

JAFFREY

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Residents-only parking adopted

Town beach parking lot restricted, though anyone can access beach itself

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Monadnock Ledger-Transcript

Parking at Jaffrey's two town beaches has officially been limited to town residents only.

The Select Board unanimously passed a new town ordinance on Monday limiting parking at the Contoocook and Shattuck town beaches to vehicles displaying a Jaffrey town transfer station sticker. Those who park at the beaches without the sticker are subject to a \$50 fine and a potential towing of their vehicle.

Earlier this summer, after multiple complaints that the Contoocook beach parking lot, particularly, was being glutted by out-of-state and out-of-town vehicles, the board considered implementing a paid sticker system for non-Jaffrey residents to park at the town beaches, and Jaffrey residents — identified by their transfer station sticker — allowed to park for free. However, it has since been discovered that one of the requirements tied to the deed of the Contoocook Beach parking lot is that it only be for the use of Jaffrey residents.

The ordinance change presented a streamlined version of that plan. Though there are not restrictions on the Shattuck beach deed regarding its use, the board did not offer any options for non-residents to access the beach parking through purchasing a sticker or pass. Instead, it is simply not allowed.

Non-residents are not barred from the beach itself, however.

"We cannot restrict the beach. We can only restrict the parking lot," Select Board Chair Frank Sterling said.

Jaffrey transfer station stickers are distributed at no cost upon vehicle registration, Sterling said, so even if residents use a private trash-hauling service, they can obtain a sticker at no cost to access the beach parking lot. When asked how the ordinance would be enforced, Sterling said it was the intent that beach staff would observe and report violations to the Jaffrey police for enforcement.

"They're not traffic cops, they're not there to argue with anyone," Sterling said of beach staff.

When asked if it was possible that Rindge residents also be allowed to park at town beaches, the board said they were not considering that option. However, if residents of other towns wished to be dropped off, or find other nearby parking and walk to the beach, they could do so.

Selectman Kevin Chamberlain questioned winter events, such as the annual fishing derby and ice racing, which typically start at the Contoocook Beach and use the parking lot. Town Manager Jon Frederick said those events require a permitting process, and the Select Board could elect to waive ordinance restrictions for individual events through the permitting process.

The board agreed unanimously to adopt the residents-only policy and \$50 fine for violations. The ordinance went into effect upon its adoption.