



BCC News

Mission Statement

The Biddeford Coastal Coalition is an organization of the coastal community of the City of Biddeford in the State of Maine. The purpose of the BCC is to present a unified voice to the City of Biddeford and the State of Maine. This will be accomplished by working with the existing coastal associations and individuals to promote and preserve the general welfare of the coastal community. The scope of the mission encompasses matters of taxes, city and state services, as well as political, environmental and any other issues of interest to the coastal community.

NOTE: By dispensing information to the membership on assorted subjects members can form their own opinions and relay their concerns to the BCC leadership.

BIDDEFORD COASTAL COALITION
P.O. Box 12
Biddeford Pool, ME 04006

Your comments and questions are appreciated.

E-Mail:
bcc@maine.rr.com

Want to become a member?
Contact us!

The BCC Newsletter will be published as information is ready for distribution.

Current number of members:
700

BIDDEFORD COASTAL COALITION

Organization of the BCC

In July 2003 the Biddeford Coastal Coalition had its founding meeting. The idea of founding the organization grew about a year ago when representatives of the Biddeford Pool, Hills Beach and Fortunes Rocks Associations, meeting regularly at the UNE Breakfast Forums, shared their dissatisfaction with the information flow between the City of Biddeford and the community. Leading the list of concerns is the fact that many things become public knowledge only after the decision has already been made. Thus, the community is deprived of the opportunity to give input before the decision process is finalized and to allow for different venues to proceed.

A group of concerned coastal residents initiated a membership drive targeting any coastal community resident in the city of Biddeford who shares the concerns on issues such as property taxes, environmental

issues, zoning & land use regulations. The purpose of the Biddeford Coastal Coalition, hence called BCC, is to represent the coastal community in Biddeford through one organization and network with other current coastal coalitions to form a united coastal voice acting on issues of mutual concern. The BCC will take a proactive role in our city government to address the matters of taxes, improved fire protection, emergency medical response and other city services to our remote area.

One of the main objectives of the BCC will be to keep its members informed on issues of mutual interest as outlined in the Mission Statement

The membership drive was very successful. At the founding meeting the BCC had already registered over 600 members and the number of members continues to grow.

Committee Highlights

The Communications Committee is proud to present its first newsletter. Some of the items you see in this first edition will appear in every issue, others will change. The number of newsletter issues per year depends on the amount of information becoming available. Your comments and questions are welcome.

To make our newsletter complete, we need a logo and would like to have our members involved in creating the BCC logo. So if you have an idea, suggestion or are a creative designer, please contact us. Please be aware that as a non-profit

organization, BCC cannot reimburse you, but maybe the knowledge that you are the "creator" of the BCC logo is reward enough. In the past months the Communications Committee has developed an E-mail list for all members with Internet access. Also, a phone tree has been developed to quickly communicate with those who do not have e-mail. Currently there is a winter phone list containing 100 families out of which 47 families are based in Maine, while the others are residing in other states. The list of families in Maine will

Committee Highlights (continued)

The Communications Committee (continued)

probably be used the most to get the word out about local events that need our attention and immediate support.

For the next few months the Communication Committee will work on creating a website. Greg Tarbox, has agreed to provide the technical expertise to develop the website within the parameters laid out by the Board of Directors

The City Services Committee

After several coordination meetings, Larry Wheeler, Don Clark of UNE and the Biddeford Fire Chief, Rick Plumber, have successfully formed a First Response Medical Aid unit at UNE. It is comprised of 20 UNE students who are members of an EMT club on campus. The unit will respond to medical aid calls in the coastal area to provide initial assessments and stabilization until the fire department can reach the scene. The unit will NOT be providing transport. EMT's are required to be certified and highly trained in the State of Maine and will be providing a very important service.

The First Responder program works as follows: In the event of a medical emergency a call to 911 will be relayed to the First Responders who will stabilize the patient while waiting for the city EMT team to arrive and take over.

While coverage may diminish when the students are not here in the summer we hope the organization will grow to solve that problem.

