

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB

2026 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

Meeting Start Time:

7:00 PM – Member sign-in and receive ballots (Ballot box open)

1. Welcome

Presented by the President

2. Acknowledgements

Presented by the President

- Special thanks to Mary Beth Myers and Phil Myers for their continued dedication in publishing and circulating our community newspaper, the Taunton Times.
- And special thanks to the Board members and all the residents who are not Board members who serve our community in so many ways.

3. Upcoming Events

- Friday, May 22, 2026 – Beach opens for the season (Memorial Day Weekend) and will remain open through Monday, September 7, 2026 (Labor Day).
- Saturday, May 31, 2025 – First Movie Night and Bonfire of the Summer Season.
- Saturday, July 18, 2026
 - Annual Fishing Tournament for all children ages 5 to 15.
 - OTCC Summer Picnic.
- Additional movie nights to be announced throughout the summer. Stay tuned for further updates.
- Friday, August 8 and Saturday August 9, 2025 – 24 Hours of Taunton.

4. Announcements

Presented by the President

Based on nominations made during the meeting, additional nominees may be added to the ballot. The nomination process for Trustees will immediately follow the Voting Overview segment. Voters who wish to hear from all candidates before casting their vote will have an opportunity to listen to candidate presentations at that time.

5. Treasurer's Report

(Refer to attached written report.)

6. Committee Reports

1. Property Committee.
2. Beach Committee.
3. Wildlife Committee: Beaver, Geese.
4. Dam Committee.

7. Member Comments

8. Voting Overview

1. Review printed ballot and procedure.

9. Nominations from the Floor

1. Accept nominations and seconds from the floor.
2. Motion to close nominations and second.

10. Candidate Addresses (3-minute limit per candidate)

1. Nominees from the floor.
2. Candidates listed on the ballot.

11. 10-Minute Break

1. Ballot counters chosen (if necessary).
2. Call to order – Ballot Box Closed.

12. Election Results

Announcement of elected Trustees.

13. Adjournment

14. Closing Activities

- Refreshments served.
- Distribution of beach tags and boat stickers.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in the Old Taunton Colony Club community.

**Treasurer's Report
for the 2026 Annual Meeting - May 3, 2026**

CPA Frank April, of Moorestown, has conducted the annual independent audit of the OTCC's financials for the 2025 calendar year. A copy of his report is attached. The breakdown of expenses for 2025 is shown on page 5 of the report.

Of your \$525 annual dues payment, \$350 funds the club's operations. The OTCC finished 2025 with an operating surplus of \$14,288. That excellent result comes from the efforts of your board of trustees to keep expenses as low as possible. Those expenses include monitoring and maintaining the quality of the lake, upkeep of the beach and other common areas, dealing with various property issues, underwriting of various member events, and payment of taxes, insurance premiums, accounting and legal fees, and other administrative costs.

The remaining \$175 of your dues payment is placed in the reserve fund that was established 20 years ago to build up funds to pay down the dam loan which financed the State-mandated upgrades to our dam. The reserve fund surplus at the end of 2025 was \$26,721. The bulk of that surplus will cover the final payment of \$25,280.43 due on the loan.

Even though the dam loan will be paid off in June, we will be required to continue to maintain and build up a reserve fund. As detailed in the most recent issue of the Taunton Times newsletter, a new state law effective this year mandates that homeowners' associations conduct capital reserve studies every five years to ensure adequate funding for major repairs. These studies must be prepared by certified professionals and include a 30-year funding plan. We're just in the initial stages of responding to the new requirements, so we don't yet know what impact the new law will have on our dues structure. We'll keep you informed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jerry Klein, Treasurer

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC, which comprise the balance sheet as of December 31, 2025, and the related statements of revenues, expenses, and changes in fund balances and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC as of December 31, 2025, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted the audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I am required to be independent of OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC and to meet my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to my audit. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing these financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. Misstatements are considered material if there is substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, I:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatements of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in my judgment, there are no conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB INC ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

I am required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that I identified during the audit.

