



NANTUCKET TOWN ASSOCIATION MEETING

April 23, 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, Craig Muhlhauser, Anne Terry, and Henry Terry.

Attendance by Zoom: Marsha Fader, Mary Longacre, Gail Norton, Lee Saperstein, and Paula Williams. The Zoom link was <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87455121153>.

Guests: Amy Lee, President, Jeff Coakley, Communications Manager and Public Information Officer, Nantucket Cottage Hospital.

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/Jbme8XzNAT8>.

I. Call the April 23, 2024, Nantucket Town Association Meeting to Order.

President Henry Terry called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Subsequently, he announced that no Town Area Plan subjects would be discussed at this meeting.

II. Approval of minutes of the Meeting of March 26, 2024.

Henry Terry asked for approval of the minutes of the meeting of March 26, 2024; Anne Terry moved their approval, Craig Muhlhauser seconded them, and the vote to approve was unanimous.

III. Treasurer's Report.

Mary Longacre gave the Treasurer's report, which is attached. The starting balance was \$4165.64, which was increased by dues payments of \$25.00, and decreased by a payment of \$40.54 for the annual subscription to the web site, giving a final balance of \$4,150.10. Mary Longacre noted that the web site payment can now be made direct from the Association's treasury. The report was accepted upon a motion made by Anne Terry, seconded by Paula

Williams, and approved unanimously.

IV. Old and New Business.

There was none.

V. Guest Speaker. Amy Lee, President, and CEO of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital

Next, Henry Terry introduced Amy Lee, President of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital, who has been at the hospital since October of 2022. Since coming to Nantucket, she has met with a lot of groups and organizations and, thus, will start her talk with things that led to questions in these earlier meetings. The mission of Nantucket Cottage Hospital is committed to providing the highest quality of care, respecting the dignity of all individuals, and serving the unique needs of our island community through partnership and leadership. The talk started with the 2023 key statistics that so many people ask about including 12, 310 visits to the Emergency Department and that the average wait time from registration to seeing a provider is 15 minutes and the median time from check in to discharge home is under two hours even in the very busy summer period. Of the number of patients treated in the Emergency Department, only 3% were flown off island for higher level treatment; the hospital treats as many as medically appropriate locally with the very skilled team we have on island and with telehealth support from Mass General Brigham. A table of facts from 2023 is attached also to these minutes.

Even with almost 20,000 lab visits, donor-supplied instruments turned out most analyses in a matter of hours. In addition to the numbers of X-ray and CT exams, they did around 2300 MRIs with the newly acquired machine made possible by a donation from the Hospital Thrift Shop. They also have an interventional radiologist specialist who has chosen to live and work on Nantucket and, thus, improves diagnosis and treatment while keeping patients home on the Island. She was particularly pleased to report on the Urgent Access Center that saw 8606 patients last year. The UAC has added a Medical Director, Dr Steve Kohler, and increased space in the Anderson Building with a new front and center entrance and walk-in patient capability. Scheduled appointments will also still be available. With the limitation on the amount of clinical space available, PASCON kindly moved their meeting space into dedicated space on the first floor and office space on the second floor of the hospital.

For surgery, they have invested in new equipment and hired a surgical Physician's Assistant, PA, Allison Fassnacht, to assist with surgeries which allows our surgeons to have more time in the operating room and clinics. Allison will also run a colonoscopy clinic to educate patients so they are more comfortable with the procedure which will also help reduce the very high no-show rate that causes delays in getting patients in for their procedure(s). She finished her review of hospital facts by saying that they had 146 births in 2023, which was 30 more than Martha's Vineyard, not that the islands are competitive.

After reviewing the numbers, she moved into the subject of Primary Care, for which there had been well over 19,000 visits in 2023. The Primary Care Physicians and Nurse Practitioners along with their staff work as a team to care for patients. This allows for schedule flexibility,

new patient appointments, and for the Nurse practitioners to have their own panel of patients. With regular visits from specialists, patients can get comprehensive care at the Hospital readily.

Several of the Nurse Practitioners have additional specialized training including Annette Adams who has a cardiology clinic in addition to her family medicine clinics which has cut cardiology appointment wait times down significantly. Annette works closely with the MGB Cardiology physicians who come on island several times a month and this has been a very positive relationship for patients. A similar arrangement exists for dermatology with Ashley Belliveau who is a nurse practitioner with both family medicine and dermatology experience. She works closely with Dr. Kvedar to see dermatology patients on a weekly basis. At present, they have over 30 specialties in the hospital and this increases the probability of on-Island treatment.

