

Memorial Town Hall, 1 Library Street, Georgetown, MA 01833

Meeting Minutes July 27, 2023

The Board of Selectman Emergency Meeting

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Emergency Meeting of the BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Memorial Town Hall

7:00PM-General Meeting

Verizon Channel 42/Comcast channel 9

Selectmen Present: D. Dawes, D. Lamonica, Rachel Bancroft and Robert Hoover.

Others Present: Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator.

ZOOM: A. Smith participating on Zoom.

7:00PM CALL TO ORDER

DISCUSSION -Emergency Meeting to discuss the beach at the American Legion Park.

Point of order from D. Dawes stated that residents are signed in on Zoom and should inform the Board of who they are.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated they do not have to identify themselves.

D. Dawes rescinded his request.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke to the Board on a recent altercation that took place the previous weekend at the ALP Beach area which consist of fighting, drinking., altercations between guest at the beach, biting was part of the altercation, using grills at the beach, police department being called for assistance, problems seem to be continuing, concert series had just started at this time -video had been sent to the Police Department which they will investigate if charges will be filed, numerous calls to the Police Department mostly on Sundays and Saturdays, language barrier with current signs, signs need to be more visible, signs will be redone to make the rules clearer and will be written in Spanish, English and Portuguese, lacking a beach attendant, no eyes or ears at the beach, Town sending mixed messages such as grills being in place when grilling is not allowed, Highway Department will have the grills removed, everything is reactive, sending one Officer down to the beach is not safe or fair, glass beer bottles everywhere.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator gave his suggestion to the Board and it would be to close the beach on Saturday and Sundays to the end of the summer.

A. Smith asked if this will affect the Summer Concert Series.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated closing the beach will not affect the concert series or the playground area, baseball field or pickle ball, we are not encouraging the proper use of the beach, will work with the Highway Department to put up some construction fences and signs that say the beach is closed, sending Officers will put them at risk including the public, good about cleaning up after but we have no one there when the activity is elevated, code analysis we don't have regarding the amount of people or cars.

D. Dawes stated he believes the board should take action for public safety we have to address this confined area asked how many vehicles can /should be there, how many people can be there, no count we have are allowed parking everywhere, what is the maximum capacity.

D. Lamonica asked how many parking spots are there staffing shortage leaves the town vulnerable.

D. Lamonica spoke on fencing being put up or down entry point.

R. Hoover asked what is Police Chief Don Cudmore's recommendation.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated that Police Chief Don Cudmore's recommendation is closing it for the week and for the rest of the season.

R. Hoover asked how do you cover the area, how does the police department know how to send more than one person.

D. Lamonica stated the Police Department is already short staffed and this is not a good environment for a single officer.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator gave an example of someone who rented the gazebo, they paid for the use of that spot and then someone taking over that area is not fair.

R. Hoover asked what happens to the Georgetown people now that they can't go to the beach, they pay a price for this and asked why is it opened to everyone.

D. LaMonica stated reasonably restriction can be implanted.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated a key component was having resident stickers but the excise taxes had already come out too late to implement this year and we can't put resident stickers in with tax bills.

D. LaMonica asked about using the Towns Electrical Department as a mailer to add with their bills going out.

D. Dawes asked A. Smith, Chair to recognize a resident in the audience.

Mr. Michael Gentile member of the Parks & Recreation was in attendance and stated that the Board is asking questions among themselves and the Parks and Recreation Committee can answer the questions and informed the Board that he had no idea the Board of Selectman was having a meeting to discuss the closing of the ALP Beach, spoke not being involved in these decisions - without input or votes

D. Lamonica asked if he was aware of what happened the past Sunday.

Mr. Michael Gentile stated he did not know about the incident from this past Sunday and the Park and Recreation Committee met last evening and no one knew of this, asked about the video, talk about it a lot at Parks and Recreation meetings but nothing gets addressed -asked about a video - the Board met last night no one knew about this meeting or situation that happened over the past weekend, not being informed, spoke of the things the parks and recreation committee have done, understands the situation, has to be a remedy -closing the Beach is harsh, cameras should be all over that area, we should have tow trucks once one vehicle gets towed everyone will know, how many reports are there currently and questioned an overreaction on one fight.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated this is more of an emergency response we are not trying to cut the parks and recreation out this -we needed to act quickly, our ability to control this behavior overlap in terms of management, we have to make a decision.

A. Smith stated now is the time to stop this behavior and get a handle on it.

R. Hoover asked if there is a middle ground instead of all or nothing believe that the Park and Recreation Committee should be aware of what's going on, example of a lack of communication, suggested to close the beach for this weekend and set up a meeting with the park and Recreation Committee.

D. LaMonica stated that when it comes to public safety you can't take a half measure because then if something happens people will know you only took a half measure, opens up a liability.

R. Bancroft asked Resident Michael Gentile when did it become more than just residents.

Resident Michael Gentile states it changed when the town took state funds, we have ideas cameras are one there are things always get stalled per mike anyone drinking should be removed -training - police academy -no drinking signs -we need to be more proactive.

D. Dawes stated that by state statute it is a public beach -have to allow access to the water.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on Liability threshold is different if a fee is charged, we do not have a Town presence -once that is in place it will be helpful -measured response.

D. LaMonica stated that the park positions have to be a paid position.

D. Dawes stated this type of activity goes back at least five years and escalates each year, residents know what is happening and it is not a one-year issue.

R. Hoover spoke about the Parks and Recreation Committee not being notified and wants to move forward on what we need to do and make sure the Parks and Recreation Committee are involved.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator asked the board where do we go from here and asked the Board to decide.

The Board was asked for a consensus -All Board members individually stated yes to a full closure of the beach.

VOTE BY THE BOARD:

D. Dawes motioned the Board to issue an immediate order closing the beach at ALP Park until further notice, seconded by D. LaMonica

Roll call vote was taken all in favor.

ADJOURNMENT:

D. Dawes motioned the Board to adjourn at 8:15 P.M. with D. LaMonica seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken all in favor.

All Board of Selectman Meetings can be viewed on our Town Website at <https://www.georgetownma.gov> - Under the Community TV tab on the left side.