Francis J April CPA LLC
Marlton, New Jersey
February 23, 2026

Francis J April CPA LLC

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.

BALANCE SHEET

DECEMBER 31,

| | <u>2025</u> | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <u>ASSETS</u> | Operating Fund | Reserve Fund | Total |
| <u>Current Assets</u> | | | |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents | 47,444 | 12,808 | 60,252 |
| Assessments Receivable, Net | 525 | - | 525 |
| Receivable - Twp of Medford | 500 | - | 500 |
| Land, Lakes, Open Areas | 15,400 | - | 15,400 |
| Interfund Balance | (6,301) | 6,301 | - |
| <u>TOTAL ASSETS</u> | <u>57,568</u> | <u>19,109</u> | <u>76,677</u> |
| <u>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</u> | | | |
| <u>Current Liabilities</u> | | | |
| Accrued Expenses | 3,541 | - | 3,541 |
| Prepaid Assessments | 125 | - | 125 |
| Loan - NJDEP - Short Term Portion | - | 25,010 | 25,010 |
| <u>Total Current Liabilities</u> | <u>3,666</u> | <u>25,010</u> | <u>28,676</u> |
| Loan - NJDEP - Long Term Portion | - | - | - |
| <u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u> | <u>3,666</u> | <u>25,010</u> | <u>28,676</u> |
| <u>Fund Balances</u> | | | |
| Operating Fund | 53,902 | - | 53,902 |
| Reserve Fund (Deficit) | - | (5,901) | (5,901) |
| <u>TOTAL FUND BALANCES (DEFICITS)</u> | <u>53,902</u> | <u>(5,901)</u> | <u>48,001</u> |
| <u>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</u> | <u>57,568</u> | <u>19,109</u> | <u>76,677</u> |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31,

| | 2025 | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|---------|
| <u>REVENUES</u> | Operating Fund | Reserve Fund | Total |
| Owner Assessments | 49,850 | 27,950 | 77,800 |
| Interest Income | 25 | 12 | 37 |
| Late Fees | 1,250 | - | 1,250 |
| Other Income | 1,200 | - | 1,200 |
| | | | |
| <u>TOTAL REVENUES</u> | 52,325 | 27,962 | 80,287 |
| | | | |
| <u>EXPENSES</u> | | | |
| Administration Expenses | 2,812 | - | 2,812 |
| Annual Picnic and Community Events | 815 | - | 815 |
| Bad Debt Expense (Recovery) | (3,575) | - | (3,575) |
| Beach Expenses | 5,452 | - | 5,452 |
| Insurance | 13,502 | - | 13,502 |
| Interest Expense | - | 1,241 | 1,241 |
| Lake Expenses | 3,296 | - | 3,296 |
| Legal | 758 | - | 758 |
| Outside Accounting | 4,220 | - | 4,220 |
| Property Management Fees | 7,800 | - | 7,800 |
| Taxes - Real Estate | 1,223 | - | 1,223 |
| Telephone - Beach | 578 | - | 578 |
| Utilities - Beach | 1,156 | - | 1,156 |
| | | | |
| <u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u> | 38,037 | 1,241 | 39,278 |
| | | | |
| <u>EXCESS (DEFICIT) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</u> | 14,288 | 26,721 | 41,009 |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.
 STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
 YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025

| | Operating Fund | Reserve Fund | Totals |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Balance (Deficit) - January 1, 2025 | 39,614 | (32,622) | 6,992 |
| Excess (Deficit) of Revenues Over Expenses | 14,288 | 26,721 | 41,009 |
| Balance (Deficit) - December 31, 2025 | 53,902 | (5,901) | 48,001 |

