



# RYE POLICE DEPARTMENT

555 Washington Road Rye, New Hampshire 03870



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To: Rye Select Board  
From: Chief Kevin Walsh *KW*  
Date: September 26, 2023  
Re: Request to add to the parking ordinance for no camping/overnight parking

The Town of Rye has an ordinance for no overnight parking, Ordinance # 5 - Night Parking, which is an ordinance to prohibit all night parking during certain months. There is no parking on any public way for more than 1 hour between the hours of midnight and eight a.m. from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of this ordinance is for snow/winter maintenance. The Beach Ordinance # 1, section two states that beaches and areas shall be open to public use from sunrise to midnight, and not any other time, with the exception of emergencies and for lobster and fishermen.

Town of Rye property, public ways and NH State Parks property have seen an increase of vehicles parking overnight. In the past year a Rye Officer located a person underneath a tarp behind the Rye Recreation shed sleeping. When the person was asked to leave the premises, he asked where else he could go. Technically, there is no town ordinance or NH state law that prevents people from camping or sleeping overnight at the Rye Recreation area, any town property, roads, or State Parks property in Rye.

People have parked overnight at the Boat Launch and State Park employees' issue a \$25.00 parking ticket, which is the cost of a State Parks regular parking ticket. The consistent comment being heard is, "\$25.00 is the cheapest camping fee". Weather permitting, people have camped out on the beach area between the boat launch and Odiorne State Park. The issue with camping out on the beach overnight is that people may start cooking fires without permits, leave trash, etc.

Some of the problems with people camping that have been reported to the police are trash, noise, and other quality of life complaints. Some examples of the complaints to the Police Department and Select Board Office are people dressing and undressing on the beach or public property (side of the road between private homes and parked vehicles). There are no restroom facilities available therefore people use the immediate area. If portable public restrooms are in place for sporting or other town events the cost of paper products and cleaning the restrooms increases, not to mention the trash left behind (diapers and food containers). Many years ago, I investigated a motor home that emptied the septic system out onto the paved parking lot south of Odiorne State Park. Earlier this year I was off duty, and I observed an RV camper parked up next to a private business/apartment complex. The RV had a hose attached to the outside faucet. The RV driver, who was from Canada, said he was out of water and was filling up. He stated that in Canada water is free. The on-duty officer educated the Canadians and told them that in America everything costs money, including water. The property owner was notified to turn off the outside faucet to prevent this type of activity again. It has been disappointing that people visiting Rye will go beyond reasonable expectations.

Municipalities surrounding Rye have been experiencing the same quality-of-life issues. On August 7, 2023, Seacoast online published an article "Portsmouth moves to halt Peirce Island camping after residents call it 'out of control'." Peter Rice, Director of Public Works for the City of Portsmouth, said that as of August 3, 2023, the city has an ordinance to restrict camping on Pierce Island. Some of the reasons for the ordinance are trash, dog and human waste, taking up parking spaces all day and night, and out-of-towners parking and camping for free overnight and all day. The ordinance is a way the City of Portsmouth is mitigating the quality of life and multiple vehicles being able to park all day and night.

During the summer of this year, Rye officers did a parking survey of different locations and how many vehicles were parked overnight.

July 31, 2023, parked overnight at 4:34 AM

- MA 1WLA63 Lot # 1
- MA 3LJP41 near 1304 Ocean Blvd
- NY JEA765 near 1595 Ocean Blvd
- MA 4LRB79 Ocean Blvd @ Myrica
- NH 3888098 near 2228 Ocean Blvd
- MA 3LE962 near 2182 Ocean Blvd
- MA RS4749 Ocean Blvd @ Cable Rd Ext
- IL DT65893 and ME RYE (cr) Ocean Blvd @ Old Beach Rd

This parking survey was done periodically between July 31, 2023 and August 21, 2023. See the attached 5 pages of logged license plates, dates and times.

Also attached is a sample ordinance I am proposing and am asking the Select Board to consider. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Thanks for your support.

