

Falmouth Heights-Maravista Neighborhood Association

Annual Meeting, Saturday, August 4, 2018

8:00 - 10:15 AM

Falmouth Yacht Club

Meeting Minutes without financial information (DRAFT 8/14/18)

Board : N= 11 Dave Buzanoski, Debbie Scott, Gerry Ryan, Greg Mazmanian, Joan MacClary,
Kevin Smith, Lance Kussell, Larry Backman, Paula Lichter, Susan Gallagher,
Mary Jo Bradley

Members: N= 46

Guests: N= 2 Police Chief Dunne, Neighborhood Police Liaison Sargent Jim Cummings

1. Welcome: Vice President Paula Lichter called the meeting to order at 8:13 AM. She informed the membership that Howard Grosser had resigned his position as he had moved out of the neighborhood and the President position is vacant. After the Chief's interview, she introduced each of the Directors. She also announced that Lorraine Luchner and Sue Gallagher were retiring from the board and thanked them for their service.
2. Guest Speaker: Falmouth Police Chief Edward Dunne. Greg Mazmanian introduced the guest speaker. Lance Kussell acted as moderator and asked the Chief a number of questions prepared by the Directors. First, Chief Dunne provided an overview of department personnel, training and resources.

Overview: The Chief explained that many years ago Town Meeting approved 66 officers. But in 2009-2010, with the budget crisis, the department gave back to the town, as did other town departments (DPW, etc.) the funding for positions which were empty at the time (retirements, etc.) so that there are currently 58 funded positions. With the additions of 2 requested and 1 funded last year, we now have 59 positions. This includes 1 chief, 2 captains, 4 lieutenants, 6 sergeants and 45 officers divided between 3 shifts. Less detectives, liaisons, etc., this results in 12-13 officers per shift. Currently, including the 2 officers who were shot last week, 6 officers are out with injuries, light duty and military leave. There are 3 cadets in the police academy (17 weeks plus another 15 week training in Falmouth) and it takes about 1 year for a new recruit to be trained and oriented. In the summer there are an additional 6 certified summer officers manning the beaches (including Heights and Bristol, and Old Silver Beach) and the main streets of Falmouth and Woods Hole.

There are typically 5 patrol cars on a shift and they collectively answer 36-56 calls per shift and cover a large geographic area of 44 sq. miles. At one time we had 8 detectives, but now have 3 plus 1 narcotics officer. We are the 2nd largest town on Cape Cod. This makes it challenging to be proactive about issues as the officers are busy just responding to calls. If 2 cruisers are answering a domestic complaint and 2 cruisers are responding to an auto accident, that leaves only 1 to cover the entire area. He hopes to add 4 more officers to the department.

Drugs and mental health: This year we had 20 undercover buys, 12 warrant arrests, 7 search warrants, 1 drug seizure and 4 pending in court. Heroin is big; cocaine is coming back strong; marijuana, fentanyl and Percocet. We're the highest on the Cape for overdose numbers because we have all the services here. Where's the highest homeless population? Hyannis, because the services are there. Most of our calls deal with mental health. I'm a member of the International Police Chief's Conference. We took a pledge called the One Mind Program along with 186 other MA police departments to get our officers trained in mental health first aid so we can deal with mental health issues, which goes in hand with the homeless. (Also see Q5 – A5 below for opioid details).

FHMNA Directors' Questions:

Q1: How would rate the personnel, equipment and program resources (budget) that is allotted you on a scale of 1 to 10... 10 being unlimited funds?

A1: I do have money for training throughout the year for all officers and we have some of the best equipment available such as bullet-proof vests for all officers which are swapped out every 5 years per manufacturer's specifications. These are paid for half through a budget line item and half from a Federal grant. Cruisers that are outfitted with appropriate state of the art materials, medical equipment, tactical vests (protection against assault rifles) and helmets, rifles and shot guns. Training budget of \$6 million has been cut. Trying to get dedicated funding similar to fire department training which is funded through individuals' fire insurance. The Chelsea department suggested putting a \$2 surcharge on rental cars (per rental, not per day rented) that will generate up to \$10 million state-wide.

Q2: As police chief, what "keeps you up at night"?

