

Selectman's Desk – Noel Bishop, Westbrook First Selectman

Public Property/Private Responsibility

Westbrook's natural resources, as a Shoreline community are one of our most valued assets. We all have access and enjoy our public areas that include municipal and educational buildings with adjoining open spaces; athletic fields and outstanding public and private beaches.

Dogs:

At a Town Meeting on April 30, 2013 several issues were addressed including the following:

Section 2-10 Use of Town Properties (c) – "Dogs shall be permitted on any beach between October 1 and April 30, provided they shall be properly leashed or on proper restraint. The owner of any dog who leaves waste on any park, athletic field, playground or beach at anytime shall clean up after said dog, and failure to do so shall be punishable by a fine of twenty-five dollars for the first offense, fifty dollars for the second offense and seventy five dollars for the third and each subsequent offense". This ordinance will be enforced and I encourage you to be in compliance so that we can keep our beaches safe and healthy.

A special thanks to the West Beach Association who, in the past, at their expense, has made available animal waste bags by doing everything they can to encourage all of us to be in compliance.

Smoking:

During the summer months, our very active Park & Rec Department conducts programs on our beaches and other public property for our youth. Each morning, their staff, at taxpayer's expense, picks up cigarette butts in order to maintain an attractive environment for their activities. Your municipal government will place, in strategic locations, i.e. parking lots, receptacles for smokers to properly dispose of cigarette and cigar butts. We encourage you to utilize these receptacles.

Alcohol:

Alcohol is permitted on public property only if you have a permit, which can be obtained in the Selectman's Office. Section 13-1(b) of the Code of Ordinances "prohibits anyone from drinking any alcoholic liquor or beer whether alone and/or in consort with others on public property".

Security:

We have had vandalism in some areas, i.e. Wren and Ted Lane Fields and on school grounds. The Board of Selectmen has voted, at considerable expense to the Town, to install security cameras to monitor vandalism and will take measures to prevent further damage.

We have a limited number of officials, i.e. Constables, Troopers and other staff, and they do their best to keep our community safe and healthy. However, compliance is in large measure, the responsibility of all of us as individual citizens to maintain the attractiveness and accessibility of our public properties. Let's continue to demonstrate our stewardship by keeping Westbrook "The Jewel of the Shoreline".

If anyone has any suggestions, I encourage you to stop by with your ideas.