

**RYE BEACH COMMITTEE MINUTES
MEETING APRIL 30, 2015**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Larry Rocha, Lori Carbajal, Steve Hillman, Keper Connell

ALSO PARTICIPATING:

Rye Fire Chief Thomas Lambert, Rye Police Chief Kevin Walsh, EMT/RFF Jake McGlashing

Meeting called to order 7:11 PM - Pledge of Allegiance

Open dialog with members and participants regarding hiring of lifeguards for the 2015 summer season. Chief Lambert stated we are budgeted for 14 weeks with guards starting the end of June. Rate of pay is \$10.00 to \$11.00 per hour with the head lifeguard pay at \$15.00 per hour. Determined this competitive pay for new hires as this was researched with other NH beach communities.

Larry Rocha and Lori Carbajal expressed concern over issues last summer with many guards not staying through summer, leaving as early as August 8th. Chief Lambert stated many are college students and have to return to school. Lori Carbajal stated that she had been at the tryouts the prior year and in the exit interview all applicants were asked if they could stay through the full summer term and with only a couple of exceptions all stated they would be staying on for the duration. Keper Connell stated they he and Lori Carbajal had met with the Director of Parks and Rec for the Town of York, ME – Mike Sullivan during the winter. Keper stated that York has a bonus program for guards that stay on for the duration which has been very successful in keeping guards on. Additionally their guards which are managed under the direction of parks and recreation are required to have an orientation prior to the start of the season which consists of one week, 40 hours covering beach ordinances and protocol in managing their beach, as well physical abilities and training. Additionally he stated their guards regulate all beach ordinances they do not enforce, they are the warning then authorities are called i.e., police for ticketing. The guards manage the resource. Mr. Sullivan stated their beach supervisor is full time during the summer and is employed year round to attend meetings with other departments etc.

Lori Carbajal asked Chief Walsh about the full text of the beach ordinances and if this information is known to the lifeguards. Both Chief's Walsh and Lambert stated that the lifeguards have full knowledge of the ordinances however they are asked to contact the police department for enforcement such as open container. Lori Carbajal indicated it didn't seem as though the guards were being proactive with violations as it was evident to her as an example, with individuals riding past guards on "fat-tire" bikes when bikes are prohibited on the beach. Larry Rocha stated the swim zones especially at Sawyers Beach during surf camps are squeezed to perhaps 20 feet flag to flag to accommodate surfing and/ or camps. Larry stated this was common place at Sawyers. Steve Hillman stated the flag posts need to be a set distance for each of the town beaches so that beachgoers know where they are versus moving the location.

Larry Rocha asked if a beach supervisor had been hired and Chief Lambert stated one had not yet been. Larry Rocha asked why it has been difficult for the town hiring summer guards as it had not been a problem during the time he was head lifeguard in NJ nor did hiring seem to be an issue in Hampton at the State beaches where many guards are returning year after year. Keper Connell asked where they were advertising and Jake McGlashing stated the University of NH, Portsmouth HS, and Hampton. It was suggested by Larry Rocha someone from Rye Fire or the town, attend the tryouts when Hampton has their tryouts to see if we can hire in some of the overflow applicants once Hampton's positions have been filled.

Keper Connell indicated the Beach Committee would post the tryouts on the committee Facebook to try and attract more applicants. (The Facebook page is, RYE BEACH COMMITTEE – FORUM).

Steve Hillman asked about the feasibility of guard chairs moving with the tides so the guards could have a better vantage point at low tide. Chief Lambert indicated they are fastened and very heavy to move so it is not practical. Larry Rocha asked Chief Lambert how long guards are stationed at their posts. Chief Lambert stated they are there for their shift which is eight hours. Larry Rocha indicated it was very long and normally a break would be needed every hour as is done at other beaches in order for the lifeguard to maintain their focus.

Committee members expressed to the participants that any letters from citizens regarding the beach, good or bad be provided to the committee. This would include emails so the committee can work towards improving areas of concern. Additionally the committee members wanted to be apprised as to new commercial beach permit requests so to have input prior to Board of Selectmen meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM

Although the meeting was to be video taped – an additional person at the library needed to be contacted in advance. The committee was not aware of this and will make arrangements for upcoming meetings.