A2: What just happened last Friday night, waiting for that phone call. Not a matter of "if", but the way things are going in this country, a matter of "when". My job is to see that these men and women have the training and equipment to go home safely to their families.

Q3: With the new marijuana laws, how will you and your personnel proactively keep our streets safe relative to driving under the influence?

A3: Since there's no test for marijuana, similar to what we use for alcohol, our officers are still arresting people based on behavioral activity, smell, bloodshot eyes, etc. Do they get convicted? D.A.s will ask, where's the evidence? We'll continue doing our jobs to the best of our ability. I'm pleased that Falmouth opted out of recreational marijuana but that doesn't mean it's not here in town. The State is working on pending legislation.

Q4: It seems the town is littered with nip bottles, particularly during the fall and winter months. Clearly, these are being consumed while driving. Can you tell us what is pro-actively being done to mitigate this issue?

A4: To be totally honest: nothing. If someone throws something out of a car window.... If the officer sees someone who is impaired.... Are nip bottles being consumed while they drive? Absolutely. We also depend on the public to make a phone call if they see someone operating a vehicle erratically. Hopefully legislation will help, if there's a deposit on nip bottles. It's a problem across the Commonwealth. Some towns have tried to ban the sale of nip bottles, but they can be bought in the next town. Our officers will address the problem if they observe a driver drinking.

FHMNA A4: Our Association is trying to help with our volunteer litter crew. On cleanup day in April, they picked up over 40 bags of garbage, including many nip bottles.

Q5: How is your department dealing with the opioid crisis and the petty crime that follows?

A5: This issue really started to appear in 2013. Prior to that it was around, but not a "crisis". I'll share with you some numbers:

2013: 28 overdoses; 3 deaths

2014: 76 overdoses; 4 deaths

2015: 127 overdoses; 9 deaths

2016: 161 overdoses; 12 deaths

2017: 162 overdoses; 21 deaths

2018 YTD: 54 overdoses; 5 deaths

We partner with Gosnold. They do need more beds. If someone overdoses today, they will get a visit from a counselor and someone from our police department. We follow up to find out if we can get them some services. Addiction affects them, their family and the whole community. We've been doing this for a few years now and gotten some people into long term rehab, saved some lives. We would like to establish a Community Action Team (CAT) which would encompass 1-2 police officers with a clinician embedded in the police department, similar to what we have with our domestic violence advocate. Also a team for the homeless. Officers would proactively seek out those people whom we know to have a problem. We know where the homeless camps are; we hear from people who see a problem. Could we do more? Yes, if we had more people. B&Es right now are down. People who are addicted, it's more of a personal thing, stealing from their families, cash, jewelry, things like that.

Q6: Recovery houses...what is the count in Falmouth today?

A6: We are aware of 35-40 sober houses in town but we've been told by people on the street that the number is closer to 80. There are no town or state regulations around them, so difficult to monitor. Anyone can open one. The iTeam came down because two years ago there was a man who was treated by Gosnold, was on the road to recovery and went into a sober home. In a few months he died of an overdose in that home. His mother found his daily journal, what it was like, how he felt and she was appalled at what he'd said about the sober house he was in. More drugs than on the street. She gave it to the iTeam who investigated. Sober houses are self-certified, many with managers who make sure residents are going to meetings, have drug testing, etc. Sometimes we find out about a sober house when we respond to an overdose, get there and see beds everywhere and ask if it's a sober house.

Q7: If we see a winter drug house, what is the best way to communicate such to the police force?

A7: Pick up the phone and call and we'll investigate. (**Ed: 774- 255-4527**). We have informants, but you're our eyes. We have a population of 35,000 year round.

Q8: It seems when we read the Police Log in the Enterprise, much of your staff time is recovering overdoses. Our concern is the resources devoted to protecting our property, namely from breaking and entering are being directed toward interdiction on the drug side.

A8: You're absolutely right. Life over property? Life comes first. We're thankful that property crimes are down. With more staffing we could be more proactive. In 2008-9 we had 7-8 detectives. We were investigating vandalism and solving it; we now have 3. It's a quality of life issue; we will take a report, but we can't investigate everything. If someone gives us a car plate number? Of course. What it would take to get back to normal on that would be more staffing.