She then moved on to the critical issue of housing for hospital staff. She acknowledged that there is a shortage of affordable houses on Nantucket and that they are doing their best to help staff obtain housing. A 2023 staff survey showed that almost 70% of the staff have some type of housing insecurity and that was for staff who had been on island for just a few months to those born and raised on the island. The hospital added a housing coordinator position that works with any interested employee for housing solutions, which has been incredibly successful. The lease-to-locals program is one example that is currently used by 9 hospital employee families. NCH has added a total of 10 newly purchased staff housing units, with 38 bedrooms and bathrooms, that the hospital has purchased or constructed over the past two years. All of the new units were funded through the generous support of hospital donors. Because of the seasonal shifts on Nantucket, they have about 60 seasonal employees, the hospital will always have needs for both seasonal and long-term housing. At one time the Emergency Department was all travelers and now it is around 70 percent permanent employees.

The hospital is significantly invested in the Behavioral Health needs of the community and is working diligently with area resources including Community Solutions for Behavioral Health and Fairwinds. The hospital's relationship with Mass General allows for expedient bed placement off island for patients who need a higher level of care. This is even more important when the wait time for in-patient Behavioral health bed placement in the state of Mass is at an all-time high.

She spoke extensively about school-to-work programs with the high school, educational opportunities, onsite training, and about a nurse residency program as ways to elevate and employ community members. At this point, she stopped and asked for the association members to ask about things that they wanted to know.

Barbara G. Cohen asked about policies set to admit doctors to practice in the hospital and Amy Lee explained that both qualifications and previous experience are reviewed through a credentialing process. Barbara G. Cohen asked also about having an ophthalmology specialist come to visit the hospital so that ophthalmology exams could be done on Island. Amy Lee explained that the hospital reviews all specialties on a quarterly basis to determine where the greatest need in the community is and, that as much as they would like to, they can't bring every specialty in house on island. There is an Ophthalmology provider who has off site clinical space that is credentialed to see patients in the emergency room and who can do surgeries.

Amy Lee then moved onto the Community Health Needs Survey that is being administered on Nantucket to help them set priorities for future care: <https://nantuckethospital.org/feedback-wanted-community-health-needs-assessment/>. Results from the survey help the hospital to focus services based on community need. The survey is also available in 5 languages and can also be completed on paper and can be mailed or dropped off at the hospital.

Anne Terry asked about staffing imaging and laboratory services, perhaps with high-school interns. Amy Lee explained that there is a shortage of radiology staff across the country, so the hospital relies on a mix of permanent and traveler staff to run the program. An insufficient number of students are applying to these programs. Mass General is working to establish a radiology tech program and it is hoped that this will help alleviate the shortage in Mass. She explained that for many of the clinical roles there is the potential to have programs on island, and using Licensed Practical Nurse program as an example, the community would need eight candidates on island for the LPN program to be taught on island as opposed to the cape. The hospital has an amazing resource in the simulation lab which allows for hands on learning in a safe environment for all types of students and is something that very few community hospitals have and definitely not to the caliber available to the students on Nantucket.

Mary Longacre asked for the name of the person who is in charge of landscaping around the hospital and was told to contact Hillary Reynolds to help facilitate. She asked also about recycling old X-ray films and was told to ask Hillary at the same time. Her next question was about wait times to see a primary care provider. If the request was not constrained by seeking a specific person or a date, the wait time was around two weeks for non-urgent issues. Urgent issues are usually scheduled the same or next day after being triaged by a nurse. Asking for a specific doctor or specialty could make that a little longer. Was the hospital recruiting more primary care providers, she asked. Yes, certainly said Amy Lee and she hoped to have a good-news announcement soon.

Mary Longacre added that she was renting to a hospital employee and encouraged anyone else that has rental properties to reach out to the hospital for tenants. Amy Lee thanked Mary Longacre, saying that people want to come to Nantucket to work and providing stable housing is an important part of the job offer. She noted that just recently they hired a new nurse anesthetist who is thrilled to come to Nantucket and has a great housing opportunity because of the community.

Mary Anne Easley asked about being able to be treated right away for something urgent – her example was poison ivy but a home-based accident might also fit. Yes, of course, the Urgent Access could see someone usually same day due to both walk in and scheduled appointments. There is also a virtual visit option that is available until late in the evening and works for some of the most common issues. Amy Lee also explained that with this new model we just need people to understand that, if the matter was more urgent than that of someone already there, the new patient could be moved up. Amy Lee then distributed a hand-out with a list of the types of services and contact information.

Mary Anne Easley talked about a recent visit of hers to the hospital and its food. Amy Lee spoke highly of the food service people and, in response to a question about access, said that the cafeteria was open to the public for breakfast and lunch, not just patients and staff. Another question was about the location of the new PASCON office, to which Amy Lee said just past the entry desk there is a door to the dedicated PASCON space. The relocation of PASCON meant that the Urgent Access center's entry was now much closer to and visible from the parking lot.

