

ORTLEY BEACH VOTERS AND TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

General Membership Meeting

Saturday, April 22, 2023

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order – A call to Order was conducted by Vice President, Paul Jeffrey beginning the April OBVTA general membership meeting.
2. Moment of Reflection - A moment of reflection was conducted by the OBVTA Directors and was honored by the membership.
3. Roll Call – Roll call was conducted by the Secretary, John Clarke, and the following Board of Directors were present; Paul Jeffrey, John Clarke, Joe Cantalupo, Joan Strathern, Cathy Crisafulli and Mike Wymbs.
4. Quorum Board of Directors – Vice President, Paul Jeffrey requested Secretary John Clarke to determine whether or not a quorum was present. Upon review of the members present for the General Membership Meeting, it was clearly established that a quorum had been reached as far in excess of 40 members of the membership were present at the meeting thereby establishing a quorum.
5. Minutes – The minutes from the October 15, 2022 General Membership Meeting were presented and accepted by a unanimous vote from the Board of Directors.
6. Treasurer’s Report – Paul Jeffrey, Vice President for the OBVTA, presented the Treasurer’s Report as our Treasurer, Debbie Barton, was unavailable for the April General Membership Meeting. Mr. Jeffrey went over the Treasurer’s Report and explained in detail the Treasury Report for the OBVTA membership. So far, the dues payment received for 2023 amounts to \$855.00. The year to date membership so far are at 608 and the year to date members are 792. There are three new members from the February to the March reporting cycle. It was noted that there may be some errors in the membership counts based upon the issue at the meeting check in today. Total expenses so far to date included payments for the Go-Daddy subscription in the amount of \$21.00 and the flyers for the dune plantings which amounted to \$38.00 for a total amount of expenses

of \$59.00 year to date. The total net income therefore amounts to \$799.00 year to date. The cash at hand including money in the money market account, checking account, and the CD amount to \$79,410.00. A copy of the full and in-depth Treasurer's Report is posted on the OBVTA website. The Board of Directors unanimously agreed to accept the Treasurer's Report, pending any necessary corrections, at the April 22, 2023 General Membership meeting.

7. Guest Lt. Gene Bachonski - Lt. Bachonski was present and addressed the General Membership at the April 22, 2023 General Membership meeting and did so as always in a thorough and efficient manner. Lt. Bachonski provided some interesting information to the membership, especially that from the 2022 summer season. From May 1 through November 15 of 2022, which constitutes the bulk of our summer season, Toms River Police Department received 1,065 calls for service in Ortley Beach as compared to 27,092 on the mainland during that same time period. These amounted to roughly 4% of the calls that were made to all of Toms River during that time period. In comparison, the north beaches of Toms River received 1,184 calls during that same time period. The calls consisted of zero calls for murder/robbery/kidnapping, two calls for burglaries, one call for aggravated assault (this was the result of the mass gathering on May 29th in which a female juvenile was hit with a bottle), two for simple assault, eleven for thefts, thirty-three for disorderly conduct, and fourteen calls for fireworks.

During that same time period, there were fifty motor vehicle crashes in those 107 days of statistics as compared to 1,918 on the mainland in Toms River. Five of those crashes resulted in injury and six of those crashes occurred at the Route 35 North/Harding Avenue intersection and all six of these were people making left turns from the right-hand lane. Apparently, there is some GPS app that is telling them to do this and there is some glitch in the system. There appears that none of this data supports changing the street directions in Ortley Beach.

The juvenile calls for service amounted to 74 during the 2022 summer season as compared to 72 in the northern beaches. The Memorial Day weekend was very busy with regard to juvenile calls and then there was nothing until the July 4th weekend and after that it was busy throughout the summer. The majority of the calls appeared to be in the north end of the town by 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and by Barnacle Bills.

Deputy Chief Dellane considers the juvenile issue a high priority for both the north and south beaches. Toms River Police Department will continue to monitor social media and send resources where needed. There will be Class I officers during the day and Class II and full-time officers present in the evening. There will also be ATVs on the beaches and mutual aid from the New Jersey State Police and the Ocean County Sheriff's Department. Lt. Bachonski was asked about the Ocean City Municipal Ordinances which are apparently being used to gather up unruly teens and hold them until their parents come to collect them. Lt. Bachonski was unaware of these ordinances and asked the OBVTA Board of Directors to provide him with information concerning the same so that he could look into it.

The localized curfew that was in place for the barrier island for the last few years was possible due to the state of emergency involving COVID. Now with the COVID state of emergency ending, there is currently no plan for a curfew for the upcoming summer season. Toms River council and administration is looking into the curfew but if the curfew will be in Ortley Beach, it will also have to be in Toms River throughout the entire town. Lt. Bachonski will provide us with updates on the status of any curfews as he learns more.

