



**Peaks Island Council
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, October 24, 2018

6:15 p.m., Peaks Island Community Room

Call to Order: 6:15 p.m.

Roll Call: Lisa Peñalver, Randy Schaeffer, Mary Anne Mitchell, Dave Stankowicz, Patrick Flynn, Stuart Jackson, Steve Anderson

Number of Audience Members (AM) in attendance: 36

Schaeffer made the motion to approve the September 26th meeting minutes. Stankowicz seconded. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Website: (Stankowicz) Since Spring the visits to the website have increased dramatically, with peak traffic in July. A report was provided with more detailed information regarding the online traffic on specific areas of the website. Vendors and sites are still being explored or the webcam, and they are hoping to have the webcam in place in the spring of 2019.

Mayor's Roundtable: (Stankowicz) After a summer break, Mayor Strimling restarted the roundtable meeting, but as of today has cancelled it. Stankowicz stated that the Mayor has stated he is open to

Environmental: (Mitchell) Mitchell stated that 5 or 6 years ago PEAT and other volunteers worked together to create a small garden of native, non-invasive plants located on Seashore Ave. Plants were donated by Lausier Gardens and the design and installation was as a volunteer community project done by islanders. Mitchell reported that that area has recently been dug up, plants removed, and another concrete slab has been poured for another bench. Mitchell stated she doesn't know who on City staff makes these types of decisions. Mitchell stated even before this a plant has been removed, and PEAT had spoken to Jeff Tarling about replanting that, but now she is unsure how many plants have now been removed. Peñalver stated she recalls having previously discussed a moratorium on additional benches and added that this item would require further discussion with City staff members.

New Business:

Proposed New Ferry: Peñalver explained that Casco Bay Lines has proposed purchase of a new car ferry that will carry 4 additional vehicles and 200 more passengers than the current capacity. PIC is requesting a community meeting with CBL representatives to discuss and allow residents to ask questions. A letter has been drafted to be sent requesting the meeting. Further discussion included PIC working with CBL to create the agenda. Schaeffer stated there is a CBL Board meeting tomorrow morning at 7:45 a.m. and he will be going to deliver the letter. It was determined that no vote was needed to send the letter requesting the meeting.

Old Business:

Golf Cart Findings and Recommendations: (Please see attachment) The Transportation Committee has been working for several months on the golf cart topic, and is submitting its findings and recommendations to the Peaks Island Council. Schaeffer recognized and thanked each member of the Transportation Committee for their time and effort. The purpose of this agenda item is for the PIC to take public comment on the list of 15 proposed items/recommendations or on the golf cart topic in general. Schaeffer stated that at the end of public comment, there will be a motion to suspend any further action until a special meeting to be held on November 14, 2018. Schaeffer stated that at the Nov 14 meeting there will be one motion per each of the 15 items and the PIC will vote. Schaeffer stated there will be an opportunity for public comment at that time on each item, and that the current membership of the PIC will remain in place for that November 14 meeting.

Peñalver stated that each speaker will have 3 minutes, and must state their name and address. She

Flynn asked Peñalver who decided the special meeting would be held on November 14th. Schaeffer stated the Executive Committee had made that decision. Flynn asked why the entire PIC didn't vote to determine the meeting date, rather than the Executive Committee making the decision. Schaeffer stated that could be included in the motion. Flynn stated that the meeting date needs to be decided by the entire council. Stankowicz stated that all councilors had been sent an email request for dates for the special meeting in November.

Schaeffer made the motion that the list of 15 proposed solutions be considered for discussion. Stankowicz seconded for the purpose of discussion.