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,

| | <u>2025</u> | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | <u>Operating</u> | <u>Reserve</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| <u>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</u> | <u>Fund</u> | <u>Fund</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Excess (Deficit) of Revenues Over Expenses | 14,288 | 26,721 | 41,009 |
| Adjustments to Reconcile Excess (Deficit) of Revenues Over Expenses to Net Cash Provided By (Used In) Operating Activities | | | |
| <u>(Increase) Decrease In:</u> | | | |
| Assessments Receivable, Net | 850 | - | 850 |
| <u>Increase (Decrease) In:</u> | | | |
| Accrued Expenses | 451 | - | 451 |
| Prepaid Assessments | (400) | - | (400) |
| <u>Net Cash Provided By (Used In) Operating Activities</u> | <u>15,189</u> | <u>26,721</u> | <u>41,910</u> |
| <u>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</u> | | | |
| Payments against Loan - NJDEP | - | (49,281) | (49,281) |
| Interfund Balance | (3,786) | 3,786 | - |
| <u>Net Cash Provided By (Used In) Financing Activities</u> | <u>(3,786)</u> | <u>(45,495)</u> | <u>(49,281)</u> |
| <u>Net Increase (Decrease) In Cash and Cash Equivalents</u> | <u>11,403</u> | <u>(18,774)</u> | <u>(7,371)</u> |
| <u>Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year</u> | <u>36,041</u> | <u>31,582</u> | <u>67,623</u> |
| <u>Cash and Cash Equivalents - End of Year</u> | <u>47,444</u> | <u>12,808</u> | <u>60,252</u> |

SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-------|-------|
| Cash Paid For Income Taxes | - | - | - |
| Cash Paid For Interest Expense | - | 1,241 | 1,241 |

See accompanying notes to financial statements

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 1 ORGANIZATION

Old Taunton Colony Club is a New Jersey not-for-profit organization incorporated in 1939 in compliance with the requirements of Title 15, Chapter 1 of the revised statutes of New Jersey. The Club's members include all the residential unit owners of Taunton Lake, Burlington County, New Jersey. Taunton Lake is defined as all that area encompassed by the Taunton Lake sides of Breakneck Road, Hinchman Road, Centennial Dam, Centennial Avenue and Hopewell Road and in addition, all real estate formerly the property of the Taunton Lakes Company and the house and property owned by the Larsen family that was granted use of Taunton Lake in their deed. The purpose of the Club is to provide for the maintenance, preservation and enhancement of the common facilities. At December 31, 2025 there are 149 members in the Club.

NOTE 2 DATE OF MANAGEMENT'S REVIEW

In preparing the financial statements, the Association has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through February 23, 2026, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued.

NOTE 3 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Method of Accounting

The Association maintains its books and records on the accrual basis of accounting. The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on that basis, in which revenue and gains are recognized when earned and expenses and losses are recognized when incurred.

Fund Accounting

The Club's governing documents provide certain guidelines for governing its financial activities. To ensure observance of the limitations and restrictions on the use of financial resources, the Club maintains its accounts using fund accounting. Financial resources are classified for accounting and reporting purposes in the following funds established according to their nature and purpose.

Operating Fund

This fund and its related cash accounts are used to account for financial resources available for the general operation of the Club.

Reserve Fund

This fund and its related cash accounts will be used to accumulate financial resources designated for repairs and upgrades to the Club's dam, as required by NJ DEP.

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 3 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES(Continued)

Member Assessments and Allowance for Credit Losses

Association members are subject to periodic assessments to provide funds for the Association's operating expenses and major repairs and replacements. Assessment revenue, both operating and replacement reserve, are recognized as the related performance obligations are satisfied. Assessments receivable at the balance sheet date are stated at the amounts expected to be collected from outstanding assessments from unit owners. The Association's policy is to retain legal counsel and place liens on the properties of homeowners whose assessments are deemed delinquent. Any excess assessments at year end are retained by the Association for use in the succeeding year.

The Association treats uncollectible assessments as credit losses. Methods, inputs and assumptions used to evaluate when assessments are considered uncollectible includes closely monitoring of outstanding assessment balances by management, member payment history of outstanding assessment balances, and susceptibility to factors outside the Association's control. It is the opinion of the Association and management that the Association will not prevail against homeowners with delinquent assessments and, accordingly, has established an allowance for credit losses of \$22,725 at December 31, 2025.

Interest Income

Interest income earned on cash balances of each fund are allocated directly to the operating and reserve funds.