With regard to the EMS situation and the concern of the residents involving slow or no response times on the island, Lt. Bachonski indicated that the ambulance response teams only have sixteen full-time employees and it is getting very difficult to hire employees as many people are currently not interested in working. By contrast, Manchester has thirty-two full-time employees. Ortley Beach will have a dedicated emergency vehicle seven days a week from Memorial Day through Labor Day from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Lt. Bachonski also addressed the HAWK light crosswalk over by Stewart's. Lt. Bachonski explained that even though this is controlled through Seaside Heights, it does affect the residents of Ortley Beach. The HAWK is short for High Intensity Activated Crosswalk and has five phases. When nothing is blinking, you are free to go through, when there is a flashing yellow, you should slow down, when there is a solid yellow, you should be prepared to stop, when there is a solid red, motorists should stop for pedestrians, and when there is a flashing red (goes for thirty seconds), you must stop, then you are allowed to proceed when it is clear.

He also reminded Ortley Beach residents that the left lane will be closed on the Tunney Bridge for a few upcoming weeks for repairs.

8. Guest – Toms River Councilman, Justin Lamb, was also present at our meeting and addressed the membership as well as answered questions from individual members and from the board. One issue that was addressed was the upcoming repairs to the beach that are to be performed by Toms River prior to the upcoming 2023 beach season. This is not to be confused with the full Army Corp. of Engineers beach restoration that will be discussed later. The bids for the repairs to the dunes and the entry ways will be opened by Toms River Township on April 25, 2023 and presented to the Toms River council at the meeting on Wednesday, April 26th. If the bids are passed by the council, then the timeline for the repairs will be dependent on the contractor's schedule however, the Toms River Township Engineer feels that the work can be completed within ten to fourteen days once the contractor has mobilized. Toms River Township did indicate that they are hoping to wait until after the weekend storm of April 29-30th, et al, so as not to do repairs only to have it damaged by that upcoming storm.

With regard to the Surf Club Property, Justin Lamb indicated that according to the township engineer, the application process that is being undertaken by the NJDEP is being delayed as a result of delays occurring in the NJDEP and the parking lot will probably not be completed for the 2023 summer season but will be completed for 2024 unless further delays are encountered by the NJDEP.

With regard to the request from the OBVTA on concerns that Ortley Beach has with regard to emergency response vehicles and the slow and delayed times that Ortley Beach residents are encountering, Justin Lamb reported that Toms River Township will be undertaking an annual summer and beach mobilization meeting in preparation for the summer season with Toms River Police Department, Fire Department, and Recreation Department to plan for the summer season. At that meeting, there will be a schedule for the EMS Ambulance to be on the barrier island. As noted by Lt. Bachonski previously, that vehicle will be on the island from Memorial Day through Labor Day from 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. Mr. Lamb reported that as far as the curfew, they are considering the potential for a curfew to be implemented as it has in the past. The prior curfew that was in place was set in place under COVID emergency guidelines and has since been cancelled.

A new curfew is being considered by the Toms River council and Mayor Hill. Any curfew that would be in place, would require an ordinance passed by the council and would have to include the entire town.

With regard to the Army Corp. of Engineers, discussion was had between the membership, the Board of Directors, and Mr. Lamb. It was reported that although the bids that were submitted to the Army Corp. of Engineers by the beach restoration companies were rejected by the Army Corp. of Engineers, they anticipate new bids to be submitted, and are optimistic that the replenishment will go forward as intended although given these delays it is difficult to say what the timeline will be for the actual full Army Corp. of Engineers beach replenishment.

Justin Lamb addressed an issue brought by the general membership concerning the kayak registration that, for the first time this year, was supposed to be online and involved reserving a kayak place at the Six Terrace extension boat launch area. The member indicated that he called right at about 7:00 when the instructions indicated that registration was to begin. He had already registered and was all set but at one portion of the application process, it indicated the "number of kayaks" to be registered, and it would not allow him to put a number in and he ultimately was unable to register his kayak. He was told that the issue would be looked into and he would be contacted by the town of Toms River concerning this issue. He has never received any communication outside of that from the town. John Clarke of the OBVTA Board of Directors, explained to Justin Lamb a similar issue and the fact that his emails and phone calls have not been responded to similar to the member's complaint. Justin Lamb indicated he would look into this and get back to us as soon as possible.

In addition, there was some discussion as to the proper method to awarding the kayak rack registration and what is the proper system. Cathy Crisafulli of the OBVTA Board of Directors suggested that a lottery system for the kayaks being awarded as the fairest resolution of this issue. Justin Lamb listened to that suggestion and indicated that he would be following up with the OBVTA as to what the proper method is for awarding the permits for the kayak storage.

9. Members Comments – Dr. Maureen Persi and her husband, Mel Persi, addressed the Board of Directors and asked that the Board of Directors further

look into the feasibility of Ortley Beach seceding from Toms River Township. Both Paul Jeffrey and John Clarke addressed this question and indicated that a full feasibility study had been conducted by the OBVTA Board of Directors (a copy of which is attached to our website) and that given the cost associated with such an endeavor, the huge time frame associated with such an endeavor, and the very poor likelihood of success of any such action, that the feasibility of secession of Ortley Beach from Toms River was, in fact, not feasible, and, as such, no further studies would be conducted by the Board of Directors at this time.

10. Close of Meeting - A motion was then brought to have the April 22, 2023, General Membership meeting brought to a close and that was unanimously approved.