Cc: Town Administrator Matt Scruton  
Assistant Town Administrator Becky Bergeron

Rye Town ordinance Draft

#4 Parking Ordinance

Or

# 5 Night Parking

Part 2 of article # 5

*person*  
Hours Restricted;

No ~~person~~ shall sleep or camp in any public place or in any vehicle located in any public place within the Town of Rye between the hours of 11:00 PM and 8:00 AM.

Definitions: As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

**PUBLIC PLACE** – Includes any public lot, any public way or the sidelines thereof, west of the Atlantic Ocean and the shores of any river or harbor located within the Town of Rye.

**Vehicle** – Includes any bus, recreational vehicle, highway equipment, motorcycle, motor truck, motor vehicle, semitrailer, sidecar, tractor, trailer, or other vehicle defined by RSA 259:1 as amended, and shall include any camper, trailer or mobile home, whether or not occupied.

**VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES** – In addition to any other penalties provided by law, any person violating the provisions of this article shall be guilty of a violation and shall be fined \$100.00 for each day of such violation. Each day the violation continues will be a violation. any bus, recreational vehicle, highway equipment, motorcycle, motor truck, motor vehicle, semitrailer, sidecar, tractor, trailer, or other vehicle defined by RSA 259:1 as amended, and shall include any camper, trailer or mobile home, whether or not occupied may be towed at owners' expense.

**RELATIONS TO OTHER PROVISIONS** – This article is intended to supplement, not replace any other laws, statutes, or other rules governing the subject to which it is addressed.

**SEVERABILITY** – If any provision of this article or any portion of such provision or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of the article and the remainder of such provisions and the application thereof to other persons and circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

Part 3 of article # 5

Overnight Camping

REGULATIONS- No person, from, cooperation or entry shall be permitted to use land or property for the purpose of noncommercial outdoor, overnight camping by any group of five (5) or more unrelated to the land owner, except by permit issued by the Select Board.

The Select Board may apply such reasonable regulations as they deem necessary.

Applications and permits shall be made to the Select Board at least 48 hours prior to intended use and next scheduled Select Board meeting.

COMMERCIAL FACILITIES- Any use of land for a commercial facility allowed under Town Zoning Ordinances must obtain a written permission from the Select Board in advance of such use. A permit for such use will be considered only after satisfaction of all other zoning and Town ordinances and shall be governed by the terms of State of New Hampshire, Division of Public Health Services Sanitary Laws and regulations Governing Places of Public Gatherings, dated September 28, 1977, and being Document No 1027, Regulations SR-4, II, III, and IV.

# Rye Police Department

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Selective Search From: 06/01/2023 Thru: 09/26/2023 0000 - 2359 Printed: 09/26/2023

For Date: 07/31/2023 - Monday

Call Number	Time	Call Reason	Action	Priority	Duplicate
23-4310	0434	911 - POLICE ONLY INFO	POLICE INFORMATION		3

Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Call Source: 911  
 Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
 Jurisdiction: RYE  
 ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-04:34:00 Clrd-05:01:00

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

MA 1WLA63, Lot 1  
 MA 3LJP41, 1304 Ocean Blvd  
 NY JEA8765, 1595 Ocean Blvd  
 MA 4LRB79, Ocean Blvd @ Myrica Ave  
 NH 3888098, 2228 Ocean Blvd  
 MA 3LE962, 2182 Ocean Blvd  
 MA RS4749, Ocean Blvd @ Cable Rd Ext  
 IL DT65893 & ME RYE (CR), Ocean Blvd @ Old Beach Rd

For Date: 08/04/2023 - Friday

23-4435	0300	Other - POLICE ONLY INFO	POLICE INFORMATION		3
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Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Call Source: Other  
 Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
 Jurisdiction: RYE  
 ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-03:00:00 Clrd-03:30:00

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

Lot 1 Ocean Blvd, NH STR8-BB  
 1142 Ocean Blvd, MA 7KM169  
 1215 Ocean Blvd, 3888016  
 2182 Ocean Blvd, 4501076  
 2216 Ocean Blvd, NH 1347609  
 Ocean Blvd @ Cable Rd Ext, MA RS4749, NH 5135376, IL DT65893  
 5-12 Perkins Rd, NH 242239, NH 4853515  
 Ocean Blvd @ Sawyers Beach, NH 5070400

