



NANTUCKET TOWN ASSOCIATION MEETING

August 27, 2024, at 4:00 pm

Meeting held in the Learning Lab of the Atheneum and by Zoom

DRAFT MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Attendance in the Atheneum: Peggy Altreuter, Trish Bridier, Barbara G. Cohen, Mary Anne Easley, Lee Saperstein, Bill Seay, Campbell Sutton, Anne Terry, Henry Terry, Barbara von der Groeben.

Attendance by Zoom: Marsha Fader, Doris Hanna. The Zoom link was <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87455121153>.

Guests: Chief Jody Kasper, Nantucket Police Department.

Thanks to the Atheneum, Sammy Aguiar, for hosting the meeting, which was recorded and the link to the video is included here: <https://youtu.be/wZJqL3zM3zY>.

I. Call the August 27, 2024, Nantucket Town Association Meeting to Order.

President Henry Terry called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm. He then gave the regular warning that no Town Area Plan subjects would be discussed at this meeting.

II. Approval of minutes of the Meeting of July 23, 2024.

Henry Terry asked for approval of the minutes of the meeting of July 23, 2024; Anne Terry moved their approval, Trish Bridier seconded them, and the vote to approve was unanimous.

III. Treasurer's Report.

In Mary Longacre's absence, Henry Terry gave the Treasurer's report, which had no changes in values. With no deposits or withdrawals, the beginning and ending balances were \$3608.16. Noting that this year's dues-paying membership is less than last year's, Lee Saperstein suggested that another round of recruiting might be in order. Mary Anne Easley reported two such e-mails were sent to the entire mailing list in January and February. She will re-send the invitation. Campbell Sutton asked about the boundaries to the Town. Henry Terry and Lee Saperstein said that the formal boundary is complicated but that the informal boundary is a circle centered on the Town Square (Main Street) of one and one-half miles in radius. Moreover, any Nantucketer who pays dues to the Association is a valid member.

The Treasurer's report was accepted upon a motion made by Trish Bridier, seconded by Anne Terry, and approved unanimously.

IV. Old Business.

There was none.

V. New Business.

Also, none.

VI. Guest Speaker. Chief Jody Kasper, Nantucket Police Department

After an introduction by Henry Terry, Chief Kasper began by talking about her early impressions of Nantucket. She had been in the Northampton, MA, police department for 26 years, the last nine of which was as chief. She said that Nantucket was a great place with great people. She has tried to meet as many people and their associations as possible and is favorably impressed. She had high praise for the Nantucket Police Department and its 41 full-time officers, all of whom live on the Island.

Living, specifically housing, is, however, a major concern of hers. The department's senior officers own their homes but, when they retire, their replacements, today's junior officers, are renters and do not own their homes. She knows that the housing issue affects all Town employees, not just the police. Housing problems affect recruitment of new officers because, no matter how well paid, they cannot afford a Nantucket home. The lack of affordable housing on Nantucket compounds a national problem in recruiting new police officers. The department will look for solutions to the housing issues cooperatively with the Town.

Another major concern for her is the issue of mental health. She had great praise for the Fairwinds Counseling Center in Gouin Village but recognized that they can do only so much to help clients. If persons with mental issues need to be in a facility, there is none on Nantucket and they must go off-Island. This means travel for the client's family.

Yes, she said, traffic is a problem, particularly in the summer. She first arrived on Nantucket in the winter period and found it a place in which she would like to live. Summer is fantastic but a challenge for traffic as well as parking. This brought her to the nearly 40 Community Service Officers, CSO, who help to control the crowded roads and parking places in the summer. Yes, they enforce the parking rules rigorously but the plus side, is that there is a regular turnover of parking places in the downtown. The CSOs reduce the challenge of recruitment of new, full-time officers; indeed, some have elected to join the department permanently.

Chief Kasper said also that the Police Department has responsibility for the Marine Division and that they do a fine job including water safety, water bylaw enforcement, and beach safety, i.e., life guards. She praised Harbor Master, Sheila Lucey for doing a fantastic job.

At this point, Chief Kasper said that it was time for questions. Lee Saperstein observed that there is poor stop-sign discipline on the Island. On the whole, Chief Kasper said that Nantucketers tend to be courteous, particularly in allowing drivers into the line of traffic from side streets. Equally, they tend to be unsafe users of cell phones. Yes, she said, there are problems with drunk drivers. In the winter, when there are fewer cars on the road, officers may make a traffic stop because of erratic driving, thus identifying an impaired driver; in the summer, because of the higher volume of vehicles on the road, they usually find an impaired driver only when investigating a traffic accident. Campbell Sutton spoke to her concern about pedestrian safety on streets on which vehicles park on the sidewalk. Bill Seay asked about the distribution of ranks and duties among the 41 officers and was given the numbers. There are eleven civilian employees

who manage the emergency phone (911 calls) system. The Fire Department is entirely independent of the Police Department except for the emergency phone system and their combined information technology (IT) systems.

Campbell Sutton asked about bicycle-vehicle accidents and was told that they are on the increase with 16 or so in the last year. All road-accident data can be found on the State's web site under "Impact," <https://apps.impact.dot.state.ma.us/cdp/home>. The Police Department is working closely with Mike Burns, Transportation Program Manager, on safety programs such as helmet-safety awareness. She went on to say that visitors to the Island, who comprise a large fraction of summer drivers and bicycle riders, may not be familiar with bicycle-safety protocols. Peggy Altreuter spoke about bicyclists on sidewalks and sidepaths who do not do a good job of warning pedestrians of their presence.

Campbell Sutton spoke about the significant traffic delays at the Milestone and Nobadeer Farm Road intersection. She knows that a rotary is under discussion for this intersection but that may take some time to implement. Meanwhile, a three-way set of stop signs could reduce wait times on Nobadeer Farm Road. Marsha Fader asked whether or not an officer directing traffic at this spot would help. Chief Kasper said that there are not enough officers to do that full time and that part-time enforcement could be hazardous for the officer on duty due to drivers' lack of familiarity with it. Marsha Fader also asked about cars driving and parking on sidewalks to which Chief Kasper said that she was aware of Nantucket's historical precedent in this regard. She also said, in response to another question, that she cannot give advice on how best to reduce driving hazards on Gardner Street. The final question had to do with siren noise and the number of sirens that can be heard. Chief Kasper acknowledged their intrusiveness and said, however, that this was necessary to achieve safe clearance of a street. With a nod toward the seasonal variation in the Island's population, she said that the siren noise should soon lessen.

VII. Adjournment.

At this point, Henry Terry thanked her for her presentation and indicated that the time was right for adjournment. It was 4:52 pm. The next meeting will be September 24 and it will be the association's annual meeting.

***Next meeting will be on September 24, 2024. It will be hybrid with an in-person meeting in the Atheneum and a virtual one via Zoom; if one uses Zoom, the address is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87455121153>.**

Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary, saperste@mst.edu.