

To: Town Administrator, Town of Chilmark  
From: Chilmark Town Affairs Council, Martha's Vineyard Book Festival 2019  
Date: April 2, 2019

The Martha's Vineyard Book Festival is part of the summer programming of the Chilmark Town Affairs Council (CTAC) and is held every other summer. In 2019, the eighth festival is scheduled for Saturday, August 3 and Sunday, August 4, with an opening panel on Friday evening, August 2. In past years, the festival's opening panel was held at the Chilmark Community Center (CCC) on Friday evening, in Edgartown at the Harbor View Hotel on Saturday, and on the grounds of the CCC on Sunday. This year, rather than in Edgartown, we would like to hold Saturday's activities at the CCC. This memo presents the basis for this proposal as well as a plan for addressing any potential problems that may arise from it.

The festival has grown in impact and popularity and now attracts some of the country's most respected authors who travel here for the weekend. The festival has become a destination event for year round residents and summer visitors. In the relaxed atmosphere of the island, we provide the opportunity for authors and readers to meet and engage with one another in a way that expands understanding and appreciation. Authors confirmed for this summer include Jim Acosta, Judge Richard Gergel, John Grisham, Admiral William McRaven, Richard Russo, Dani Shapiro, and local authors Nicole Galland, and Tony Horwitz to name just a few.

For the first two years, the festival was held in Chilmark only on Sunday, but as it grew it became apparent that we needed more opportunities for the island community to hear these authors and for the authors to speak together. We added a second day of programming on Saturday at the Harbor View Hotel, Edgartown accepting the hotel's generous offer to provide their facility without charge. The split location has always created logistical difficulties, but with the Harbor View under renovation this year, it is even more problematic. Chilmark, where the tents are already up, is the clearly the best location to also host the first day of the festival this year. This simplifies logistics for guests, for the authors, for managing the festival, and for our bookseller Bunch of Grapes who otherwise has to haul over 250 boxes of books between two locations. These efficiencies also reduce costs, an important consideration for a free festival. For Chilmark, the festival shines a spotlight on the creativity and values of this community. This proposal results in no additional cost to the town.

The hours for the 2019 Saturday festival would be 9 am – 4 pm (same as Sunday) and we expect that we would hold panel discussions inside the CCC with book sales, author book signings, and an author green room in the tents outside the Center. We recognize that the Town of Chilmark is busy on the first Saturday of August and that the Chilmark Library is open and the Martha's Vineyard Bank and Town Hall are open until noon. Accordingly, we are developing a comprehensive plan to limit the impact of the festival on the town, as follows:

- Hire a police detail outside of the CCC and at Beetlebung Corner to facilitate traffic management.
- Station guards at the library during their open hours to ensure that only their patrons park in their lot.
- Run shuttles several times per day between Vineyard Haven and Chilmark, and Edgartown and Chilmark to reduce down island driving and parking in Chilmark.
- Secure all available parking near the CCC including the Pony Field on Menemsha Crossroad (50+ cars), Chilmark Community Church (after 11 am reception), The Yard, Chilmark Police Dept. field, Chilmark School, Beetlebung Farm, Town Hall and the bank (after hours). Use volunteers/hire staff to manage these lots, including the Pony Field, consistent with the requirements of the facility owners.
- Direct drivers to the Tabor House Road parking lot (at the town dump) and run a continuous shuttle between the CCC and this lot. (This was also done for the 2017 festival.)
- Advertise and publicize the parking plan in the newspapers and online. Provide parking maps to all festival guests.

In sum, CTAC requests to add Saturday, August 3, 2019 (i.e., one additional day in two years) to the existing alternate year book festival schedule. We will implement a comprehensive plan to ensure that the festival's impact on other local activities is minimized. We hope you agree that this cutting edge literary festival, which brings the community together, is an asset to the Town of Chilmark. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Respectfully submitted by Suellen Lazarus, Executive Director, MV Book Festival, on behalf of CTAC