For Date: 08/05/2023 - Saturday

23-4454	0404	911 - POLICE ONLY INFO	POLICE INFORMATION		3
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Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Call Source: 911  
 Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
 Jurisdiction: RYE  
 ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-04:02:00 Clrd-04:51:02

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

618 Central Rd, NH 4411220

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Jenness Beach, MA VF 379B  
 2242 Ocean Blvd, CO 724TQX  
 Ocean Blvd @ Gray Ct, NH 1347609  
 Ocean Blvd @ E St, FL QZTZ51  
 2206 Ocean Blvd, MA 11ST74, 72YZ61  
 2182 Ocean Blvd, MA 1WBA69, MA 3PKR27  
 Ocean Blvd @ Cable Rd Ext, DT65893, NH 4792582, NH 4501076  
 5 Perkins Rd, NH 242239, NH 3037496, NH 242238  
 1304 Ocean Blvd, MA 61SG03  
 1235-1230 Ocean Blvd, NH 3526040, MA 4HDF78, NH 3888016, NH 3508023  
 789 Ocean Blvd, NH 2884607, NH 2522681, NH 4460666  
 Ocean Blvd Lot 1, ME 491ZH

For Date: 08/06/2023 - Sunday

23-4472 0150 911 - POLICE ONLY INFO POLICE INFORMATION 3

Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Call Source: 911  
 Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
 Jurisdiction: RYE  
 ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-01:50:01 Clrd-02:22:03

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

5-12 PERKINS RD, NH 242239, NH 3037496, NH 242238, MA 1ACB82, MA 7TS596  
 2242 OCEAN BLVD, CO 724TQX  
 2216 OCEAN BLVD, NH 4635363  
 OCEAN BLVD @ GRAY CT, NH 1347609  
 OCEAN BLVD @ E ST, FL QZTZ51  
 2206 OCEAN BLVD, MA 11ST74, MA 72YZ61  
 2182 OCEAN BLVD, MA 1WBA69, MA 3PKR27  
 OCEAN BLVD @ CABLE RD EXT, NH 4501076, NH 4792582, IL DT65893, NH 4987374  
 99 OLD BEACH RD, NH 3265757  
 OLD BEACH RD @ SUNRISE PATH, VT HWB965  
 OLD BEACH RD @ CARBEE DR, NH 4812761  
 OCEAN BLVD @ HIGHLAND PARK AVE, NH 4452988  
 1304 OCEAN BLVD, MA 61SG03  
 1235 OCEAN BLVD, NH 3888016, NH 4843214  
 785-789 OCEAN BLVD, NH 2884607, NH 4460666, NH 4202410  
 290 SAGAMORE RD, NH 4573508

For Date: 08/07/2023 - Monday

23-4492 0101 Other - POLICE ONLY INFO POLICE INFORMATION 3

Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Call Source: Other  
 Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
 Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
 Jurisdiction: RYE  
 ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-01:01:00 Clrd-02:00:00

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

5 PERKINS RD, MA 1ACB82, MA 7TS596  
 OCEAN BLVD @ GRAY CT, NH 1347609  
 2206 OCEAN BLVD, MA MA 72YZ61  
 2182 OCEAN BLVD, MA 5LE962

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Selective Search From: 06/01/2023 Thru: 09/26/2023 0000 - 2359 Printed: 09/26/2023

OCEAN BLVD @ OLD BEACH RD, NH 4792582, IL  
DT65893, NH 4987374  
103 OLD BEACH RD, NH 3265757  
1235 OCEAN BLVD, NH 3888016, NH 4843214  
1154-1164 OCEAN BLVD, NH 4770219, NH 3404673, NH 3887905  
789 OCEAN BLVD, NH 2884607, NH 4460666  
21 WALLIS RD, NH 3695284  
595 WASHINGTON RD, 4534409

