

## **A SBCA public meeting was held on Mon., July 17, 2017 @ 6 PM**

**Officers and Board Members in attendance:** Phyllis Farfaras (President), Doris Sweet (Correspondence), Vickie Sawyer (Secretary and Bench Program Coordinator), Roland Jacques (Treasurer), Peter Volpe Jr. (Membership Secretary), and Frank Leone (SBPD & SBFD Liaison).

Earl and Susan Spruce (American Flag Program) were unable to attend.

The June 2017 meeting minutes were approved by Phyllis and all other present board members.

### **6:00 PM**

**Phyllis called to order the public meeting** by welcoming those in attendance, leading the Pledge of Allegiance, and making some announcements.

Phyllis encouraged those in attendance to take home a Vial of Life Rx bottle.

Phyllis also encourages the audience to use the blue trash bags that were available for picking up litter & leaving the bags out off the side of the road for the town to pick up. She requested that people picking up litter wear reflective vests for safety and provided some for people to take home w/ them.

Phyllis shared how the sand castle day was very successful. However, she went onto say that Lucie Mann won't be able to help next year b/c of her new job & so the SBCA will be in need of volunteers to help plan the event.

**Frank (SBPD & SPFD Liaison)** - Gave Police & Fire Department reports.

**FD:** The new Portsmouth Regional Hospital ER in Seabrook is open. Fireworks were quiet on the beach around the time of the 4th of July.

**PD:** The new K9 dog's name is Henry & he will be on patrol @ the beginning in the new year. Parking enforcement is out on the streets & the next Coffee w/ a Cop will be Fri., July 29.

A woman in the audience shared a bad fireworks experience & asked if the SBCA could put on a professional fireworks show.

A man in the audience complained about there being "125 businesses in Seabrook selling fireworks."

Phyllis and Frank validated their frustrations w/ fireworks. Phyllis explained what usually happens when the FD responds to fireworks calls (the people are usually gone by the time the FD arrives). And Frank shared that the SBCA does not have money in their funds to light them off professionally.

Mary (Hooksett St.) stated her concern about the painted lines on the parking spaces on Hooksett St. - how cars should be parking parallel (but no one actually parks in that direction).

An audience member complained about motorcycle noise & Col. Quinn (who happened to be in the audience), said that he has a plan in place to decrease the noise.

**Peter (Membership)** - Reported 106 members in the SBCA and promoted new membership. He went on to say how he now has an assistant, Pat Cardin, who is willing to call non-members to get the numbers up.

Phyllis explained that in addition to the 106 members, we get an amazing amount of donations. She went onto say that we need new members, donations, volunteers - in order to keep the beach looking so lovely.

A woman asked how much a bench costs & Phyllis stated that the cost to refurbished bench was \$358 and said that when benches were available to be sponsored, it may \$500 to sponsor one depending on the cost of material.

Phyllis briefly explained the SBCA budget by stating we need \$4k to run the SBCA (and mentioned other expenses such as rent for a storage unit and a P.O. Box).

**Roland (Treasurer)** - A man in the audience asked what the SBCA spent \$2k on & Roland provided an itemized list of what money was paid out for.

**Vickie (Benches)** - Read the names of the streets where new trexed benches had been placed so far this summer. Phyllis explained that we are repairing benches that are at the end of their life-span and whose sponsor are members first.

**Dave (Beautification)** - Thanked those who water the SBCA flowers; promoted volunteer work and shared how it was a joy to see the flowers doing so well.

## **6:30 PM**

Phyllis invited the audience to get a bottled water and a woman in attendance randomly said out loud, "Thanks to all you do, David."

Phyllis introduced Town Manager Bill Manzi, Selectman Khan, Selectwoman Theresa Kyle and Selectwoman Ella Brown.

### **Phyllis facilitated a Q & A exchange:**

Unknown woman (3rd row back) blurted out...

**Q:** Are fireworks legal at the beach?

**A:** (Manzi/Phyllis/Frank) - No, they are not legal in the Seabrook Beach Village District. They are only legal in the town of Seabrook. If you see fireworks, call the SBPD at 474 - 5200 to report them. The SBFD often goes down the beach to check out the scene, but the people who set off the fireworks are usually gone. Someone lighting off fireworks must be caught in the act in order to be formally charged.

Betty (Suncook St.)

**Q:** I wrote a letter to the town a couple of years ago asking for the town to build a sidewalk from the end of Portsmouth Ave. by 1A onto Hooksett St. When will the sidewalk be installed?

**A:** (Manzi) - I gave the letter to the DPW to evaluate the possibility.

The sidewalk is in the Capital Improvement Fund (CIP) for 2019. We prioritize and plan projects in the CIP plan. The year could change. It's the planning board who discusses it, but the selectmen have some say about anything being approved.

Ruth (Portsmouth Ave.)