Statement of Cash Flow

The Club considers all bank accounts, including certificates of deposit, to be cash equivalents. At December 31, 2025, the Club had no certificates of deposit.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reported period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 3 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES(Continued)

Income Taxes

Homeowners associations may be taxed either as associations or as regular corporations. For the year ended December 31, 2025 the Association was taxed as an association. Under that election, the Association is taxed on its non-exempt function income, such as interest income, at a rate of 30%. Exempt function income, which consists primarily of member assessments, is not taxable. For the year ended December 31, 2025, there was no income tax expense. The Association is considered a tax exempt entity for New Jersey corporate taxes.

The Association's federal tax returns for years before 2022 are no longer subject to examination by the Internal Revenue Service.

NOTE 4 Loan - NJDEP

The Club has entered into a loan with the State of NJ DEP for restoration work on the Taunton Lake Dam. Total loan commitment is for \$433,440, payable over 20 years bearing interest at 2% per annum on the unpaid principal balance from the date of the initial loan disbursement by the state to the Club until payment of the entire principal balance. Interest accrued against each interim drawdown of the loan, from the date of the first drawdown to a date three months following the last project drawdown, must be paid to the state three months after the final drawdown. At December 31, 2025 the outstanding loan balance was \$25,010.

During the year ended December 31, 2025 the Club made principal payments against the loan of \$49,281 and also paid \$1,241 in interest expense.

Five year maturity of long term debt is as follows:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| December 31, 2026 | 25,010 |
| December 31, 2027 | - |
| December 31, 2028 | - |
| December 31, 2029 | - |
| December 31, 2030 | - |
| | <hr/> |
| Total five year maturity of long term debt | <u>25,010</u> |

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 5 Property Management Contract

Effective March 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021, and annually renewable thereafter unless either party provides written notice 30 days prior to expiration, the Club is managed by Target Property Management, requiring monthly payments. Property management fee expense for the year ended December 31, 2025 was \$7,800.

NOTE 6 Revenue Recognition

Revenue from owner assessments are recognized when assessments are due. Any amounts received in advance of the due date are deferred until due. The Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Code (ASC) 606 requiring the deferral of recognition of income until the services are rendered. The Club has determined ASC 606 does not apply to the Club as no customer relationship exists as it is defined by the Code. The Club does not defer the recognition of any portion of revenue as Contract Liability.

NOTE 7 New Accounting Guidance Implementation

Effective January 1, 2023, the Association adopted ASU-2016-13, *Financial Instruments - Credit Losses (Topic 326): Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments*, as amended, which modifies the measurement of expected credit losses on certain financial instruments. The Association adopted this new guidance utilizing the modified retrospective transition method. The adoption of this standard did not have a material impact on the Association's financial statements but did change how the allowance for credit losses is determined.

NOTE 8 Financial Instruments

Concentrations of Credit Risks and Credit Losses

A majority of the Association's revenue is derived primarily from the unit owners in the same geographical region. The Association is dependent upon this source of income for its ongoing operations. Collection of members assessments is vital to the ongoing financial support and stability of the Association.

The Association maintains cash account balances at financial institutions, which, may at times during the year may exceed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) limit of \$250,000. The Association continues to evaluate this risk and believes it is not exposed to any significant credit risks on its cash balances at the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

At December 31, 2025 the Association has evaluated assessments receivable and believes all assessments are not collectible and has provided an allowance for credit losses of \$22,725 at December 31, 2025.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE -2026 ANNUAL REPORT

The Property Committee's primary mission is to preserve and enhance the natural Pinelands setting that has defined Taunton Lakes for over a century. Through guidance, communication, and oversight, the Committee upholds the aesthetic and environmental standards that shape our community—protecting property values while safeguarding our access to nature.

A core responsibility of the Committee is reviewing homeowner requests related to tree removal and replacement, as well as requests for dock and other property improvements. We collaborate with residents to ensure all properties comply with established by-laws, deed restrictions, and community regulations. The Committee also conducts inspections to promote fair and consistent enforcement.