For Date: 08/12/2023 - Saturday

23-4631	0450	911 - POLICE ONLY INFO	POLICE INFORMATION	3
Call Taker:	464	- HUDSON, EDWARD		
Call Source:	911			
Primary Id:	464	- HUDSON, EDWARD		
Location/Address:	[862 173]	RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD		
Jurisdiction:	RYE			
ID:	464	- HUDSON, EDWARD		

Arvd-04:50:00 Clrd-05:18:17

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

300 PIONEER RD, NH VOICES  
1232 OCEAN BLVD, NH 649B, NH 3888016  
1286 OCEAN BLVD, MA 61SG03  
1315 OCEAN BLVD, NH 6P653  
OLD BEACH RD @ SUNRISE PATH, NH 5077863  
40 OLD BEACH RD, NH 4527752  
OCEAN BLVD @ JENNESS AVE, MA 8CS160  
OCEAN BLVD @ BAKER AVE, ME 3483XV  
5 PERKINS RD, MA 7TS596, NH JVF-JR  
OCEAN BLVD @ BROWN CT, QC M69PTD  
2250 OCEAN BLVD, VA XNE1997, CO 724TQX  
OCEAN BLVD @ GRAY CT, NH 1347609, VT GRH770, FL QZTZ51  
OCEAN BLVD @ E ST, MA 4LDM75, NC KEE-3702  
OCEAN BLVD @ CABLE RD EXT, ME RYE (CR), MD FBW002  
620 CENTRAL RD, NH 5189391

For Date: 08/13/2023 - Sunday

23-4655	0430	911 - POLICE ONLY INFO	POLICE INFORMATION	3
Call Taker:	464	- HUDSON, EDWARD		
Call Source:	911			
Primary Id:	464	- HUDSON, EDWARD		
Location/Address:	[862 173]	RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD		
Jurisdiction:	RYE			
ID:	464	- HUDSON, EDWARD		

Arvd-04:30:32 Clrd-05:00:00

Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates & locations:

797 OCEAN BLVD, NH 5224045, NH 5224008  
789 OCEAN BLVD, NH 4460666, NH 2522681, NH 2884607  
1230 OCEAN BLVD, NH 3888016  
1304 OCEAN BLVD, MA 28HM52  
OLD BEACH RD @ CARBEE DR, NH 4069948 & NH T587087  
OCEAN BLVD @ OLD BEACH RD, NY HBX7292  
OCEAN BLVD @ BAKER AVE, QC M69PTD, QC W14LKV  
2242 OCEAN BLVD, VA XNE1997, CO 724TQX  
2216 OCEAN BLVD, NH 3888098  
OCEAN BLVD @ GRAY CT, NH 1347609  
OCEAN BLVD @ CABLE RD EXT, ME RYE (CR), MD FBW002  
24 CABLE RD, NH 3544046, NH 1576068, NH 3508046

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Selective Search From: 06/01/2023 Thru: 09/26/2023 0000 - 2359 Printed: 09/26/2023

23-4683 0430 911 - POLICE ONLY INFO POLICE INFORMATION 3

Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
Call Source: 911  
Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
Jurisdiction: RYE

For Date: 08/20/2023 - Sunday

23-4831 0431 911 - POLICE ONLY INFO POLICE INFORMATION 3

Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
Call Source: 911  
Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
Jurisdiction: RYE  
ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-04:31:00 Clrd-05:37:47

## Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates &amp; locations:

789 OCEAN BLVD, NH 4460666, NH 2522681, NH 2884607  
1237-1242 OCEAN BLVD, NH 5185437, NH 3888016, NH 4843214, NH  
554IP, NH 213C2  
1350-1367 OCEAN BLVD, NH 3814673, NH 5289346  
1647 OCEAN BLVD, NH 4501763  
OLD BEACH RD @ OLD BEACH WAY, NH 4993317,  
99 OLD BEACH RD, NH 2559738, NH COACH-O  
2165-2260 OCEAN BLVD, ON M69PTD, VA XNE1997, CO 724TQX, NH  
5038595, NH 4739671, NH 4266566, NH 3148593, NH 1347609, MA  
1WBA69, NH 3417199, NH 4725297, NH EVALIBY, ME RYE (CR), NH  
5070354  
22 CABLE RD, NH 1576068, NH 3508046  
71-110 CABLE RD, MD 8EF0311, PA LVA0532  
5 PERKINS RD, QC P14SZH, NH 4853515, NH 4665627  
590 CENTRAL RD, NH 4623409  
587 WASHINGTON RD, NH 842272  
482 SAGAMORE RD, NH 4527582