In closing, Amy Lee said that she was available to answer questions at any time and if a question arises that had not been discussed in the meeting, do not hesitate to send her an e-mail. Henry Terry reminded the members that the next meeting would be May 28th and then asked for a motion to adjourn, which was given readily and approved equally quickly.

VI. Adjournment.

A motion to adjourn was made by Anne Terry, seconded by Trish Bridier, and approved unanimously; the meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.

***Next meeting will be on May 28, 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.

APRIL 23, 2024, TREASURER'S REPORT:

We received letters of thanks from the Nantucket Atheneum and Nantucket Food-Fuel-Rental Assistance for our recent donations. Copies attached for the minutes.

Available Balance at last report: \$ 4,165.64 on 03/26/24

Dues Received	\$0.00 through PayPal \$25.00
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Total Income	\$25.00
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Expenses	\$40.54 (Wix annual renewal: website hosting)
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PayPal Fees:	\$0.00
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Balance as of 04/22/24:	\$4,150.10
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44 members have paid their 2024 dues so far

2 members have paid in advance for 2025

2023 had 54 paid memberships

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Longacre, NTA Treasurer



**NANTUCKET
ATHENEUM.**

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April 3, 2024

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The Nantucket Town Association
PO Box 181
Nantucket, MA 02554

Dear The Nantucket Town Association,

Thanks to you, the Nantucket Atheneum is able to provide access to over 1.6 million books, nearly 1,300 free programs, and access to information and internet for the Nantucket community all year long.

Your generous donation of \$500.00 will ensure that the Atheneum, *your* public library, continues to bring a variety of cultural and educational services and events to the Nantucket community.

You have made a real difference in the lives of the patrons we serve. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, administration and staff of the Nantucket Atheneum, I would like to thank you for your gift towards our Annual Giving campaign and for your confidence and dedication to the Atheneum.

Thank you once again for your donation. The Atheneum, and those we serve, sincerely appreciate your generosity.

With best wishes and our sincere gratitude,

Maggie O'Reilly
Director of Development

No substantial goods or services are being provided in exchange for this gift. Please retain this receipt for your tax records. The Nantucket Atheneum is a private, non-profit organization, qualified by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3).



**NANTUCKET
FOOD • FUEL • RENTAL
ASSISTANCE**

COMMUNITY • COMPASSION • CONFIDENTIALITY

Post Office Box 2597, Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554 ♥ www.assistnantucket.org

March 26, 2024

Nantucket Town Association
PO Box 181
Nantucket, MA 02554-0181

Dear Nantucket Town Association,

When we received your gift of \$300.00 dated February 4, 2024 we couldn't help but **do our happy dance!**

Your gift will provide assistance to islanders who are often devalued and struggle to afford their essential needs. It is supporters like you that give our neighbors in need access to fresh fruit & vegetables, rental payments to avoid eviction or homelessness, emergency payments to keep basic services on and connection to off-island medical care.

You and others like you make all the difference!

Thank you for joining us in our over 25 year effort to build stability and opportunity for Nantucket's vulnerable community members .

Deepest Gratitude,

J. Carreiro
Janis E. Carreiro,
Executive Director

*Thank you so much
for your support!*

The Nantucket Interfaith Council is a non-profit organization with a 501(c)3 designation
(Federal ID # 04-3194441). No goods or services were provided in exchange for this donation.

Nantucket Interfaith Council

President: Rabbi Gary Bretton-Granato
Vice President: Rev. Dr. Tom Richard
Treasurer: Dr. Terry Anne Vigil
Secretary: Judy Aveni DeBaggis
Co-Registrar: Susan Hochwald
Co-Registrar: Susan Levine

www.nantucketinterfaithcouncil.org
nantucketinterfaithcouncil@gmail.com

Community Outreach Programs

Executive Director: Janis E. Carreiro
nffra@assistnantucket.org

Assistant Director: Thomas Dixon
tom@assistnantucket.org

Nantucket Food Pantry

Manager: Ruth Pitts
Ten Washington Street
Tel: 508-228-7438

ruth@assistnantucket.org

Nantucket Rental Assistance, Utility Assistance & Medical Assistance

Processing

Program Director: Janis E. Carreiro
Two Madaket Road
Tel: 508-901-1320

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Administrative/Development Assistan

Jamie T. Dickinson
Tel: 508-680-3559

adminassistant@assistnantucket.org

By the Numbers

Fast Facts About Healthcare at NCH (Calendar Year 2023)



Emergency Department visits
12,310



Median length of stay in Emergency Department, from check-in to discharge home
Under 2 hours



Transfers off-island from Emergency Department
346



Lab visits
19,985



X-ray exams
8,322



CT scans
3,889



Urgent Access visits
8,606



Surgeries
1,479



Mammograms
2,210



MRIs
1,500



Dialysis treatments
766



Infusion treatments
1,901



Primary care visits
19,310



Physical therapy treatments
12,819



Births
146