In the coming year, the Committee aims to strengthen community-wide engagement in preserving our historic and natural landscape, expand education around our unique Pinelands ecosystem and provide members access to native plants and trees.

Due to the large amount of requests we receive we have partnered with Target management group. Our representative, Carri Alper, works with members to document requests, approvals and necessary actions to be taken by the member or the Board of Trustees.

Every Taunton Times newsletter has the contact information for Target Management listed (856) 988 8000, Calper@targetpm.com

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Conlow, Marty Hamilton, Phil Myers and Brian Miller

Guide to Landscaping in the Pinelands



OTCC Beach Committee

2026 Annual Report

The Beach Committee remains committed to maintaining the beach and OTCC-owned areas to provide members with a safe and enjoyable lake experience. All beach operations continue to comply with Burlington County Health Department requirements and regulations.

Beach Maintenance & Clean-Up

The annual Beach Clean-Up was held March 21–22. OTCC contracted **Outdoor Solutions** to clean and muck the lake in the beach area. As a result, the beach, park area, parking lot, dam, and pathways were well prepared for the summer season. We appreciate the families who volunteered their time and effort.

Additional volunteer assistance is still needed to:

- Remove logs stacked on the boat ramp off the parking lot
- Remove the rotted wooden playhouse

The spring neighborhood cleanup, organized by the Stapletons, will be announced once dates are finalized. OTCC receives \$500 from Burlington County to support these efforts.

Beach Operations & Safety

Taunton Lake Beach has filed for seasonal opening approval with the Burlington County Health Department. Required signage updates will be posted in the beach shadow box once approved. All emergency equipment has been placed in the shed or on the equipment rack. These areas are for emergency or beach operations only. A brown bin located under the main beach sign is available for shared beach toys; please return items before leaving.

The goose rope has been installed to discourage geese from using our beach area and we ask that all residents connect the rope to the wooden posts prior to leaving the beach. Due to increased goose activity in recent years, residents are asked to assist by monitoring the beach and using the pooper scooper stored in the shed as needed. The porta toilet will remain unlocked this season due to repeated lock replacements in prior years.

Water Quality

Lake water is tested weekly during the season by South Jersey Water Testing, with results reported to the Board. Taunton Lake continues to maintain clean and safe water quality, supported by required wooded buffer zones limiting chemical runoff.

Beach Attendants & Access

The Board continues to seek a volunteer Beach Attendant coordinator. Without a volunteer, beach monitoring will return to a shared community responsibility. Residents are reminded to display required tags and stickers and to be respectful when asked to verify access by their neighbors. Shared maintenance of our beach includes policing and removing debris, regular raking of the sand,

and ensuring our trash and recycling receptacles are placed along breakneck road for scheduled picks ups.

Community Events

OTCC social events remain an important tradition that fosters community engagement. The Board thanks residents who have volunteered to support these events, including:

- **Annual Taunton Lake Picnic** following the Fishing Derby (**July date TBD**) – This long standing tradition will return this summer hosted by **Kailah Borbi**
- **Easter Egg Hunt** – hosted by **Caitlyn Sutphin**
- **24 HOT Event (August 7–8)** – hosted by **Steve Watson**
- **Dock-o-Treat** – hosted by **Monica Czyzyk**

OTCC will host the Spring Bonfire and family movie night 5/16. Volunteers are still needed to organize the **Spring and Fall Bonfires**.

We look forward to another successful and enjoyable beach season.

Respectfully,

Tina Miller

Beach Committee Chair

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB

Wildlife Committee: Beaver Report, May 3, 2026

Over the past several years, our lake community has experienced intermittent beaver activity, typically involving transient pairs that would eventually relocate or be removed through natural attrition or licensed management. During the recent lake lowering approximately four weeks ago, direct observation confirmed active **bank denning** consistent with a resident pair of beavers currently inhabiting the lake. Unlike lodge-building beavers seen in some areas, these animals are utilizing shoreline burrows or dens excavated into the lake bank. Based on current evidence, the committee believes there is presently **one active pair** on the lake.