For Date: 08/21/2023 - Monday

23-4856 0457 911 - POLICE ONLY INFO POLICE INFORMATION 3

Call Taker: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
Call Source: 911  
Primary Id: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD  
Location/Address: [862 173] RYE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - 555 WASHINGTON RD  
Jurisdiction: RYE  
ID: 464 - HUDSON, EDWARD

Arvd-04:57:00 Clrd-05:28:45

## Narrative:

Cars parking overnight, plates &amp; locations:

490 SAGAMORE RD, NH 4527582  
489 OCEAN BLVD, NH 2522681, NH 2884607  
901 OCEAN BLVD, MA 1HWL38  
1230 OCEAN BLVD, NH 3888016, NH 5185437  
OCEAN BLVD @ CONCORD POINT RD, NH 3814673  
1647-1677 OCEAN BLVD, NH 4501763, MA 8RJ852  
OLD BEACH RD @ CARBEE DR, NH 4069948 (NH T587087)  
OLD BEACH RD @ OLD BEACH WAY, NH 4993317  
99-103 OLD BEACH RD, NH 2559738, NH COACH-D



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2170-2260 OCEAN BLVD, QC M69PTD, VA XNE1997, CO 724TQX, NH  
1347609, ME 3543ZS, MA 1WBA69, NH 4725297, ME RYE (CR)  
24 CABLE RD, NH 1576068, NH 3508046  
110 CABLE RD, NY GYC8985  
CENTRAL RD @ PERKINS RD, NH 4623409

# Seacoastonline

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## LOCAL

### Portsmouth moves to halt Peirce Island camping after residents call it 'out of control'

**Jeff McMenemy**, Portsmouth Herald

Published 5:13 a.m. ET Aug. 7, 2023

PORTSMOUTH — City staff are posting signs alerting visitors to the city-owned Peirce Island that overnight camping is not allowed.

Peter Rice, director of public works for the city, made the announcement Thursday, Aug. 3, saying Portsmouth's legal department confirmed the city has an ordinance that allows it to "restrict camping on the island."

"So what we're going to be doing is posting a sign at the beginning of the island saying no overnight camping on Peirce Island, so it will be really clear," Rice said during a meeting of the city's Parking, Traffic and Safety Committee. "And as you enter on to the bridge, it won't say 'dawn to dusk,' it will just say 'no camping.'"

Rice's comments came after committee members heard from several residents during the meeting who complained about people staying overnight in RVs, campers or vans on the island, and along city streets.

City resident Francesca Marconi Fernald told the committee "this is not a homeless issue."

"I'm not against camper van parking, we just need to give them a designated spot, not on the neighborhood streets," she said. "I've seen a marked increase in campers since COVID. They've begun to override Peirce Island."

Residents of Portsmouth made similar complaints about campers to the Parking, Traffic and Safety Committee in January of this year. Some supported banning camping on city streets at that time. Supporters of a ban backed off, however, after city Fire Chief Bill McQuillen pointed out one of his firefighters utilizes a camper because of the high cost of housing in Portsmouth.

## **Trash, dog and human waste upset some Portsmouth residents**

Fernald worries Peirce Island is being “overused for free camping with a lot of abuse, trash, dog poop and now human waste.”

“Let’s find a spot to put the campers, not on the streets, they’re taking up too much needed parking as it is,” she said. “If you’re going to allow this to continue, you must put some regulations on camping city-wide.”

“Please try to address this issue this year so it doesn’t become a giant problem next year,” she added.

Police have previously said that there is nothing illegal about vans or campers parking overnight on city streets where it’s legal to park. They do have to move their vehicles before 72 hours is up, however.

