**Minutes of the Treasure Chest Committee**

August 17, 2023: 5:00 PM

Harwich Town Hall: Griffin Room

Committee Members Present: Eric Fahle, Ellie Gerson, Mary Moody, Reenie Davis, Cindy Beaulieu and Heather Bolinder

Alt. Committee Member Present: Jean Bulger & Eileen Garrity

Selectmen Present: Jeffrey F. Handler

Treasure Chest Volunteers Present: None

Others Present: None

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1. Quorum:

A quorum of Treasure Chest Committee members was present at the meeting and the meeting was opened.

2. Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by those in attendance.

3. Old Business:

**Meeting Minutes: May 11, 2023:**

Treasure Chest Committee members were asked to read the draft Treasure Chest Committee meeting minutes of May 11, 2023, for acceptance by the Committee. After the Committee members had a chance to review the draft minutes, Eric asked for a motion to accept the Treasure Chest Committee meeting minutes of May 11, 2023. Ellie made the motion to accept the minutes. Mary 2nd the motion and the Treasure Chest Committee voted unanimously to accept the minutes of May 11, 2023.

**Harassment of Treasure Chest Volunteers:**

The Treasure Chest Committee continued their discussion of the incidents and steps to be taken to resolve the customer harassment issue.

Ellie again summarized the incident for the Committee. The incident occurred during the afternoon shift of April 22, 2023, when a Treasure Chest customer, who was once a Treasure Chest Volunteer, was being disruptive and was throwing donated items at some of the Volunteers who were working the afternoon shift. The Volunteers were Susan and Jean. Chris Cindy and Andreas were the Volunteers. The same customer showed up the next morning during operations and continued to be disruptive throwing donated items at some of the Volunteers who were working the morning shift. According to Treasure Chest Committee and Volunteer member Cindy Beaulieu, items thrown at Volunteers included a pickax and a shovel. Some of the Treasure Chest Volunteers feel that this customer is continually harassing and threatening them. Jean said that she and Keith Beaulieu both felt threatened. Heather said the customer had chased her into the kitchen on a different occasion. They all want to see this customer banned from the Treasure Chest so these actions will stop.

Both incidents were reported to Ellie, and she reported the incidents to Link Hooper the DPW Director. Link and Ellie devised a strategy whereby the customer would be allowed to come to the Treasure Chest and shop only when Ellie was on duty. The customer apologized to Ellie for his behavior on April 22nd and 23rd and agreed to the proposal. Ellie noted that the customer was complying with the restrictions imposed on him since April 23, 2023, and never threatened her. Some Committee members however noted that the customer didn’t apologize to them for the threatening outbursts and voiced their continued concern that this customer couldn’t be trusted to behave. It was also noted that having Ellie provide special supervision to one customer who couldn’t control himself was not a good resolution to eliminating the threat of harassment felt by some of the Treasure Chest Volunteers. Jeff Handler, the Selectmen’s liaison to the Treasure Chest Committee indicated that the appropriate steps to take in instances regarding harassment and threats to Treasure Chest Volunteers would be to not confront the harasser and call the police. We need to think of the other customers safety as well. Selectman Handler stated that bringing the issue to the DPW Director was not the proper course of action.

Selectman Handler outlined the steps a Town Committee should take in making a recommendation to the Select Board. In this case, Ellie as the Chair of the Committee should submit a recommendation to the Selectmen to have the customer banned from the Treasure Chest if the Committee voted to approve the measure. Heather said the Committee should think safety first when it came to the Volunteers and other customers shopping at the Treasure Chest. Committee members Mary Moody and Eileen Garrity were also concerned about the potential threat to Treasure Chest customers and Volunteers. Mary noted that the Food Pantry has a “3 strikes and you’re out” policy.

With that said, Cindy made a motion requesting that the Committee submit correspondence to the Selectmen requesting that they ban the customer from the Treasure Chest. Heather 2nd the motion and the Treasure Chest Committee voted unanimously to have Ellie, as the Chair of the Committee work with Jeff Handler to bring the measure before the Selectmen as an agenda item at an upcoming meeting of the Selectmen. Alternate Committee member, Eileen abstained from the vote.

4. New Business**:**

**New Sticker Sales:**

Heather requested a tally of the sales of Treasure Chest stickers. Hopefully for FY 2023. There will be no selling of stickers at the entrance to the Treasure Chest. Stickers can currently be purchased at the Chamber of Commerce for $5 dollars. Stickers can also be bought online.

**New Sticker Compliance:**

Ellie indicated that about 95% of the Treasure Chest Customers have new stickers attached to their cars. Ellie also stated that Town Administrator, Joseph Powers offered to call those customers who were noncompliant with the Treasure Chest Sticker Program.

**Update Summary of Items not Accepted at the Treasure Chest:**

The Committee discussed updating the items accepted and not accepted at the Treasure Chest. Customers are looking for clarification of what items we do and don’t take. Heather suggested not updating the Operations Plan/Guidelines but update the Treasure Chest website to update the items accepted and not accepted at the Treasure Chest. Jean said she would work on this task with Link.

**Resolution of Past Agenda Items:**

Jean inquired about the resolution of past agenda items. Eric stated that New Business agenda items discussed and deliberated by the Committee are to be continued to the next meeting as Old Business agenda items if not resolved at the present meeting.

**Compliance with the Customer Time Shopping Limit at the Treasure Chest:**

The Committee discussed whether the customer time limit for shopping should be ½ hour or 1 hour. Before the Treasure Chest when to “Harwich only”, the time limit for shopping was ½ hour due to the overwhelming number of shoppers. However, since the Treasure Chest went to Harwich only, the number of shoppers has decreased in volume and, therefore, a 1hour time limit for shopping should be considered. The Committee will consider the idea and discuss at a future meeting.

5. Open Session:

Ellie acknowledged the celebration at the Treasure Chest facility to commemorate the following two events.

* One year anniversary of the reopening of the Treasure Chest, and
* Long Term Treasure Chest Volunteer Beverly Gomes 90th birthday.

6. Set Date for Next Meeting:

The Treasure Chest Committee scheduled their next meeting for September 12, at 5:00 PM in the Small Room at Town Hall.

7. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Ellie and Eileen 2nd the motion to adjourn the meeting and the Treasure Chest Committee adjourned their meeting at 6:05 PM.