Currently, Chief Plumber has assigned his department vehicle to the campus for use by the First Responders. The committee is visiting local car dealers in the hopes of securing a donated, 4 wheel drive vehicle for the unit so that the chief can have his car back. A Federal grant application has also been submitted to secure funds for this

unit.

This service is not in any way designed to replace our efforts to get a permanently manned fire station built in the coastal area. Those efforts continue.

Chief Plumber is currently exploring the possibility of having college students in the Fire Protection program man the BP Fire Station. Again, this is not the permanent solution we seek but certainly an improvement on the present situation.

The Environment/Zoning Committee

Several members of the committee met in September to review its overall objectives, which included a meeting with Bob Foley from Maine SOS. Present at that meeting were: Karin Gregory Furman, Chris Stone, Gail Erath and Dave Curran, who serves as an advisor to this committee.

Since then, we have learned that the Scenic Overlay District ordinance was approved by the planning board in May 2003. It went to City Council and failed to get the required votes for passage, but could come back to life at any time.

The proposed Scenic Overlay District includes certain scenic corridors in the coastal area: West Street, Granite Point Rd., Mile Stretch, Yates St., Ocean Ave., and Hills Beach Rd. In these areas, limitations being considered relate to curbs, shared driveways, retaining stone walls, utility lines, clearing of vegetation, tree planting or building fences that would obstruct views. It would also relax side yard setbacks, allow increased building height for decreased mass and stagger building heights down slope towards the water. Applicants for a building project would have to submit a "visual impact statement", the author or elements of which are not clear at this time. It is also unclear whether this ordinance applies only to

new construction or to remodeling as well. The committee will follow up on the questions raised by this proposed ordinance, and follow its progress this year.

There are newly approved sand dune rules that allow for rebuilding of a coastal home destroyed substantially by a storm or other severe coastal weather, that are enforced by the state DEP. We will be tracking their enforcement as it impacts our neighborhoods.

In addition, the committee is planning to:

- Attend a planning and zoning board meeting to understand the process better.
- To meet with the Governmental committee to make sure that we have a way to coordinate our efforts.
- Work with SOS-Maine on state wide coastal issues such as the remapping of the flood zones and beach enrichment.
- Continue to review activities that may impact coastal residents and communicate those activities to the membership.

The Government, State/Local Committee.

The Government committee met early on after the establishment of the BCC to set its course on how, when, and who to interact with in government to best meet the goals of the BCC mission.

BCC officers and committee members were introduced to the newly hired City Manager, Ed Clifford when he first came on board in August. He was given a tour of our five areas by our representatives and made aware of their concerns. He is a very positive person and we look forward to a good working relationship with him.

Committee Highlights (continued)

The Government, State/Local Committee. (continued)

The BCC was the first organization to approach "City Hall" concerning setting up a "Candidates Night" regarding the November elections. The City Manager took our request to then Mayor Dion and the City's plan for locally televised "forums" was hatched.

The BCC had hoped to do a live debate for the mayoral candidates at UNE. The UNE folks wanted us to jointly sponsor the event with the Chamber of Commerce, which was fine with the BCC. Unfortunately, the Chamber pulled out at the last minute and it was too late to develop new plans.

As things worked out, there were many other opportunities for the candidates to express their views at other forums throughout the city. In keeping with our mission to provide and distribute information; the BCC did not endorse candidates for any office.

As you are now aware, General Wallace Nutting was elected mayor of the City of Biddeford and Philip Dumont was elected councilor from Ward One representing our coastal area.

On the matter of "Tax Reform", this committee worked with the BCC Tax Committee to get out the mailing of our recommendation of 1c for the referendum questions 1a, 1b, 1c. We will be following this matter as it moves through statewide process following the effect of the "victory" of the 1c vote.

The BCC officers have recently met with Mayor Nutting to introduce him to the BCC and its origin and plans.

It is our intent to meet with Councilor Dumont as well. We hope to establish a good line of communication through him to "City Hall".

With upcoming statewide elections in 2004, we plan to communicate with both incumbent legislators and candidates for those offices in order to share our views and concerns.

The BCC Board and Committee Members met with Bob Foley of SOS Wells and the Maine Coastal Coalition and discussed concerns of the Sand Dune Regulations that will be going through the legislature early next year. We plan to have local legislator, Representative Twoomey follow this activity and keep us informed as it goes through the house Environmental Committee of which she is a member.