Q9: Should a home with central alarm ring your office, what is the average response time to investigate?

A9: Within a few minutes, depending on where they are. Again, 44 square miles, 5 cars on the road. If one is tied up with an arrest, another has to come from another area. Travel time. 90% of alarm calls are false calls, pets, etc. If it's a panic alarm, a bit different. On average, between 3-5 minutes.

Q10: What can be done about speeding on Grand Ave. and Maravista Ave.? Is there some sort of protocol we should follow as citizens to get radar enforcement on streets where we see abuses?

A10: That's a proactive activity. When we're getting 36-56 calls, difficult to do proactive activities. Reach out to us if you see a problem. I don't know how anyone can speed in the summer because I can't get anywhere! (laughter) I realize this is a serious problem and we recently have purchased some data gathering equipment that we have put on poles throughout town. You would not know what they are by looking. We put one on Palmer Ave because there's talk about putting a crosswalk over there. Another on Shore Street where in one week, 24 hours, set for 5 miles over speed limit, only 5 motorists out of 10,000

were actually speeding. Does that call for an officer to sit there? No. Is it dangerous when a car speeds? Absolutely. But, can anyone guess how many calls have we gotten from residents about speeding cars on Grand Ave. since the first of the year? Zero.

Q11: Neighborhood watch groups...are there programs active in Falmouth and if not, what can we do to get those off the ground?

A11: Over 30 that are active. We have Sgt. Cummings for your area as a liaison to help solve quality of life issues. We have liaisons with the schools, etc. If any small group wants a liaison, just call.

FHMNA A11: how many people would be interested in getting involved with a neighborhood watch? (Some show of hands.) (Ed: Sgt. Jim Cummings, Heights-Maravista Police Liaison, has since clarified that in Falmouth, our "neighborhood watch" program is referred to as the Community Liaison Program, not citizen patrols.)

Q12: How do you measure your department's success in protecting life in property in Falmouth?

A12: That's the toughest question on the list. Falmouth is a great community; there are a lot worse out there. Our numbers are low for murder, etc. We have them but they're not random, are identifiable. Having our B&E numbers down is a measure of success. Our officers are out there doing the best they can. We cannot do it without the community. We need your eyes and ears. If you see something, say something and we will respond. We're here to serve this community. I've been here for 39 years and have seen a lot of changes and I can say it isn't because I'm Chief, but the men and women here are truly professionals. The other night I was thinking I had two dead officers and didn't know their condition till I got there. They did a great job. A lot will come out down the road. They and the officers who responded to assist them were truly professional. I'm so proud of this department and the community should be proud of them also.

The chief informed us of the National Night Out, a police station open house this week on 8/7/18 @ 6 pm.

The chief responded to several questions from the audience, including:

1. 911 calls from cell phones used to be routed to Framingham and then back to the actual location. But, now there is enhanced 911 software which sends the call to the local sheriff's department rather than the state police and pings the cell phone's exact location.
2. Gun Buyback - The most recent one was held this past June. These were mostly guns no longer in use, but which are good to be turned in so that they can't be used accidentally or stolen.
3. Section 35 for involuntary commitment for 90 days has been utilized by the police and family members.
3. Standing Committee: Nominating; Larry Backman
 - a. **MOTION** by Larry Backman to **re-elect Board members for 3 year terms**: Dave Buzanoski, Joan MacClary, and Debbie Scott. Seconded by Charles Matteo. Approved unanimously.
 - b. **MOTION** by Larry Backman to **re-elect Alternate**: Mary Jo Bradley. Seconded by Gerry Potamis. Approved unanimously.
 - c. Larry Backman announced Board Openings: 5 Directors (1 ending 2019, 3 ending 2020, 1 ending 2021); 1 Alternate (annual appointment)
4. Secretary's Report: (Sue Gallagher) - **MOTION** by Sue Gallagher to approve Minutes from the 2017 Annual Meeting. Seconded by Mary Driscoll. Approved unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report (Kevin Smith) – presented his report. **MOTION** by Paula Lichter to accept the treasurer's report. Seconded by Charles Matteo. Approved unanimously. (Financial information available to members upon request.)

