

Westbrook Council of Beach Associations

Minutes

June 3, 2024

The Westbrook Council of Beach Associations (WCOB) meeting was called to order by President Pat Marcarelli at 7:05PM.

The following people were in attendance:

Pat Marcarelli	President
Cindy Howard	Vice President
Ann Cole	Secretary
Steve Smith	Treasurer
Gary Bazzano	Grove Beach Point
Maria Botelho	Coral Sands Beach
Ron Botelho	Coral Sands Beach
Ted Budney	Sagamore Terrace Beach
Andy Calderoni	Chapman Beach
Tony Cozza	Island View Beach
Michael DeBaggis	Middle Beach
AnnMarie Ferreira	Middle Beach
Lucy Nobile	Pointina Beach
Tom Nobile	Pointina Beach
Amy Palumbo	Middle Beach
Rick Parks	Old Kelsey Point
Michael Tosatti	Grove Beach Terrace
Jack Zmary	West Beach

Pat announced that Pauline Peterson unfortunately was unable to attend this meeting due to a previous commitment and introduced Ann Cole as a new member and the new secretary. Everyone welcomed Ann.

**Minutes Approved**

Pat stated that the Zoom meeting minutes of May 6, 2024 have been posted online.

Motion made, seconded to approve the minutes of May 6, 2024. Unanimously passed.

Pat had a roll call of the officers and had attendees in the audience stand and introduce themselves along with their beach association.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Steve Smith reported that there is \$1,178.96 in the checking account and \$6,400.47 in the savings account. He also highlighted the \$200.00 donation made to the Eagle Scout Project. Scout Devin Wojecki sent a thank you note which Steve read aloud.

Motion made, seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Unanimously passed. **President's/Officers' Report**

Coastal Resiliency: Cindy Howard reported to Ron Botelho that her daughter works in the climate realm and told her that the US Treasury, on the federal level, has put out regulations to interpret resiliency issues. She is having it emailed to her, and in turn, will email to Ron.

Water Quality Testing: Pat reported that water testing is being done every 2 weeks at the town beach area. The most recent test results showed very good water quality. Pat will send out the regular testing results to the COB and every beach association as he receives them.

Westbrook Events Magazine: Pat asked the group to submit to him pictures or any items of interest from their beaches. He will forward to MaryJane Monahan. He thanked MaryJane for all her work on the magazine.

Beach Cleaning discussion: Pat received a postcard mailer from a company called Sandy Sweepers. He suggested contacting them to inquire about their services. Andy Calderoni also mentioned P&G Landscaping out of Old Saybrook that Kelsey Beach currently uses. They are an outfit that rakes the beaches by hand. Pat stated that kids could be coming in on a possible grant to rake the beaches. He will find out if this grant will be available by July 1st.

Discussion was had on hand raking vs. machine raking and the pros and cons.

Watercraft Stickers: The orange personal watercraft identification stickers are available on the sign-in table for anyone to take.

## **Committees**

Harbor Commission: Andy said that Charlie McSorley is the acting interim harbor master, due to Harry Plant's passing. (There is also an interim animal control officer taking Harry's place). Charlie is reviewing all mooring applications. There is a telephone contact number on the website, under town harbor commissions, to register moorings. A brief discussion took place on pulled moorings and to contact Charlie for resolution.

\*Michael DeBaggis entered the meeting at 7:33 pm.

Alleviating Hunger/Food Drive: Tony Cozza highlighted the "Fill-a-Boat/Stuff a Cruiser event to take place on Saturday, July 13th from 9:00AM to 1:00PM on the town green. This is one of our most important fundraising events and will involve committee volunteers going door to door for monetary donations, collection boxes on display, food and canned good donations, etc. Pat mentioned he will verify with the Lee Company if they will be matching funds again.

For monetary donations, checks should be made out to: Shoreline Kitchen and Pantry, and most importantly, to put COB in the memo line on your check.

Last year's donations totaled approximately \$7,000-\$8,000. It is anticipated to make this year's event even bigger and better and to raise as much money as we can.

### **Old Business/New Business**

Cannabis Shop: Jack Zmary informed the group of the Ad-hoc and sub-committee's results. There are 2 paths to be taken: (1) to consider removal of cannabis establishments in neighborhoods on Route 1 corridor and (2) look at all zones.

Consensus was not to put any cannabis businesses on the Route 1 corridor. Dave Russell stated that Westbrook citizens, along with most of the businesses do not want cannabis stores near their businesses. The group discussed ideas of improving the existing businesses on Route 1, enhancing the vibrancy of the town center, and try and mimic what the town of Chester has done to improve their town center.

Pat expressed his appreciation for all of Jack's work.

Singing Bridge: The State DOT's plan to do repairs on the bridge was originally scheduled for July 2027. A proposal was sent to them to change this work to October or November 2026 because of the negative effect this would have on the summer guests and beach population. Pat will keep the COB apprised of this as he is awaiting the final decision.

Town Green Septic Project: Tony discussed the 50 – 60 people this would affect and what the cost would potentially be to them. Experimental soil testing is to be done, and then the cost will be presented to the town for a vote or referendum.

There was discussion on the positive and negative effects of this project and how it could possibly affect our small town of Westbrook. The Westbrook outlet project was brought up and how it could be a tax benefit vs a tax burden. Also, the impact on the education budget. Pat brought up a possible Tax Incentive Program for attracting new businesses. Pat will stay on top of this project and report information as received.

Blessing of the Fleet: This event will take place on Saturday, June 29th from 10:00am to 12:00pm off Duck Island. Dave Russell is the Harbor Patrol officer and will be on the police boat.

Scholarship Committee: The recipient picked for the \$500 scholarship was Dev Patel. A letter was sent to the board of education for their awards night taking place on June 11th. Discussion was had on possibly increasing the next year's amount to \$1,000 or having two \$500 awards.

Coastal Resiliency: Ron reported the 2nd round draft is being reviewed. The 3rd part of the draft will be coming out soon and is going as well as expected. Ron stated that his priority is to see where the grant money will be going and who gets it first (town by town).

Pat informed the group that he and Zack walked the beaches (in regard to the health and water reports) to see the water flow of the pipe systems, drainage, etc. from the Route 1 corridor to Long Island Sound. He said the coast guard and federal government measure the water amounts in "acres" (rather than cubic feet or gallons). Pat said there are new rules for sump pump drainage and that he will try and learn more about this topic.

Town Hall Solar Construction: The solar project has been completed and police cars now have new carports.

There are new police hires consisting of 3 full-time officers and 9 part-time officers. There will be full-time officers on our beach fronts and bicycle patrols on major weekends. There may be funding for radar guns on bicycles and Pat will stay on top of this for the outcome.

Good and Welfare: Invoices for dues have been sent out.

Pat has been asked by the zoning officer to submit all Presidents and/or contact persons names and addresses of each beach association. Please email this information to Pat at your earliest convenience.

Next Meeting: Monday, July 1st at 7:00PM in person in the Multimedia Room, Town Hall.

There being no further business to discuss, motion made, seconded, unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 8:18PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Cole, Secretary