

ORTLEY BEACH VOTERS AND TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

General Membership Meeting

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order – A call to Order was conducted by President, Anthony Colucci beginning the August OBVTA general membership meeting.
2. Moment of Reflection - A moment of silence was conducted by the OBVTA Board of Directors to send prayers and support to those who are suffering from the fires in Hawaii. The moment of reflection was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call – Roll call was conducted by the Secretary, John Clarke, and the following Board of Directors were present; Anthony Colucci, Paul Jeffrey, Debbie Barton, John Clarke, Cathy Crisafulli, Mike Wymbbs, and Mike Stramandinoli.
4. Quorum – President, Anthony Colucci 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 July 15, 2023 General Membership meeting were presented and accepted by a unanimous vote from the Board of Directors.
6. Treasurer’s Report – The Treasurer’s Report was presented by the OBVTA Treasurer, Debbie Barton. So far, through July 2023, the total operating income is \$16,588.00 year to date with expenses for the month of July totaling \$2,821.00. We currently have 634 total memberships which includes 149 still being in the grace period. Total year to date members in those memberships amounts to 827. We also have 19 total business members as opposed to 22 for the past year. Expenses year to date amount to \$10,793.00 and for the month totaling \$3,473.00. Net income for the year to date amounts to \$3,582.00. The OBVTA has a total amount of cash on hand of \$81,544.00 including the money market account having \$18,441.00, the checking account has \$23,103.00, the CD has

\$20,000.00 and the treasury bond has \$20,000.00 amounting to the total amount set forth above.

Some discussion was had with regard to how to spend the outstanding cash on hold. President Colucci did indicate that there are several areas that we are awaiting to have the money spend on including areas like street scape and the extended boardwalk near the Joey Harrison's property. Some of these monies will be spent for upgrades and involvement in areas such as this. The Treasurer's Report was unanimously accepted by the OBVTA Board of Directors.

7. President's Notes – OBVTA President, Anthony Colucci, addressed the General Membership on a variety of topics. Anthony discussed the status of the old Joey Harrison's site and the parking lot directly across therefrom. Anthony talked about the possibility of discussing with Toms River having some EV charging stations installed in the area especially considering that there are grants available to fund these charging stations. This might be a benefit for the Ortley Beach residents as a whole. Mr. Colucci indicated that he will address Justin Lamb, our Councilman, about them. Other topics discussed were how to deal with the traffic flow on Route 35 and the accidents that seem to be occurring on a fairly regular basis on Route 35. Other topics included the EMS response to recent issues and response time of the EMS vehicles on the island. Director, John Clarke, also indicated that he had witnessed an accident near his residence and that it took approximately 30 minutes for the police to arrive at the scene. Mr. Colucci indicated that with the upcoming election and the political promises that were made to have EMS vehicles available for Ortley residents 24/7, that we are hopeful that these issues can be resolved in the future. Mr. Colucci also discussed some future possible expenditures including flags and decorative items and lighting for street scape, holiday light, solar lights on the boardwalk, and possibly funding a jet ski for the beach patrol.

8. Guests – Our original agenda had scheduled Councilman, Justin Lamb and Toms River Police Lieutenant, Gene Bachonski to address our membership. Unfortunately, both Justin Lamb and Lt. Bachonski were last minute cancellations and, as such, the OBVTA had no guest speakers for the August meeting.

9. CIBA-GEIGY Superfund - Vice President, Paul Jeffrey gave an extensive presentation concerning the issues surrounding the CIBA-GEIGY Superfund site

settlement. Paul gave an extensive history of the events that took place concerning the initial contamination up through and including the recent proposed settlement between NJDEP and BASF Corp. It was noted that the settlement involving NJDEP and BASF Corp. took place without any involvement from the municipality of Toms River even though the location of the superfund site took place in Toms River. The settlement effectuated was controversial and produced strong opposition from local officials. Even though it has been presented by BASF that the land was contaminated and unable to be developed, yet it turns out that much of the land is being developed including but not limited to the wind farm that is producing electricity as well as up to 250 acres being made available for a proposed development.

Save Barnegat Bay, the local environmental group, has organized a team of legal and environmental experts that have dealt with cases such as this and who indicate that the settlement should be in the hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars. Currently, there is no victim's compensation fund or payout to the local municipalities effected despite the fact that this land may be contaminated for 50 to 100 years or even longer. Save Barnegat Bay officials are undertaking the opposition to this settlement and indicate in all likelihood that this will be proceeding to courts before any resolution can be anticipated.

At the OBVTA General Membership meeting, petitions were passed around and were signed eagerly by the membership in support of Save Barnegat Bay's legal battle.

10. Friends of Ortley Beach – Cathy Crisafulli gave a presentation concerning the issues surrounding Friends of Ortley Beach and their struggles to keep this fine organization moving forward. Cathy spoke concerning the cherished events that the Friends of Ortley Beach present including, but not limited to the kite nights, townwide garage sales, craft shows, doggie days involvement, scholarships and the like. It is unanimously agreed through the membership that this is a valued organization. However, at the current time, the Friends of Ortley Beach is looking for new leadership and more volunteers in order to keep many of these great programs moving forward. The OBVTA General Membership was asked to consider becoming more involved with Friends of Ortley Beach and possibly for someone to take a leadership role in Friends of Ortley Beach and move forward with their exciting projects. It was asked that if there is interest in joining or becoming more involved with Friends of Ortley Beach, to contact Cathy Crisafulli

or any board director of the OBVTA. We will have more information on the Friends of Ortley Beach situation as we move forward.

