# Beach Committee - Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
**Location:** Online Remotely – Zoom Video Conference - [https://zoom.us/j/97998159310](https://zoom.us/j/97998159310)  
Meeting ID#: 979 9815 9310  
Meeting recorded for later access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present:</th>
<th>Absent:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Miskovsky, Chair Beach Committee</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Jeff Billard, Vice Chair Beach Committee</td>
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<td>Margie Mitchell, Beach Committee Member</td>
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<td>Dan Shearer, Beach Committee Member</td>
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<td>Joseph Strazzulla, Beach Committee Member</td>
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<td>Maggie Clayton, Acting Beach Superintendent</td>
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<td>Jennifer Rodger, Beach Coordinator</td>
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**Visitors:**
- Doug Brown, Vice Chair, Select Board
- Brad Cole, Reporter, *The Falmouth Enterprise*
- Linda Davis, Solid Waste Advisory Committee & Litter Free Falmouth
- Jim Downey, Falmouth Heights Maravista Neighborhood Association
- Peter Hargraves
- Michael Holcomb
- Alan Robinson, Chair, Solid Waste Advisory Committee
- Margaret Sabens, Litter Free Falmouth & Falmouth Litter Reduction Team
- Theresa Saunders, Old Stone Dock Association
- Debbie Scott, Vice Chair, Falmouth Heights Maravista Neighborhood Association

**Agenda:**
1. Call to Order (7:00 p.m. by Paul)
2. Approve Meeting Minutes from 1/20 (Motion by Paul, seconded by Dan, so voted unanimous)
3. Correspondence
4. Public Comment
5. Continue discussion of committee members’ findings at beach sites (esp. those not discussed 1/20)  
   a. Margie: Menauhant  
   b. Jeff: Woodneck & Stony  
   c. Paul: Falmouth Heights, Bristol, and Surf Drive  
   d. Dan: Chapoquoit & Megansett  
   e. Joe: Grew’s Pond & Old Silver
6. Solid Waste Advisory Committee/Litter Free Falmouth  
   a. Presentation  
   b. Q&A
7. Discussion of flier distribution at beach parking lots accessed by day-trippers
8. Discussion about present state of Menauhant West, including area off of Foster Rd.
9. Discussion of creating an action plan to address issues identified as priorities by the Committee
10. Discussion & Vote on Recommendation to Select Board for reinstatement (or not) of One-Week, Two-Week, Three-Week, and Four-Week non-resident beach stickers
11. Acting Superintendent’s Report
12. Committee Members’ Comments

**Correspondence:**
- E-mail from MaryKay Fox, Chair, Sippewissett Association  
  o Reach out to provide guidance on managing Woodneck dune complex; would attend future meeting
- E-mail from Debbie Scott, Vice Chairman, Falmouth Heights Maravista Neighborhood Association  
  o Submitted 14-point report of specific improvements & enhancements for Falmouth Heights & Bristol
- E-mail from John Mullen, Bywater Ct. homeowner, copied Select Board & Town Manager’s office  
  o Ideas for making Surf Dr. more resilient separate from those proposed by Coastal Resiliency study  
  o [$7.3 million in funding for Newburyport Harbor dredging project](https://www.newburyport.com/news/2023/03/08/7-3-million-in-funding-for-newburyport-harbor-dredging-project/)

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*$7.3 million in funding for Newburyport Harbor dredging project*
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- E-mail from Sharon Short, Ryder Rd. homeowner
  - Requests replacing fence at Megansett be added to list of beach improvements for this year

Public Comment: (from the Zoom chat)
- Doug Brown
  - I suggest you compile your recommendations and forward them to Select Board for action, rather than bargaining directly with Conservation Commission and DPW.
  - DPW is aware of work to be done at Menauhant, but another reminder is helpful. Thanks to Jeff for taking the initiative to send the good photos of the dangerous conditions.
  - Been discussing beach nourishment at Chapoquoit. Jeff Williams, coastal geologist, pointed out need to provide nourishment beyond high water line. He’s estimated $6 million budget to do it correctly.
  - Perhaps we should have the dump open Sunday afternoon and early Monday morning. Many weekend people bring their trash to the beach.
  - Is the vote to allow non-resident parking stickers contingent on fully open parking lots? (answered: no)
- Jim Downey
  - FHMNAssoc@gmail.com is willing to partner with the Beach Committee. Tell us how we can help?
- Theresa Saunders
  - Are the minutes of previous meetings available to the public? I don’t see them on the Town website even though it shows a button for minutes and agenda I can’t get to it. I’m interested in Surf Drive Beach. OSDA annually cleans the beach, provides flowers for window boxes, etc.
- Debbie Scott
  - Do non-resident beach stickers allow access to sticker only beaches? Many resident neighbors very upset last summer that the beaches could not accommodate their use & felt their resident sticker purchase wasn’t genuine