6. Standing Committees

- a. Bylaw Review (Paula) – Paula presented the proposed changes to the bylaws (previously distributed). Discussion occurred about the wording of Article 4.2 A related to the representation of the board. A number of members contributed to amending the article to clarify the meaning without hampering future boards: "The Board shall strive to achieve a geographically proportional representation of the membership".

Discussion occurred about the meaning and intent of Article 7.2F. There was interest in having the board meeting minutes available upon request to any FHMNA member. The wording was changed to: "All meeting minutes shall not be posted on the FHMNA website nor be made available to the general public. Any member may request a copy of meeting minutes which may be released by a majority vote of directors in specific circumstances."

MOTION by Paula Lichter to approve bylaw revisions as amended. Seconded by Charles Matteo. Approved unanimously.

- b. Membership Committee (Debbie Scott) - Member report: Debbie Scott shared the membership numbers with the members. As of last week, 134 households, equivalent to 214 residents have renewed their membership. This represents 8% of the total households in our geographic area. 63% are from Falmouth Heights and 37% from Maravista.

7. Appointed Committees

- a. Clean Up (Mary Jo Bradley) - Mary Jo reported on the cleanup day on 4/28/18. 40 people came out and worked for 3 hours. They collected 40+ bags of trash. It was very successful!

She also mentioned the new water refill station near the Heights beach at the corner of the Ballfield, intended to reduce the number of plastic bottles being discarded. She surveyed interest of members in doing an "adopt a block" program whereby individuals would volunteer to clean up a street or block near their home. 5-6 people expressed interest.

- b. Hospitality (Sue Gallagher) Susan thanked the Falmouth Yacht Club for donating their space. She also thanked Stop & Shop, Shaw's and Windfall for their donations of gift cards for the refreshments.
- c. Social (Lance Kussell) Lance reported on a successful, well attended June social at the Yacht club. He suggested holding a Fall gathering similar to last year with a tentative date of 10/14/18.

8. Liaisons

- a. Beach Committee/Department- Paula reported that although Lorraine is leaving the board, she will continue to serve as our Liaison to the Beach Committee. (*N.B. Lorraine has also agreed to volunteer to stock our Mutt Mitt stand*). A member inquired about the stairs near FH beach that have fallen into disrepair and have overgrown brush. Joan (DPW Liaison) believes this will be addressed prior to the Road Race. General opinion was the lifeguards are using their discretion more successfully than in the past to monitor activities at the beaches, especially ball playing and placement of tent canopies towards the back of the beach.