The Government Committee of the BCC would like to enlist more BCC members to help in doing this important work and we appreciate your support.

The By Law Committee

With a considerable helping hand from Don Furman, our business/tax attorney, the By Laws committee developed a set of By Laws. These By Laws were developed to keep the BCC in conformance with the State of Maine's regulations regarding Nonprofit Corporations. The By Laws were voted on and approved by the BCC Board.

Having completed the By Laws the committee then submitted the articles of incorporation to have the Biddeford Coastal Coalition approved as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation. Being recognized as a nonprofit corporation will, among other things, allow individuals to claim contributions and membership dues paid to the BCC as a deduction for tax purposes.

The Taxes/Budget Committee

The Tax Committee met on August 7, 2003 to set an agenda for the upcoming election on November 3rd. The committee's priority issue was to

study the "property tax relief" provided by Question 1A (Maine Municipal Association) and Question 1B (Maine Legislature) which appeared on the ballot. Committee members were asked to attend informational meetings sponsored by advocates of both proposals. Committee members also met with Carol Palesky's Maine Taxpayers Action Network (MTAN) to determine the viability of the Property Tax Cap referendum.

In September the tax committee submitted a report on their findings. The report stated that neither Question 1A (MMA) nor Question 1B (Maine Legislature Proposal) provided direct property tax relief. The committee therefore recommended that members vote for Question 1C, which was a rejection of both proposals.

The Tax Cap referendum is scheduled to appear on the November 2004 ballot. The Tax Committee will continue to examine and study this referendum before making a recommendation to the BCC membership. The committee has also been in contact with Bob Stone of Common Sense for Maine Taxpayers. Stone's group was a strong proponent for Question 1C and has an organization in place. We will examine the possibilities of our groups joining to support an action on the November 2004 ballot.

On the local side, a meeting was held with the city assessor, Mr. Frank Yattaw to discuss future reassessment plans. Mr. Yattaw stated that the City was at 100% evaluation as required by the State. However, he said that coastal properties are only at 60%. The assessor plans to increase coastal property assessments by about 30% - 40% via land evaluations. The Tax Committee will determine how the State and City arrived at the 60% valuation of coastal properties. The BCC membership will be kept informed about new developments as they occur.

Committee Highlights
- Special -
- Grant Opportunity -

John Biter, member of the Board of Directors, and Jack Rothera, a BCC member, met with Biddeford City Manager, Ed Clifford, and the city's information technology specialist, Jerry Gerlach, to discuss the possibility of a grant. Both support the BCC effort to develop a neighborhood site. The City Manager will provide BCC with a list of businesses that may support this concept and the City of Biddeford and BCC will be applying to the Maine Community Foundation for a \$5,000 grant to enhance and improve the communication and interaction between the City of Biddeford and its neighborhoods.

About our Organization

Board of Directors and Committees						
Board of Directors	By Laws	Communications	Government, State/Local	City Services	Environment/ Zoning	Taxes /Budget
Lou Quenneville (President)	Gary Archibald	Sheri Poftak	Dick Frost (Chair)	Dave Curran	John Cox	Creighton Gogos (Chair)
Gary Archibald (Vice President)	Frank Erath	Lou Quenneville (Chair)	Ron Peaker	Dick Frost	Dave Curran	Imogene Grimmer
Dave Curran (Secretary)	Lou Quenneville	Elaine Robinson	Steve Schell	Chris Stone	Gail Erath	Jim Ryan
Dick Frost (Treasurer)		Ricarda Wlodarczak	Greg Tarbox	Larry Wheeler (Chair)	Karin Gregory (Chair)	Judy Sharpe
Armando Alfano		Alan Wright			Leonard Nemon	Greg Tarbox
John Biter					Chris Stone	
Diane Connelly					Greg Tarbox	
Mark Gervais						
Creighton Gogos						
Judy Kimball						
Ron Peaker						
Elaine Robinson						
Chris Stone						
Larry Wheeler						
Alan Wright						

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