



Beach Road Weekend and MV Concert Series Come to a Close on Martha's Vineyard

Iconic Festival To Find New Home on Mainland

(Vineyard Haven, MA) The Vineyard Arts and Culture Foundation announced today that the Beach Road Weekend music festival and MV Concert Series will not return to Martha's Vineyard this summer. Beach Road Weekend will relocate to a new home on Cape Cod in 2025.

Beach Road Weekend began in 2019 in partnership with the Town of Tisbury, with the goal of creating a destination event that would rival any other in New England. While that first year yielded a significant financial deficit, together the partnership had proven that a first-class event could be produced well on Martha's Vineyard. By all accounts, the festival was a success and was enthusiastically embraced for a return the following year.

In 2020, the Beach Road Weekend name and brand were licensed to a newly established Martha's Vineyard-based 501-c3 non-profit to leverage the fledgling festival and raise funds for island organizations that support the arts, education, and recreation. The original producer, Innovation Arts & Entertainment, stayed on to program, market, and produce the festival; donating its time, expertise, and resources to the cause. Despite brisk sales and a near sellout, the 2020 festival was canceled due to the COVID pandemic.

Coming out of the pandemic, enthusiasm was high for the return of live events. Meeting the challenge, the 2022 Beach Road Weekend Music Festival delivered an experience worthy of that excitement. Thirty bands appeared over three days starring the Avett Brothers, Beck, and Wilco. Tickets sold out within weeks of going on sale; over ten months in advance. More than thirty thousand people spent their days in Tisbury, and then filled ferries, hotels, and restaurants island-wide all weekend.

While the 2022 festival met with extraordinary critical and popular success, inflationary pressure and supply chain challenges emerging from the pandemic resulted in losses exceeding \$ 1 million. Festival operators were still able to raise and donate over

\$110,000 to critical island organizations including Harbor Homes, the new Tisbury school, MVRHS Minnesingers, the Edgartown School, MV Community Services, Camp Jabberwocky, and Ladyfest/Connect to End Domestic Violence.

Despite the financial challenges from previous years, festival operators predicted that the experiences learned in producing the event would yield financial and operational efficiency in 2023 that could offset the difference between revenue and expenses.

To their surprise and disappointment, the same financial pressures of 2022 continued into 2023, and the costs of producing the festival escalated further as a result of the extraordinarily high cost for cargo, on-island accommodations for working crew, costs for on-island labor and equipment, and off-island rental equipment. While the 2023 Beach Road Weekend music festival yielded another sold-out event, the festival once again suffered seven-figure financial losses.

Given the challenges, and with consideration from the Vineyard Arts and Culture Foundation, their advisors, and Innovation Arts and Entertainment, organizers have come to the realization that the costs to produce the festival on Martha's Vineyard are simply too high and, as a result, there is not a pathway forward to achieve the fundraising goals of the Foundation.

"It is with great disappointment and sadness that we announce that as a result of the extraordinary expense associated with producing touring shows and festivals on Martha's Vineyard, the MV Concert Series and Beach Road Weekend will not be returning to the Island," Festival founder Adam Epstein said. "This past Beach Road Weekend was fantastic. Seeing Mumford and Sons headline an event we had built from scratch over the span of five years was exhilarating. Yet, the festival had very clear and unrelenting challenges. For every dollar we saved via experience and efficiencies, our costs would increase by two dollars from other factors. We could never catch up. Perseverance and a drive toward efficiency weren't enough. Hotel costs for our staff, cargo and ferry-related expenses, and extra costs associated with doing the festival on an island led to an extra \$1.25 million in expense each year over what the same festival would have cost on the mainland."

Joe Kosin, Co-Producer of Beach Road Weekend added, "We see a pathway where Beach Road Weekend can be successful for audiences and as a vehicle for good, but not with the extra financial challenges presented by the Vineyard's unique location. So, the festival will take 2024 off for a re-design a location on Cape Cod to be announced at a later date. Same great festival – new location!"

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