Continue discussion of committee members’ findings at beach sites:

a. Joe
   - Grew’s Pond
     - Public park area & a combination of those who want to go to the water; 2 mos. where there’s overlap
     - Parking lot has not had any attention or reconstruction in some time (estimates 20+ years), starting to erode down the hill forming gullies that drive rainwater down toward the beach; regrading needed
     - Doesn’t have adequate parking for the number of visitors; cars repeatedly park on grass
     - Facilities are adequate
   - Old Silver
     - Maintenance required on access ramp from residents’ parking lot to beach
     - Snack shack is worn looking; painting might make it look more attractive
     - Dirt lot used for auxiliary parking next to Herring River marsh area is “in terrible shape”
       - Suggests working w/ ConComm to find ways to make it more stable; approval for regrading?
       - “Lot is half underwater when the tides are high”
     - Receives attention from Police Dept. with presence of officers in-season

b. Paul
   - Falmouth Heights
     - “Has lost some sand because the beach itself is really caught in between the jetties”
   - Bristol
     - Agrees with FHMNA report about fencing issues and appearance of parking lot area could be prettier
     - Cosmetic stuff needs to be discussed with buildings and grounds department

Maggie
- Old Silver dirt lot not used Summer 2020 due to reduction of spaces; 50% capacity kept all good spots up top
- 2021 parking capacity yet to be determined, anticipate an April/May decision prior to Memorial Day opening

Margie – Suggests Committee puts a timeline on work requests

Dan
- Committee needs to rank items; have long-range goals for all beaches & then mark successes along the way
- Need to offer and encourage volunteer work (small daily tasks) from people who use the beaches
- Much of this work requires money if anyone wants to make donations

Joe
- Relates these items to creation of a Capital Plan where you pick most high priority items to focus on
- Suggests Committee asks DPW to keep certain items as a priority
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**Solid Waste Advisory Committee/Litter Free Falmouth**

Alan Robinson, in promotion of litter-free beaches, here tonight to do the following:

- Inquire about litter at the beaches and understand the degree of the problem
- Wants better understanding of past approaches to litter and waste management at the beaches

**Paul**

- Cigarettes are a problem
- Half the trash in containers is household trash; it’s a question of convenience

**Joe**

- Trash receptacles are often overwhelmed, as containers do not always hold enough
- May need to invest in additional (larger?) containers as currently are small; regardless of size, empty more frequently
- Recommend providing space above & beyond what people use each day; can’t expect people to bring home their trash

**Margie**

- Suggestion to have a community dumpster for those who aren’t here for curbside trash day
- Suggestion to have small trash bags available, like the Mutt Mitt bags provided for picking up dog waste

**Dan**

- Suggestion to have signage about not bringing household trash, most doing this are day-trippers or weekenders

**Linda Davis**

- Suggests Beach Committee create a spreadsheet/profile for each of the beaches that they are responsible for
- Decide what kind of behavior they want on the beaches, how they want the beaches to be treated, develop a policy that everyone is aware of, and put up signage about that
- Recognizes that there are people in the community who want to be active and make a difference

**Alan Robinson**

- Inquiry about how much trash receptacles cost
  - Maggie - Last purchase was completed in April 2020 for 12 containers at a cost of $16,225.71
- Inquiry about when beaches are in active use, what is the communication from the beach staff?
  - Paul - Their job’s to make sure people are safe in the water & parking lot; staff aren’t the trash police
- Providing information he received from DPW
  - A few trash containers at beaches have been left out this off-season; DPW supportive of keeping beaches clean
- 1st Recommendation - Need for signage with various messages
  - References success of blue signage from 2019 w/ statistics about how long it takes items to degrade
  - Opportunity to provide message & art on panels of trash bins; work w/ Beach Committee on wording
- 2nd Recommendation - Increase the number of barrels at the beaches
- 3rd Recommendation - Adopt a beach initiative/project
  - Alan – have people in the community who want to help
  - Paul - suggests they create a schedule for people who are interested and want to get involved and then create a pilot program, but states it needs to be supported by the Highway Department
  - Margaret - 159 people in their army from the fall cleanup and believe they can do this
- 4th Recommendation - Messaging and information distributed when people buy beach pass

Margaret Sabens – Litter Free Falmouth is working on a Town bylaw about litter to give anti-litter movement some teeth

- Paul - Suggests they instead inspire by example as bylaw won’t be readily enforced