- AM thanked the Council for their time and effort. She stated she appreciates having some of the statutory basis explained up front, but asked what the legal basis for golf carts being driven around on the streets on Peaks when it is not legal in Portland. Schaeffer stated public comment tonight is isolated to the proposed solutions rather than PIC answering questions, but it was determined that an answer to her question would be distributed regarding the statutes that enable golf cart use on the island.
- AM stated she is adamantly against the golf carts and she feels they are ruining the island in too many ways to list here. She stated she feels there are other ways to accommodate people. She went on to say she feels that homeowners should be allowed to own one golf cart per household; but that bringing throngs of people over that speed around the island is a big mistake.
- AM thanked the PIC for all their work. He stated that he owned an electric golf cart and traded in a pickup truck for it. He stated he walks the circumference of the island daily and he feels that items 9 and higher on the list should be considered. He stated he really thinks golf cart businesses contribute to the economic viability of the island adding seasonal jobs. He stated that during his daily walks around the island he sees many golf carts that are not misbehaving adding that in some cases, the golf carts are allowing those who cannot walk that far to enjoy the backshore. He stated that 5 people in a golf cart is a compact group, but if 5 people are walking or on bikes they are much more spread out. He stated that he has had many nice conversations with visitors, and he has met some who appreciate the natural beauty and who are focused on preserving green spaces, and parks conservation and will be voting locally to do so. He stated that he encourages the golf carts if it means bringing people like that to enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty of Peaks Island.

- AM stated he appreciates everyone's perspectives, but takes offense when no regard is given to the jobs related to the golf cart businesses which contribute to the year round workforce and sustainability of the island. He stated that the closing of the School is still of concern, and he feels as a community we need to make compromises on some of these issues in order to maintain the year round sustainability of living on the island.
- AM stated she is in favor of the golf carts, adding that there are a lot of people here that really need them. She stated that some people shouldn't be driving them, like drinking and driving golf carts but she stated that some drink and drive cars as well. She stated that she doesn't see any big issues with the golf carts and that she thinks it is getting blown out of proportion.
- AM stated that she is against the golf carts, adding that they go past her house all summer long. She stated that the carts go by every hour like a train and she shuts her windows because the smell is tremendous and that she can't stay out on her porch. She stated she thinks weekly rentals with electric carts only would be better.
- AM stated that he is not against golf cart rentals, but is against how it is being done. He stated if you offer to rent out a hotel by the hour you get a drastically different clientele. He stated that he has been asked where to go to get the 'go carts', adding that there is an obvious carnival mentality and that hourly rentals have limited time and only \$25 invested. He stated that as a parent of small children he is terrified to have his kids out in the summertime. He stated that as a concerned person, he stops people on golf carts when he sees them misbehaving. He gave an example of stopping a family in a golf cart with a 5 year old child on his lap while driving and told the driver he had made the child the airbag. He stated he feels the hourly rental compels people to go faster and treat everything with less respect. He stated that perhaps rentals should be no short than daily, with a moratorium on any new gas carts, with a drop dead date to convert to electric. He stated he feels there should be smart regulation in place to ensure safety and enjoyment for everyone.
- AM stated she would prefer to see weekly electric rentals only. She stated she thinks there are lots of jobs around Peaks, and that we don't need these jobs from the golf cart rentals. She stated she appreciates the professional process that the committee has followed. She stated that she loves the recommendations, and believes this will help to manage this in an acceptable manner for both residents and golf cart business owners. She stated that her sister spoke previously about closing the windows, and she stated that she does not leave her windows open wither because of the exhaust from golf carts. She went on to say there are environmental concerns, especially if more gas carts are added.
- AM stated that he and his wife have tried to take a low profile on most of the issues on the island. He commended PIC for their work to involve the community on this topic. He noted the near unanimity on this topic and the feeling that the current status has measurably decreased the fabric of the culture of Peak island. He stated that he doesn't know what the answer is, but that the status quo is not acceptable. He stated that he feels this will remain a contentious issue if not addressed.
- AM stated he is not a fan of golf carts, adding that they add to noise pollution and air pollution. He stated he appreciates the work the Council has done thus far and wished them well with addressing this topic. He stated he has been coming to Peaks since the mid-1960s. He stated he feels a positive effort would be to create a public relations campaign to come and enjoy the peace and quiet and serenity of the island in attempt to counteract the current state. He stated it would be a promotion of what has been great to so many for 40 or 50 years. He added that maybe kids could be hired to hand out pamphlets at the ferry terminal that promote walking and biking.

