *Contained in Staff report.**

New Business:

- **Discussion on fees for 2027. *See attached.** Nina Addressed the Board. She showed a slide with the 2026 fees for comparable Off-Road Vehicle beaches in our area. Nina read aloud the fees other beaches charged in 2026 and concluded that Sandy Neck was still lower in pricing.
- Nina showed the trend lines in respect to sales from 2009-2025. This showed that Resident Off-Road Vehicle Permits are consistent, with maybe a little upswing. Non-Resident Off-Road Vehicle Permits show consistent movement upward.
- Nina showed the proposed fee increases. Special Permit from 20-50 people, from \$30 to \$35. Special Permit from 50-100 people from \$60 to \$65. Special Permit for over 100 people from \$100 to \$120. Rescue fee from \$60 per person to \$80 per person. Campfire Permit from \$20 to \$25. Annual Off-Road Vehicle Permit for Resident from \$100 to \$110. Annual Off-Road Vehicle Permit for Non-Resident from \$250 to \$270. Annual Off-Road Vehicle Permit Cottage Owner Permit from \$50 to \$55. Annual Trailer Permit from \$50 to \$45. Fall Resident Off-Road Vehicle Permit from \$60 to \$65. Fall Off-Road Vehicle Permit Non-Resident from \$120 to \$130. Fall Off-Road Vehicle Permit Cottage Owners from \$20 to \$25. Overnight Camping-Resident Slide-on from \$12 to \$13 per night. Overnight Camping-Non-Resident Slide-on from \$24 to \$26 per night. Overnight Camping-Resident RV from \$16 to \$17 per night. Overnight Camping-Non-Resident RV from \$32 to \$34 per night. Overnight Camping-Chase from \$7 to \$8 per night. Tent Camping-Per site from \$30 to \$40 per night. Lean-To-Per Person from \$20 to \$30 per person per night. Horse Permit Per Horse Per Ride from \$20 to \$25.
- Tom asked if there was a target in mind in terms of revenue Nina would like to achieve. Tom feels that the Board should know the target additional revenue, if not now by next meeting. Nina agreed. Tom wanted to know about the rescue fee. Is it enough or should it be brought up higher to help eliminate staff from having to drive people back. There must be a balance to what services we provide, and the cost of those services.
- Bill Carey wanted to know more about the revenue. He thinks most of the revenue comes from the Off-Road Vehicle Beach. Bill feels it would be more helpful to see what is contributing the most to the revenue. Maybe there should be some things like the Halfway House that should be for free. Bill said it would also be nice to see what we have in the Capital Account. It was great that we received grants to do the project, but it would be good to know that we have enough money in the Capital Account in case of emergency. Like if we had to replace sand. He would like to know the relationship between revenue, regular expenses, and Capital expenses.
- Nina said the budget is coming up in December. She assured Bill that all the finances are heavily reviewed by the finance department. Nina said she would be happy to provide our overall budget and the surplus we have, and the figure we are looking for through fees increases. Tom said an overview would be helpful.
- Rich French asked if it would be helpful to have the Director of Finance, Mark Milne speak to the Board to help them understand the finances better. Tom said that was up to Nina but that may get us into the weeds. Nina can provide what is needed as far as revenue and Tom suspected that a lot of the revenue comes from Off-Road Vehicle use by Non-Residents. Nina said he was right and the largest chunk of revenue is from Non-Residents. Nina said she presents this information every year to the Board in a report showing each line item of revenue. The report shows each line item for current year and four prior years. Bill Monroe wanted to know if we could get the number of times a tent campsite was rented. Including the lean-to, Horse permits and Halfway House usage. Nina said she presents this every year at the November meeting to the Board. Bill asked about parking lot revenue. Sandy Neck has three streams of revenue from the parking lot. The Bodfish hang tags we sell, a percentage of Barnstable Resident Beach Parking stickers and revenue from Sandwich. The Town of Barnstable sets the fee from Resident Beach Parking stickers. Nina made it clear that they were talking about parking lot revenue not Off-Road Vehicle Permits. Bill wanted to know about the amount of revenue we receive from Sandwich and Tom said there has not been any determination from the Town of

Barnstable regarding what Sandwich pays Barnstable for the use of Sandy Neck. Tom said it was up to Nina and her team and the town management.

- Tom's only other comment was that he would not like to see the Barnstable Resident Off-Road Vehicle Permit go up in price. Bill Carey said that the ten dollars is not a lot, but he would still like to see the numbers in the budget so he can analyze the numbers.
- **Regulation Changes Discussion:** Nina addressed the Board. After discussing regulation changes with the staff, it was determined that we would have only a few minor housekeeping items that can wait. We feel that there are no large or substantial changes to the regulations currently. So, unless the Board has anything that they would like to bring up, staff would like to keep current regulations until next year.
- Bill Carey commented that he wished to speak regarding the parking lots. He would like to see a section set aside in the lots for E-bikes and E-scooters. He would like signage there stating parking for E-Bikes, E-Scooters and Bicycles. Nina said it was not a regulation. We do have bikes and E-bikes coming up. We will be addressing putting in more spots this winter.

Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair: None.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by individual voice consent at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bragg, Operations Supervisor, Sandy Neck

Attachments:



September 14 Staff
Report (002).pptx



Chair Tom O'Neill
email to Town Mana



2027 Proposed SNK
fees.pdf