**Discussion of flier distribution at beach parking lots accessed by day-trippers:**

**Margie**

- Friendly & inviting design for this hard copy created by Kylie Breen, Endicott College, Class of 2023
- Currently on an 8.5x11” sheet, but goal is to get it on a 5x7 card size
- Would like Committee feedback on this draft, working towards final product available to distribute in May

**Jeff**

- Likes it, suggests adding parking prices

**Paul**

- Very creative, suggests including “see website for more information” w/ link & print on laminated card, size 3x5 or 5x7
- Maybe also consider including the same information on the sides of trash containers

**Joe**

- Likes concept of being on cardstock, gives everyone the same information that they can hold onto
- Have Collector’s Office mail out with purchased stickers & Beach Dept. Clerks can hand out at Bathhouse
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- Suggests use hrs. side for other messaging, e.g. a version of “keep the beach clean” or “love our beaches”
- Print a batch that they can experiment with until they fine-tune it

Dan – Would like to see addresses/directions to other beaches included, and “sticker only” parking information

Maggie
- Printing capabilities at the Bathhouse & DPW are copy paper, have to pay Carlson Printing for other services
- Suggest members “reply all” to Margie’s e-mail with suggestions to create an updated draft for next meeting

Discussion about present state of Menauhant West, including area off of Foster Rd.:

Jeff
- Wants all to know the Town’s aware of current conditions, Menauhant has not been forgotten
- Photos from January 26 showing erosion, rusty rebar, exposed nails & broken up asphalt sent to Select Board on Feb 2.
- February 4, Peter McConarty wrote back that Town is moving forward with permitting process for removing the bridge, structure & building new jetty revetments; anticipating full approval by summer/fall; DPW will perform site visit soon

Maggie
- Spoke to Engineering & Highway at DPW as it’s an interdepartmental effort & Town investment for residents/visitors
- Safety precautions (fencing off, signage, etc.) will be taken in the spring, post-storm season

Discussion of creating an action plan to address issues identified as priorities by the Committee:

Paul - We’re doing this through correspondence with different associations & Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Joe
- Create a list of priorities that Committee can add to; give wish list to Select Board
- Shouldn’t give up on queue for Chapoquoit [approved, then tabled for COVID-19 safety, then tabled for budget cuts]
- Pick out the common nouns for all 10 sites (parking, trash, etc.) and take to the associations

Discussion & Vote on Recommendation to Select Board for reinstatement (or not) of One-Week, Two-Week, Three-Week, and Four-Week non-resident beach stickers:

Maggie
- Eliminated last summer as part of COVID-19 management plan, with decision to restrict parking lot capacity to 50%
- Parking lot capacity decision has not been made yet for summer 2021
- Looking at recent sales history, annually it’s about 650-800 non-resident stickers, compared to 13,000 resident stickers

Jeff - In favor of them coming back

Joe
- In favor to reinstate them as majority of vaccinations are forecasted to have taken place by June 2021
- Helps rentals and commercial base
- Work out language, we’re discussing “parking permits” not “beach stickers” that allow cars access to beach parking lot

Dan - Agrees to allow more people to park

Motion by Paul for a vote in favor of reinstatement, seconded by Jeff, so voted unanimous

11. Acting Superintendent’s Report:

- Mayflower Wind Project drilling soil borings at Falmouth Heights & Surf Dr. began February 16, will be completed in a couple of days; stakeholders (DPW, Beach Dept. etc.) were informed of plans & approved all markings prior to start
- Seasonal job postings will go up on Town website in next couple of weeks, NotifyMe will send out the information
- March 8, Select Board reviewing 2021 special events permit applications; Dept. will await ruling for NEEEE Triathlon, beach weddings, Recovery without Walls fundraising concert at Old Silver, etc.
- Old @falmouthmass.us e-mail addresses being retired on March 1; @falmouthma.gov platform already in place
- IFAW providing Town w/ signage about seals; to start Dept. requested 13 count for each beach parking lot access point
- As of end-of-day February 17th, have sold 1,638 resident/taxpayer beach parking permits for revenue total of $65,520

12. Committee Members’ Comments:

- Paul – Suggests the flier include the message “first come, first-served”
- Joe – Suggests rethinking Paul’s comment/phrasing to be more friendly
- Margie – Agrees to work with Joe to make verbage of Paul’s suggestion more soothing
- Dan – Parking lot at Chapoquoit has been full & been clean even with the increased number of people this off-season

- Meeting Adjourned at 9:09 p.m. (Motion by Paul, seconded by Jeff, so voted unanimous)
- Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 17, 2021