- AM stated she thinks the golf cart issue begs the larger issue of public transportation. She stated she thinks if we invested in public transportation there would not be such a demand for golf carts. She stated that businesses are not necessarily responsible for their clientele. She stated that people coming to the island already have an idea of what they are doing when they come to the island. She reiterated she feels it is a public transportation issue and asked the Council to consider cross island and around the island public transportation.
- AM stated she feels education for visitors is a good idea stating that Peaks Island is advertised by the City and by CBL as a place to come. She stated that she was on a CBL cruise and over the microphone they said you could go visit Peaks and rent a golf cart. She added that renting a golf cart on Peaks Island was once the #1 Thing to do on Trip Advisor, so perhaps some of those advertising things could be addressed.
- AM stated at the end of each of the community meetings, each meeting ended with residents saying that they didn't want golf carts, especially gas. She states he feels they are very disruptive.
- AM stated she feels golf carts are a blight on the island and are very polluting. She stated that she witnessed 30 golf carts pass by in about 4 minute timeframe. She stated it really ruins the quality of life, it is disruptive and the gas fumes were in pedestrians faces. She added that she has witnessed endless infants on golf carts. She stated she witnessed two carts driving side by side with a male on the back with one foot on each cart, and that cart continued toward the backshore like that. She stated that they are unavoidable, you can't get away from them and that they are even present in what are usually very quiet locations on the island. She stated that from an accessibility standpoint, that she raised a family here walking everywhere and that there are golf cart tours for older people.
- AM stated that she is not in favor of rental carts and that she agrees with previously stated environmental issues and quality of life issues. She stated that she drives a large van on the island, and is very concerned about hitting a golf cart with her vehicle and only goes forward in the van in summer months because of it. She stated that she is concerned about the decrease in the quality of life and the impact that will have on property values due to the Coney Island atmosphere on Peaks.
- AM stated she hears everyone's valid reasons, but if stated she feels if we vote to get rid of rental carts then residents should get rid of golf carts too and set a good example across the board. She stated we can all walk, bike, use the tours and the taxi.
- AM asked if PIC has formally asked the police about policing the golf carts. Schaeffer noted items #12 talks about enforcement.
- AM stated that he totally agrees with previous statements. He stated he has been on Peaks year round for approximately 42 years. He stated that people used to always walk on the island and rarely drive. He stated that Kauai was one of the most beautiful places he had ever been and he returned to find the culture and beauty had been ruined by helicopter tours and he feels that is what is happening on this island. He stated that he feels golf carts are a plague and a destruction of our culture. He went on to say that PILP and PEAT have put in endless hours to get fewer cars to park on the backshore, which has been completely undermined by golf carts.
- AM stated he has lived here for 15 years and that he has certainly seen the change in just a few years and the culture and quiet is being ruined. He stated it seems the reality is there will be more tourists. He stated he believes if advertising is highlighting golf cart rentals and promoting the Coney Island mentality, then that is what we will get. He stated that there have been many visitors who are happy to walk or take one of the tours, and that it is in more recent years that the island has turned from quiet to a fun

house. He stated that people have managed to love this island for decades, enjoying the quiet and peace of the island without this quick fix. He added that the speed, noise and smell and peace of the island is changing. He asked if that is really the type of visitor that we want.

- AM stated what about switching to bicycle pulled carts? She stated they are not loud. She stated that would offer a way for older people to get around.

Schaeffer made the motion that any further action on this topic be postponed until the special meeting of the PIC on November 14th where further discussion and action may be taken. Stankowicz seconded. 5 voted in favor, 2 abstained. Motion passed.

There was Councilor discussion regarding correct procedure for determining the date of the special meeting. Schaeffer stated that the above motion referenced the meeting date and passed, adding he doesn't feel a further motion was necessary. Stankowicz stated that all of this information had been previously distributed to the entire council and that all members had been notified.

Public Comment:

- Kim McIsaac representing Casco Bay Island Alliance – The board is discussing the new ferry proposal which will have great impact on all islands who are also concerned about the increase in day trippers. The board is willing to work with PIC on that item.
- AM stated last year CBIA and PIC created a poster on the ferry, down played the island playground mentality. No camping, public restrooms, etc.
- AM asked if the meeting on the 14th be open to the public? Schaeffer stated that there will be one motion per item and voted on each of the 15 items individually.
- AM saw an article about proposed changes at the CBL terminal including the addition of a second floor. AM asked the Council to take note.

Announcements:

- PIC special meeting November 14th to vote on each of the 15 proposed golf cart recommendations.

Next PIC Meeting: Wednesday, November 28, 2018, 6:15 pm at the Community Room

Meeting Adjournment: 7:21p.m.