City officials have heard an increasing number of complaints about out-of-towners parking for free overnight in Portsmouth, a popular tourist destination, particularly in the warmer months.

They have also acknowledged some people stay overnight in vans because they have no place else to live.

## **Campers are seen in Portsmouth not limited to Peirce Island**

Former City Councilor Paige Trace said “campers have been a problem all over town this summer.”

Parking a camper and/or a van on some of the city’s narrower streets can also impact traffic, she said.

“I can only imagine what it would cause on garbage day, let alone emergency vehicles,” Trace said. “So there has to be some reasonable process that will take into consideration the width of a street, because people pay taxes for their properties, and they expect a reasonable sense of security.”

She said “the camper situation is out of control” and “this city has not done very much to mitigate the problem.”

"It's wrong just to ignore it and (hope) maybe it will go away, it won't, so please do something," Trace said.

## **'It's a housing issue, too,' Portsmouth councilor says**

City Councilor Andrew Bagley chairs the Parking, Traffic and Safety Committee.

Reached Friday, Bagley said he hears concerns about the issue "on a weekly basis."

"It's not an organized group either, it's just random homeowners who tell me things like, 'I dropped my daughter off at the library and there were a bunch of vans parked out front,'" he said. "It's a large group of people that have concerns."

**Portsmouth housing news:** Rooftop workforce apartments in 'very sacred' Market Square? Portsmouth board members object

Bagley acknowledged posting the no overnight camping signs on Peirce Island "might move people into the neighborhoods."

Many of those people, he believes, "are just kind of people living the van life."

"It is a housing issue too, but it's not exclusively one," he said.

He's has been working with fellow City Councilor Kate Cook and city staff to try to find a solution to the problem.

"We want to encourage people passing through to park in a place designated by city, pay a nominal fee and pay for sewer and trash disposal," he said.

One of the suggested sites he's heard about is the park and ride off Route 33, but he doesn't know if that will work yet.

## **Solution needed, councilor says, before there are 30 campers on Parrott Ave.**

Bagley said the committee will continue to work on the issue, but likely won't have a solution in place until the next summer season.

"I don't think we have a clear path yet and there's no easy solutions," Bagley said. "But we're going to have to come up with a solution."

He said people staying in campers and RVs overnight represent a mix of tourists and people who have made the vehicles their full-time homes.

"I would say there's a significant number of each. I don't know necessarily if it's 50-50," he said. "Housing is one of the biggest issues facing Portsmouth. Until we address that there's going to be a lot of secondary consequences."

Councilor Cook said as an RV owner herself, she understands there's a national movement to find places to park overnight for free.

"Prescott Park and Peirce Island were not designed for RV parking. There're no services there," she said Friday. "It becomes a real problem when people can't find the services they need and end up dumping their sewer in a public space, on a public street."

If the city ultimately creates a site to allow overnight camping, it should either have sewage services available there or a nearby location, Cook said.

She acknowledged there is no backing away from the problem.

"I think it is an issue the city is going to have to address one way or another," she said. "It's not like the problem is going to go away on its own."

She believes "it's really important" city officials start planning long-term how to address the issue.

She pointed to cities on the West Coast where some streets have been essentially taken over by people parking in RVs and vans.

"We want to address this before we get to a point where we have 30-35 campers a night parked on Parrott Avenue," she said.

## **A call for a humane approach**

At the same time, Cook said, the city should not stop a woman and her three kids from staying in their car overnight on city streets when they're escaping a domestic violence situation.

"It's a really complicated situation and a solution has to be multi-faceted," she said.

**More on housing:** Mayor pushes for workforce housing in Portsmouth's new bid to acquire McIntyre building

Mayor Deaglan McEachern said it “sounds like we have an ordinance on Peirce Island that we can enforce,” when asked about the issue this week.

“I don’t think it’s our job to figure out more rules when we have rules that can be enforced,” he said.

However the city addresses the issue, he said, it’s important “that Portsmouth remains a fair and welcoming city.”