

GIANTS NECK BEACH ASSOCIATION
BOARD of GOVERNORS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
WEDNESDAY MARCH 5 2025 6:00 pm
THE EAST LYME TOWN HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM 1
108 PENN AVE, Niantic CT
Minutes

Present: Paul Formica, Chip Brienza, Lisa Doggart, Lou Piscatelli, Gerry Van Noordennen, Louise Wilcox

Absent: Ernie Annibale, Mary Ann Heenehan

1. Call to Order

Paul Formica called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Public Hearing

A Public Hearing regarding GNBA regulations and associated fee changes was called to order at 6:04 PM. The hearing was confirmed to have been posted on the website. No public comments were made.

Jim Ventres discussed changes recommended by the Zoning Commission to adjust the fee structure, ensuring increases align with project size. The application extension period was modified, and the ZBA fees were adjusted to cover legal notices required by law. Applicants will now be responsible for legal fees to avoid financial burdens on the association.

Gerry Van Noordennen shared his experience regarding legal notice expenses. Depending on the word count, they can become expensive. Mike Heenehan praised the group for its efforts. Chip Brienza asked if applicants would bear the full fee; Ventres confirmed they would, including a base fee and additional costs.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:11 PM.

2. President's Report

Paul Formica reported:

- Budget Preparation: Committee members should begin gathering financial data for the next budget cycle.

- Insurance Costs: Rates increased 25-30% this fiscal year and are expected to rise another 30% next year.
- Raft Consideration: Paul asked the group to consider whether it's worth deploying the raft due to the cost implications. Chip Brienza wondered if there would be insurance implications if it is not deployed. Mike Heenehan noted the \$4,300 expense for installation and removal.
- Paul suggested continuing to discuss a policy for locking the court gate. He suggested that there be a recommendation for that at the April meeting.
- Paul feels a Capital Committee and Climate Change Committee should be established.
- Paul and Louise are working on solutions for document digitization.
- Paul reported a security concern as Mary Jane Agostini reported a suspicious vehicle taking photos of her home. Paul contacted the police.

3. Treasurer's Report

Louise Wilcox reported total funds of \$308,000 (report attached). The budget process began three weeks ago; all committee chairs have submitted operating budget data. The Operating Budget Committee meets tomorrow for a detailed review.

A motion to approve the treasurer's report passed unanimously.

4. Approval of BOG Minutes (12/30/24 & 2/5/25)

A motion to add approving November minutes to the agenda was made by Gerry, seconded by Lou Piscatelli, and was approved unanimously.

Gerry asked if his previously suggested changes had been made (they had). Paul suggested a change to the reference to renewing the cottage lease. A motion to approve the minutes with two amendments passed unanimously.

Gerry made a motion to accept the December Minutes. The motion was seconded by Chip Brienza and passed. Lisa Doggart abstained.

Gerry made a motion to accept the February minutes. The motion was seconded by Lou. There was a discussion. Louise Wilcox clarified that the \$3,000 for pond fencing has already been approved and is in the capital budget. It can be used for pond netting, but none of the other suggested expenditures of the geese committee.

Paul suggested that once the netting is paid for, the leftover money might be able to be used for the other proposed expenditures of the geese committee. Louise said the money is in the capital budget, and the membership voted on item by item. The committee can propose a new capital expenditure for the next budget year. Louise is looking through the operating budget to find more money for the geese committee. The big expense that the geese committee is suggesting is seeding geese-resistant grass.

Louise further clarified for the record that the contract for Sandy Sweepers reflects money left in the beach budget for this FY. There is \$9,700 in the beach budget for spring cleaning and life-saving rings. If there is an emergency or a storm, the \$3,500 noted in the contract would have to come from the BOG capital budget emergency fund.

The motion to approve the February minutes passed with several modifications for clarity.