Residents should be aware that beaver populations appear to be increasing regionally, and recurring occupation of the lake may become more common. Signs of beaver activity include **freshly gnawed tree trunks or saplings with characteristic pointed/stump-like cuts**, accumulations of sticks and branches near den entrances, trails or slides leading from the water onto shore, muddy bank burrows, and the development of **winter food caches**—submerged piles of branches stored in shallow water during the fall for feeding beneath winter ice cover. These signs help identify areas of active use and may assist residents in monitoring changing activity around their properties.

While beavers can be fascinating wildlife to observe, residents are reminded that **beavers are wild animals and should never be approached, fed, harassed, or treated as pets**. Although generally non-aggressive, beavers may defend themselves if cornered, provoked, or approached too closely—particularly in the water or near den sites. Swimmers, kayakers, and shoreline users should maintain a respectful distance and avoid interaction if a beaver is observed nearby. Parents should also advise children not to approach or attempt to engage these animals.

Residents wishing to protect their shoreline and landscaping may take several preventative measures. Valuable trees may be protected by installing **heavy-gauge wire mesh or hardware cloth around trunks** to a height of approximately 3–4 feet, leaving space for future tree growth. Shoreline fencing or wire barriers may help discourage bank access in vulnerable areas. Prompt cleanup of fallen branches may also reduce food incentives. Because New Jersey strictly regulates beaver trapping and relocation, removal can only be performed by properly licensed professionals during authorized trapping season, generally from late December through mid-January, unless special state authorization is obtained.

The Beaver Committee will continue to monitor activity throughout the year and provide updates to the Board and membership as conditions evolve. Residents are encouraged to report significant new beaver activity, bank damage, or tree loss so that areas of concern can be documented and prioritized for management planning.

Gerry Burke, Monica Czyzyk, Marty Hamilton, Kate Conlow, John Angermeir, Linda Hamilton, Tina Miller, Phil Myers, Jerry Klein, Kathy Ware.

OLD TAUNTON COLONY CLUB

Wildlife Committee Report

Resident Canada Geese on the Lake

Over the past several seasons, we have begun seeing resident Canada geese establishing themselves on Taunton Lake. These are not migratory geese simply passing through. They remain here year-round, nest locally, and once established, their numbers can increase rapidly. What begins as one nesting pair can become a substantial flock in only a few years if left unchecked.

This matters because geese are far more than a nuisance—they present a legitimate **lake management and water quality concern**. Their waste contributes bacteria and nutrient loading directly into the lake and shoreline areas. Increased goose activity near our swimming beach can elevate bacterial counts and, **if severe enough, could ultimately jeopardize our ability to keep the beach open for recreational use**. In addition, goose droppings on the beach, in the sand, and on surrounding grassy areas create an unpleasant and unsanitary condition for residents and guests.

One of the most effective and natural deterrents we have against geese is **preservation of thick shoreline vegetation**. Canada geese strongly prefer open, manicured shoreline where they can move freely between land and water and maintain clear sightlines for predator awareness. Dense vegetation along the lakefront makes those areas significantly less attractive for nesting and congregation. For that reason, **our deed restriction prohibiting the cutting or removal of vegetation within 20 feet of the lake edge** is not simply aesthetic—it **serves an important environmental and wildlife management purpose**. **Consistent enforcement of that restriction is one of the most practical tools we have to discourage long-term goose establishment**.

It is also important that residents help maintain the **goose rope barrier at the beach**. When swimming is completed, the rope should be put back in place promptly. If any resident arrives and finds the rope down, we encourage them to raise it again. The goose rope helps discourage geese not only from entering and defecating in the swimming area itself, but also from coming onto the beach, fouling the sand, and contaminating the grassy area above the beach where families gather. Its effectiveness depends entirely on consistent use.

For all of these reasons, the Wildlife Committee strongly encourages resident cooperation with shoreline vegetation rules, beach goose rope maintenance, and broader goose deterrence efforts. Taking these steps now will help us avoid a much larger and more difficult problem in the future, while preserving water quality, beach safety, and the enjoyment of Old Taunton Lake for all members.