11. EMS Issues – There was some discussion by the Board of Directors, led by Director, Michael Stramandinoli, concerning the poor response time of EMS vehicles on the island. The poor response times have been an issue for Ortley Beach residents for a substantial period of time. Paul Jeffrey even suggested having the ambulance staff through the county Sheriff's Department become more involved. John Clarke made a comment that an accident happened near his residence a few weeks ago and it took approximately 30 minutes before the police even arrived at the scene of the accident. Obviously, with the recent primary elections, all of the Republican contenders, vying for Ortley Beach votes, promised to have EMS vehicles on the island available for Ortley Beach residents 24/7. We are hoping with the results of the election and the upcoming general election that the candidates continue to support EMS vehicle in Ortley Beach and will fulfill their promises made during the electoral process.

12. Beach replenishment – John Clarke gave a brief update concerning the beach replenishment. The last word from the Army Corp. of Engineers, received this past week by John Clarke, indicates that the bid protest is still being handled by the Army Corp. of Engineers and, at the current time, no contracts have been awarded and no updates as far as scheduling the beach replenishment are available.

In addition, John Clarke has received questions concerning the beach warning flags systems used by the lifeguards. There have been recent articles that the National Lifeguard Association is changing some of the ways that the warning flags are used. Nevertheless, at the current time, Ortley Beach is continuing to use the standard flag system of green, yellow, and red. Green indicates that it is ok to go swimming (although the ocean is never totally safe), yellow is to swim with caution, and red no swimming is allowed. This coincides with the signage that is posted throughout Ortley Beach and there are no plans to change from this system at the current time.

13. Pumping Stations – Paul Jeffrey also gave an update on some confusion with the use of pumping stations and recent situations where the Bay beaches had been closed due to high bacteria levels. There are times when the water is

especially high that people seem to be complaining that the pumping stations are not pumping. Paul clarified that during certain high tide cycles, the pumps are designed not to pump water if the bay tides are above a certain level as they are deemed to just be pumping the same water right back into the bay increasing the problems. This is why, at times, even though water levels may seem high in some of the streets, the pumps are not operating at those times.

14. Mike Stramandinoli also gave an update on the speeding situations on Bay Boulevard. The county is currently accumulating data to make a determination as to whether the speed limits need to be lowered in the Bay Boulevard area. This takes some time and Mike has been in contact with the county and they are in the process of gathering the information and data and will share it once they have reached a conclusion.

15. Member Comments – As always, members of the OBVTA also had comments and/or questions for the Board of Directors. One such question was what assurances the OBVTA had that the unsightly cell tower would be removed, as discussed, on September 30, 2023. To the best of the knowledge of the OBVTA, we have received assurances from the administration in Toms River that the cell phone tower was only going to be in place until September 30, 2023. Furthermore, we have reviewed the actual contract and there are not automatic renewals for that particular contract. While we cannot give any firm assurances that it will be removed on September 30, 2023, everything that the OBVTA Board of Directors is being told is that it will, in fact, be removed at that time. There was also a question regarding the cell phone tower as to whether any monies were received for it and what those monies were used for. It was reported that Toms River did receive \$20,000.00 for the allowance of the cell phone tower to be put into place and that money was not specifically used for Ortley Beach but rather just put into Toms River's budget.

Another one of our members presented the membership with information she has received concerning the taxes paid by Ortley Beach residents, in comparison with the overall taxes in Toms River. This member attended council meetings and followed up with the town at large including councilman Matthew Lotano, Lou Amoruso, and Jeff Brown. The information that was received and double checked was that the total ratable base that Ortley Beach makes up of is \$1,497,361,500.00 versus the total ratables for Ortley Beach being

\$20,343,613,100.00. (We need to double check this figure). This would indicate that the percentage of taxes paid by Ortley Beach residents amounts to approximately 7.36% of the total ratable base, much different from some of the projections set forth previously which included Ortley Beach having much, much higher percentage of the total tax base. Some of these prior estimates were as high as 34%. The information received and referenced herein was received from Mr. Jeff Brown, CTA who is the Deputy Tax Assessor for Toms River Township. The average assessed value for the homes throughout Toms River Township rounded out to \$489,300.00 while the average for Ortley Beach rounded out to \$582,400.00.

Also included in the members informational presentation was that in order to search for individual assessments of properties throughout Toms River Township, is to go to the web page for Toms River, click on the online payments and then scroll down to tax payments. At that point in time, you can either search by owner name or property location and then click the search tool next to it. At that point in time, you can either select the owner name or property location and on the right hand side it will give you the total assessed value. Using this method, unfortunately, you have to check each property individually.

Also of importance is you are able to file for Ocean County clerk's office property alert. You can do this by going to tomsrivertownship.com, scroll down to the Ocean County Clerk's office property alert service, click on the box that has Ocean County clerk's office property alert service on it. There is a link at that point to sign up at the bottom of the description which will allow you to get the Ocean County clerk's office property alert.

There were also comments that were made that at the current time, the race for Toms River Mayor is somewhat in flux. The successful Republican nominee is Dan Rodrick but the Democratic nominee has withdrawn and the Democratic party has until the end of August to have another individual in place to run. We are hoping to have both candidates at a future meeting to give a short presentation and answer some questions from the membership.

16. Close of Meeting - A motion was then brought to have the July 15, 2023, General Membership meeting brought to a close and that was unanimously approved.