5. Discussion Items

Dock Committee Update, repairs, budget, possible action\

Tom Doggart spoke on behalf of the dock committee. He said that over the last year, the committee has been looking into extending the dock. In that process, it became clear that the dock needed repair. The committee had surveys done to determine the extent of the need. The inner poles were replaced 35 years ago. The outer poles were replaced in 2009. Many poles are at or are reaching the end of their useful life. The dock committee is studying two scenarios:

- 1) Repair the two deteriorated poles that are at the end of their useful life for approximately \$10,000.
- 2) Replace the outer eight poles for approximately \$90,000. The whole dock would cost an estimated \$300,000.

The dock committee holds \$53,000 in funds. There will be a discussion on how to fund these repairs, including a consideration of asking homeowners to contribute toward this community asset.

Mike Heenehan stated that while the dock is a community asset, only slip holders are permitted to use it. Slip turnover is very slow. Perhaps a slip fee increase should be considered.

Paul requested a full report for the next meeting.

GN Heights Collaboration

No updates.

BOG Budget Review 2025/2026

Louise Wilcox reviewed the proposed general operating budget line items for the proposed line item amounts. The group agreed on the following:

- Legal Notices: There is still \$500 left in budget for this year. Keep at \$500 next FY.
- Legal Fees: Keep at \$3,000 next FY.

- Office Expenses: The majority of the budget will be spent by June 30. Keep it at \$800 next FY.
- Real Estate Taxes: Make line item \$800 next FY.
- Surveying Costs: Louise said that Jim Ventres suggested having \$2,000 for surveying to determine what private and community property is around the right of way. Terra Moore noted that the new owners of the adjacent property feel it is impossible to get to the water from the right of way. Gerry said that when the new owners moved in, there was a survey done. It is located in the zoning files in the clubhouse, and that survey should be located before getting a new one. Louise said that there is \$2,270 still in the capital budget for signage. Therefore, the only thing that needs a budget line item is the survey if it is determined to be needed.
- Insurance: The insurance committee suggested that Louise budget for a 35% increase next year, which would equal \$46,000. Paul requested competitive quotes. Louise talked to Jackie from Bouvier, who thinks the increase is more likely to be 20%.
- Security & Safety: The group agreed to reduce this line item to \$1,250 next FY.
- Treasurer/Tax Collector: Paul suggested examining the history of compensation for this role to determine whether an increase is needed.
- BOG Secretary: \$1,300 next FY.
- Payroll Taxes: Adjusted to \$3,000 next FY.
- Contingency: The contingency has not been used this FY. The Clubhouse Committee is considering proposing asking to use it for deck repairs. Paul and Lou each suggested leaving it at \$1,000 for the next FY. Mike Heenehan and Lou Piscatelli further indicated that a contingency of a certain amount across the operating budget for smoother operations in the future.

Zoning Regulations Approval

Gerry moved to approve zoning regulations with fee increases. Lou seconded the motion, which passed (5-0). The new regulations take effect March 15.

6. Committee Reports

Geese Committee

Gerry reported. Coyote decoys have been installed: one in his yard and one at the Wohlers. They appear to be effective.

The pond lights were damaged by ice. The company is sending replacements. Next year, the lights need to be removed in winter before ice forms. A buoy was suggested to mark their location so they can be reinstalled in the same place.

Gerry will work with the geese committee to purchase and install the netting, which does not require wetlands approval. He also plans to order the grass seed.

Mary Jean said committee members met with a landscaper who gave ideas for screening around the pond and in the right-of-way areas. She showed renderings. Lisa Doggart said there was a second proposal as well, and she will meet with someone to talk about the cost of installing turf grass at the right-of-ways.

There was discussion about where the money for plantings would come from. Louise suggested that it is a capital project and should be voted on by the members.

In discussing geese as bird flu carriers, Chip Brienza noted the potential impact that it could have on the community as a health and safety issue, suggesting the use of available emergency funds as an appropriate resource in the current effort to manage the neighborhood flock

Beaches

Mike Heenehan reported that Sandy Sweepers is contracted for beach cleaning.