- b. Coastal Resiliency Action Committee (Larry Backman) - Larry reported that there has been a procurement by the town of a 5% reduction in homeowners' flood insurance secondary to the Town's participation in coastal planning. *(N.B. we have learned subsequently that this is being reported automatically to FEMA and insurance companies which should apply the discount. However, it is unknown if companies will do this retroactively or start with each homeowner's new policy. People should call their insurance companies if they have flood insurance.)*
- c. DPW & Conservation Committee (Joan MacClary) - Joan reported on a number of repairs and improvements including:
- Deacons Ave: fence replaced and one of marble benches restored.
 - Grand Ave: Broken fence and downed wire reported to DPW 3 times. Told it will be fixed by road race.
 - Bristol beach fence is in shop. Per Peter McConarty will be installed late fall/early spring.
 - Worcester Ct: 4 benches to be installed at beach end. 3 at Nantucket and 3-4 north of Jericho path. Plan exists to do bush/privet maintenance 2 x per year. Additional trees will be planted in fall. Joan recruited neighbors to water the trees regularly to enhance growth during the drought. Painted crosswalks to be located at Worcester Ct and Jericho path and Lake Leaman Rd. White Lines on Worcester Ct delineate where to drive, not a bike lane.
 - Concerns of commercial trucks on Worcester Ct. per Mr. McConarty - signs say "No thru truck route" can be placed at corner of Worcester and Jericho. *(N.B. 8/7 note from TAC: "The signs will be placed on Grand Ave and Worcester Ave (Northbound) and Jericho and Worcester (Southbound) restricting commercial truck traffic. My understanding is that it is focused on the Park section only.")*
 - Fire hydrants are flushed regularly each spring and fall. 50% of those in the town have been done and of those, 98% were in working condition. They may get to FH this Fall. To tell if hydrant has been flushed in past 3 years look for reflective strip on the hydrant. Town is developing a plan for hydrant painting.
 - Crosswalks in Maravista lost when sewerage was done will be replaced when the sewer project is completed.
- d. Traffic and Safety (Gerry Ryan) - Gerry reported the sidewalks on Worcester Ct. have been installed. She explained that speed bumps and rumble strips are generally opposed by the town due to the noisy braking, thumping and difficulty with snow removal. Any traffic issues are brought to the attention of Officer Porter and he puts them on the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) monthly agenda for discussion. TAC recommendations are then approved or not approved by the town manager.
- e. Road Race (Gerry Ryan) – Gerry reported that the Road race is Sunday, August 19th. Total runners unchanged: 12,800. Security measures can't be completely disclosed but there will be dump trucks filled with sand in predetermined areas, canine dogs and a private security company checking bags around the ball field. Bike valet program is being continued. The RR organizers are committed to leaving a positive impact on the neighborhood. They are working with Cavossa Disposal Corp. to pick up trash along the entire race route. Cavossa will canvass the route on Monday morning to be sure trash has been removed. Since 2012-2013, the Road Race organization has contributed \$2.1 million to the town for a variety of programs, services, equipment etc. The Road Race board of directors thank the residents of Falmouth heights for sharing their roads and community. For additional road race info visit www.falmouthroadrace.com. *(Ed. For road closures, see Police Department information at <http://falmouthpolice.com/events/falmouth-road-race/>)*

9. New Business

- a. Strategic Planning (Greg Mazmanian) - Greg discussed the board's activity this winter/spring to strategize about the focus/mission of the FHMNA. Focus areas identified were membership and volunteerism. The group has created a brochure to distribute to prospective members. We have had signup sheets for volunteers at the June social and here at the annual meeting as well as having sent an email blast asking for volunteers for social, marketing & membership, environmental and coastal resiliency efforts. He emphasized the importance of active volunteers to augment our volunteer board.

10. Announcements – Paula reported that the Helms Circle 40B Project is likely to be approved by ZBA and Conservation Committee with many “conditions”. There may be a legal appeal by the abutters. More info to be sent out to members as it becomes available.

11. Question & Answer period:

- Q. Mary Driscoll – Concerned about lack of traffic light at corner of Spring Bars and Worcester Ct.
A. May be considered when 40B on Spring Bars Road is developed. *(N.B. this area is not within our “focus area” and we do not follow it in detail. Please watch for Enterprise articles. Ed. We will post the link to the 2016 engineer’s plan.)*
- Q. Margaret Fitzgerald - Are golf carts legal on the streets? Seeing them in neighborhood.
A. Dave Buzanoski to address with police department *(Ed. and information will be posted)*.
- Q. Bob Cronin- Are we planning to request any grant from the road race?
A. Gerry said the water refill station was from the road race and we may consider a future request.
- Q. Jane Maloney- The walkway along FH beach by the parking area seems narrower. Is it the concrete blocks for parking that are impinging on walking space?
A. Joan will look into with DPW.
- Q. Charles Matteo- Dogs on beach after hours.
A. Paula said the dog officer has extended her hours to 4-6 PM and will visit beaches to monitor. Paula heard a rumor that last year one man with 2 dogs off-leash was fined \$300.
- Q. Bob Maloney - when is the Black Dog bakery opening?
A. Paula said they recently received their license. Hours will be 6:30 Am-8 pm year round. There is still construction and no opening date announced yet.
- Q. Marc Comstock asked about abandoned houses.
A. FHMNA just discussed this at our last board meeting and is looking into what can be done. If property owners are paying taxes, the houses are not technically “abandoned” but just derelict. One director reported a home on Miami Ave to the Health Department with no constructive result. We will research further.

12. Set date for next Annual Meeting. – August 3, 2019

13. Adjourn - MOTION to adjourn at 10:13 AM by Paula Lichter, seconded by Ginny Downey. Carried. Meeting adjourned.