**Q:** When the sidewalk goes in on Hooksett St., will I be notified?

**A:** (Manzi) - Sure, yes. It's in the CIP plan for 2019. The board of selectmen look at all the article items. Before it goes to construction, it needs to go on a warrant by the DPW and then gets voted on.

Kevin (Newbury St.)

Comment: Thank you to the DPW for cleaning the beach again.

Reply: (Manzi) - He thanked the board.

Phyllis (Ocean Blvd.)

**Q:** Where does the money that's collected for parking go?

**A:** (Manzi) - Right to the town's bottom line/general fund. The SM got a report from the police chief and they have doubled the amount made.

Phyllis follow-up comment: Out here at our little lot there is 1 sign at the entrance about parking and then a sign here, but not there...

**A:** (SM) - The chief of police & Manzi will look into having additional signage out there - perhaps at each spot.

Phyllis: I hear that there is going to be a Cracker Barrel here.

**A:** (Manzi) Not sure.

Connie (Franklin St.)

**Q:** Parking enforcement is cost-effective, so could we do the same w/ dogs down at the beach?

**A:** (Manzi) - I read a complaint about that on Facebook today. I can talk to the police department about having a parking person going down to the beach to write tickets there.

**A:** (Kyle) - People will be on the beach w/ their dogs until their fined.

**A:** (Brown) - Sometimes if you fine them, they won't pay it.

**A:** (Manzi) - That can be the case if they are not a NH resident.

Rose

**Q:** How many tickets has the police department given out for parking w/o a permit?

**A:** (Kyle) - The revenues have doubled. \$10k @ \$50/pop is about 200 tickets.

**Q:** What happens if they don't pay it?

**A:** There is no escalation for 2nd or 3rd fines - it's the standard ticket each time.

**Q:** How would they be able to check a person's parking ticket history?

**A:** (Manzi) - Use computers, but we're not looking at it as of today.

**Q:** Is there a way to put up the blinking sign up on Rt. 286 reading "no fireworks at beach" again? The last time the sign was up about motorcycles, the noise decreased. When the fireworks sign was posted it seemed that there were less fireworks on the beach.

**A:** We can talk to the police department about getting it back up.

**A:** Ella Brown reviewed the fireworks discussion from earlier.

Khan then wanted to go back to the discussion about the CIP. Decisions are made by the planning board and approved by the board of selectmen. Anything in the next 5 years on warrant articles, comes from there. If something needs improvement like the drainage on Atlantic Ave., it can be brought up on CIP night. Residents need to be at that meeting. The February deliberation session and budget hearings are other similar meetings. Those w/ the CIP are the 3 dates in which things can be talked about so that things can get done.

Phyllis (Ocean Blvd.)

**Q:** How would someone know when something like the sidewalk will be discussed?

**A:** (Khan) - We provide you w/ a CIP book (w/ ideas). It shows what year things will be planned.

Vicki M

**Q:** Can you go in to town hall for a copy of the CIP book?

**A:** (Manzi) - You can get it on-line from the town of Seabrook website.

**A:** (Kyle) - The CIP is a wish list. It is not set in stone. It helps us decide what the town will do. Kyle encouraged people to come to the town hall and bring people to selectmen's meeting to discuss an item and make some noise. Then we (the SM) hound Manzi and he will hound us. I've heard of complaints about the condition of the beach roads from all the heavy construction trucks from building new homes. The old drainage system was not made for all the new people at the beach. The roads weren't built w/ the future population increasing.

Peter (Portsmouth Ave)

**Q:** How is the value of the SB Power Plant down?

**A:** (Manzi) - The Power Plant is a utility. Being a utility means it's a special assessment. How the value of the Power Plant with taxation is based, is on economic output & profitability. It's not just SB - power plants are closing in other states. Manzi went on to discuss how power plants in other states were being subsidized. In the future, we will need to decide if we want nuclear power in New England.

**Q:** If they are no longer viable, are they still storing fuel at the Power Plant? Who will take care of it if it closes?

**A:** (Manzi) Yes, and there is a decommissioning fund. You don't start closing things immediately, you wind things down...

Arleigh (Atlantic Ave.)

**Q:** Could you tell us what it would be like if there was a Seabrook without the Power Plant?

**A:** (Manzi) - Financially, it would not be good. It's employment and it's taxes. There isn't one good thing about Seabrook Station closing. Even with it staying, the amount of money that we are receiving from it is decreasing. There has been town discussion about it and there is a financial fund in plan if the Power Plant ever closes.

Larry (Ocean Dr.)

**Q:** Do we have a financial plan if the Power Plant does have to close?

**A:** (Manzi) - There have been substantial drops. What you want is not a top-down approach, but bottom-up...

Larry response: I think that the town should have a say.

Khan commentary: This summer we negotiate the Power Plant again. Last time it took 4-6 months to negotiate. The power plant AND the warrant articles are part of the budget - as is the schools. A lot of town revenue goes to schools. If you compare other small towns to Seabrook, we do not know what is coming in the next 5 years. The board of selectmen are already discussing what we will do if the power plant closes.