There was discussion of putting out no wake zone buoys that have been used previously. The buoys are stored under the docks. Lou said that the buoys under the docks are not compliant. Gerry asked if the buoys are supposed to be out on the water. The buoys are not required but if they are used it requires a permit which the GNBA has.

Marc Berger said that the buoys are useless with no enforcement.

Mike brought up for consideration again the idea of beach access tags required on the beach to ensure that people on the beach are members or guest of members. He plans to make a proposal.

Pond Committee

Jim Beaulieu is planning to remove several protruding rods around the pond for safety concerns.

Jim proposes to install a pipe from the pond to the beach move the output, improve water flow and reduce geese activity. About running a 6 inch pipe. From the pond down through the culvert, under the sand, to the road washout. This would result in one source of discharge into the sound. There was discussion. Paul asked Jim to prepare a proposal It goes in the proposal that compares the possibilities of putting a pipe under the road, one with a pipe not under the road.

Court Committee

Terra Moore spoke on behalf of the tennis committee. She wanted to discuss the change in court hours that was implemented at the end of last season. The new hours keep tennis players from playing. The mornings are taken by pickleball players. And it is too hot to play

tennis until after 5 pm. Between 7 pm and 8 pm is the nicest time of the day to ply. But now the court is closed.

Terra doesn't feel it is fair. The court has turned into a pickleball court, useless to tennis players who now have one hour of playing time. Terra does not think closing the court at 7 p.m. in the middle of the summer is fair.

Paul suggested convening a court committee meeting to develop a recommendation for the board to consider. Terra did not feel that the tennis and pickleball committee members would agree unanimously to a recommendation.

7. Public Comments

Terra Moore stated her concern about the avian flu that resulted from this meeting.

Mike Heenehan alerted the group that the beach may need some sand restoration. The beach committee is assessing the issue. Sandy Sweepers can bring more sand. The members have already approved \$35,000 for beach restoration.

Jim Beaulieu commented on insurance costs. The BOG might consider a higher deductible to lower the annual premium.

Mary Jean Agostini said that the car was caught on camera taking pictures, was at the Beebe's House.

Mary Jean also relayed an email from Matt Ravosa. He asked if the geese committee should remain active, and the answer was yes.

8. Board Comments

9. Adjournment

Lou moved to adjourn. Lisa Doggart seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Annah Perch
Acting Recording Secretary

Next meeting: April 2, 2025, at East Lyme Town Hall, 6:30 PM.

TREASURER'S REPORT
BOG MEETING
March 5, 2025

BANK BALANCES AS OF 03/03/2025	
Operations Account (2531)	43,824
Tax & Assessment Collection Account (5826)	100
Reserves Account (2544)	59,341
Money Market Account (1462)	205,150
TOTAL FUNDS	308,415

PROPERTY TAX REVENUES AS OF 03/03/2025	
Amount Levied	145,507
Amount Collected	(145,507)
TOTAL TAXES OWED	0

NON-TAX REVENUES RECEIVED SINCE LAST REPORT	
214 Rent- Mar	2400
NBT Interest- Feb 28	667
BoA Interest- Feb 28	2
Zoning Applications	525
TOTAL NON-TAX REVENUES	3594

OPERATING EXPENSES PAID SINCE LAST REPORT	
Perch- BOG Feb 5 meeting minutes	91
Comcast WiFi- Feb	134
Mail Chimp- Feb	33
Web Pay (Eversource) Clubhouse- Feb	44
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	302

BUDGET PROJECTIONS AS OF 3/03/2025	
Current Operating Balance	43,824
Projected Future Revenues to be Collected	10,625
PROJECTED FUTURE OPERATING FUNDS	55,100
PROJECTED FUTURE OPERATING EXPENSES	54,594

Submitted by: Louise Wilcox, Treasurer