

March 3, 2011

Dear Mr. Carroll,

I would like to request to be on the agenda at the next board of selectmen meeting to utilize the Chilmark Community Center for a volunteer training on June 4, 2011. The New England Aquarium (NEAQ) Rescue Department has field stranding response volunteers on Martha's Vineyard who act as first responders and data collectors for stranded marine mammals under NEAQ's authority. We hold an annual training in Boston each year, but due to the difficulty for our vineyard volunteers to get off island, we would like to hold a convenient training on island.

The attendees of the training will be current and new field volunteers who are residents of the island and usually consist of 30-50 people. The current volunteers have been actively participating in stranding response and are required to attend a training at least every 3 years in order to stay an active volunteer. The new volunteers have gone through an application and interview process.

The training consists of a power point presentation with various breakout activities. One activity involves practicing collecting external data (measurements, exams, etc.) on a marine mammal carcass. This activity is done outside on a tarp or other protective equipment, so that the carcass will never enter the building or touch ground where other people may be to prevent any health concerns. All other activities are done inside, and involve species identification and health assessment questionnaires. We usually provide a small breakfast and a break for participants to leave the premises for lunch.

The process for becoming a new volunteer involves visiting NEAQ's website at [www.neaq.org](http://www.neaq.org) and following the links to the volunteer application.

A description of the position is also on the website and found here:

[http://www.neaq.org/get\\_involved/volunteering\\_and\\_internships/volunteering/volunteer\\_positions/position\\_details.php?id=57](http://www.neaq.org/get_involved/volunteering_and_internships/volunteering/volunteer_positions/position_details.php?id=57).

We would be interested in recruiting people to apply for the position, especially in the Chilmark area. We have volunteers across the island, but Chilmark is one location where we would like to increase or response time. We request that applications be submitted by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, in order to allow time for the interview process.

Thank you for your consideration in allowing us to use the community's facility to host our training. If you have any questions about the training, please do not hesitate to contact me at 617-733-0319 or via email at [kmcnally@neaq.org](mailto:kmcnally@neaq.org).

Sincerely,

Kerry McNally