Arleigh (Atlantic Ave.)

**Q:** What percent does the Power Plant pay for taxes?

**A:** (Manzi) - It was 80% and now it's 47%. The town did a good job negotiating w/ the Power Plant.

Peter (Portsmouth Ave.)

**Q:** What about the power lines coming from Canada?

**A:** (Manzi) - The No. Pass will definitely hurt and make negotiating a lot harder.

(Kyle) - The town manager has cleaned up a lot of the spending mess in town (ex., town employees had credit cards, employees took home old equipment (now we sell it), etc.

(Manzi) - We have a final fund of \$9mil - that is how we counteract the decrease in revenue. The Department of Revenue says it keeps \$4mil in UFB. Now SB is at \$9mil b/c of more efficient buying/selling, accounting.

Phyllis (Ocean Blvd.)

**Q:** The town of Seabrook had an assessment company assess our homes. If we hired this company instead of our Town Assessor Angela Silva doing the work, then why are we giving back abatement money?

**A:** (Manzi) - It is the NH law (such as how vets can get tax credits).

**A:** (Kyle) - It's the law for assessors to use an assessment formula and it can go down.

**A:** (Manzi) - We are talking about property values, not tax dollars. People have the right to file for an abatement. ... A 5 year assessment is required.

**A:** (Khan) - Vision comes in every 5 years - it's mandated by the state.

**A:** (Manzi) - Angela Silva tries to keep it to 100 % as she can. Abatements are the nature of the beast.

Sue (Ocean Dr.)

**Q:** To follow up on Phyllis' question, I realized that my beach house that was build in 1947 has been assessed for 2 full baths when I only have 1 1/2 baths and something else is not recorded right in the records.

**A:** All you have to do is ask what the assessment is for and have it looked at. The property was built in 1947, so just be aware of what has really changed and it will be adjusted appropriately by Angela Silver, our town assessor, who is very professional. (Sue affirmed Silva's professionalism).

Ella Brown encouraged those in attendance to come to the selectmen's meetings. There's a lot of things that we do that everyone can see. The selectmen do what they can do to not raise taxes by getting the rate down.

Sue (Ocean Dr.)

**Q:** You mentioned coming to the selectmen's meeting. Who is recording these notes? Do you see the notes? Will these valid issues be addressed coming from tonight's meeting? I want to make sure that these causes are addressed.

**A:** (Bill Manzi) - I have a good memory.

**A:** (Brown) - We'll get a copy of the meeting minutes from the SBCA secretary.

Unknown man in back

**Q:** How do you find out about upcoming town meetings and what is on the agenda?

**A:** (Manzi) - Look on the town website.

Man

**Q:** Can we have a selectmen's meeting at night so that more people can attend?

**A:** (Kyle) - We tried that, but no-one came. Besides, the Newburyport "Daily News" reports on them.

**A:** (Manzi) - We try to have 1 evening meeting per quarter.

Phyllis comment: I've went to selectmen's meetings at all different times and it's always the same people.

Joe Giuffre commented on how the selectmen have wanted to get people to go to their meetings. And selectmen have tried in the past to have beach meetings w/ beach-related agendas at the beach precinct building.

(Manzi) - The Rec Center is set up to record meetings.

Phyllis: Selectman Khan, did you announce the SBCA meeting at this morning's selectmen meeting?

(Khan) - Yes.

Phyllis: People only go to meetings if they care about the issues.

(Khan) - As 4th-term selectmen, in '08 & '09 we tried to do the night meetings, but it did not work and we paid \$400 in over-time for the channel 22 crew to record after-working-hours meetings. We can have night meetings 6 times per year.

Man

**Q:** There is a lot of commercial property on Rt. 1. Why aren't these businesses paying their fair share?

**A:** Traffic is not like it was 20 years ago. They are paying a lot of taxes. **A:** (Kyle) - They pay impact and exaction fees/donation. These fees have been raised in the last few years. The businesses, themselves, have paid for the widening of Rt. 1.

**A:** (Khan) - Rt. 1 is a state highway. The DDR, where Wal-Mart is, proposed the project. The project went to court and the town of Seabrook had a say in the Rt. 1 traffic project.

Different Man

**Q:** I am a school committee member. We get asked questions all the time and it's often difficult. How much do the town employees get for health benefits?

**A:** (Manzi) - In the past it was 100%. This board bargains w/ the union and all 4 contribute to deductibles, etc. So, it is not 100 % anymore. If you look at the salary range for the professional staff in Seabrook and then look at other towns, the salaries of our DPW is \$20k lower, but our town offers better health benefits.

(Khan) - Thanked commissioner Dick McGuire (who was in the audience) for fighting to keep out tax dollar down.

Manzi acknowledged Col. Quinn for helping to keep Seabrook safe.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Vickie Sawyer (SBCA Secretary)

Edited by the Website Manager