

ORTLEY BEACH VOTERS AND TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

General Membership Meeting

Saturday, May 13, 2023

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order – A call to Order was conducted by President, Anthony Colucci beginning the May OBVTA general membership meeting.
2. Moment of Reflection - A moment of reflection was conducted by the OBVTA Directors and honored those killed and injured by gun violence.
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, Joe Cantalupo, Joan Strathern, and Mike Wymbms.
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 April 22, 2023 General Membership meeting were presented and accepted by a unanimous vote from the Board of Directors.
6. Treasurer’s Report – Debbie Barton, Treasurer for the OBVTA, presented the Treasurer’s Report for the General Membership. So far, year-to-date, due payments of fees for a net amount of \$3,337.00. The year-to-date membership so far is at 614 and the year-to-date members are 804. There are seven new members from the April 2023 reporting period. The total operating income year-to-date is \$3,365.00. Total expenses year-to-date total \$419.00 with \$200.00 coming from the hall rental and zoom related expenses, \$181.00 year-to-date for website domain and email subscription and \$38.00 for flyers for the dune grass planting. The total cash at hand amounts to \$81,558.00 which includes \$25,258.00 in the money market account, \$36,300.00 in the checking account, and \$20,000.00 in the CD amounting to the total amount of \$81,558.00. 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 at the May 13, 2023 General Membership meeting.

7. Guest Lt. Gene Bachonski - Lt. Bachonski was present and addressed the General Membership at the May 13, 2023 General Membership meeting and did so in his usual excellent manner. Lt. Bachonski reiterated some of the calls for service information that was also presented in the April 2023 General Membership meeting and indicated that the number of calls for Ortley Beach and for the Toms River beaches including Normandy Beach were almost identical. He went on to indicate that Deputy Chief Dellane is confident with the overall staffing of the police crew heading into the 2023 summer season for Ortley Beach but also asked the public to be patient in that if they do not see police visible in their area that does not mean that they are not on the island. They could be helping northern beaches at that time for instance. Lt. Bachonski indicated that the Toms River Police Department is closely monitoring the juvenile situation involving pop-up parties. They are keeping an eye to see whether or not any are being planned for Ortley Beach and, if they see that they are, they will take all appropriate actions necessary to resolve the situation. He did note that the Toms River Police Department found it somewhat surprising that Point Pleasant Beach was seemingly getting the worse of the pop-up party situation rather than Seaside Heights. After Toms River looked into it, it was determined that the train service from the north that ends in Point Pleasant Beach is the likely culprit for worsening juvenile problems in those northern beaches than it is down Seaside Heights or in our areas.

Lt. Bachonski went on to explain some issues involving signs at entrances. First off, there are lifeguard stands more or less positioned throughout Ortley Beach and these lifeguard stands are numbered. Unfortunately, the numbers that are located on the stands do not necessarily match the new numbers that are at the signs at the beach entrances. Although this may seem to be completely illogical, Lt. Bachonski explained that it has to do with the lifeguard stands moving around and not necessarily being placed at say one area of the beach. That stand may be at or near Fielder Avenue at one time but may be further down towards 7th Avenue on another date.

Lt. Bachonski also addressed questions concerning curfews that are attempting to be in place. From what he has heard, the Toms River town council is not in favor

of the curfews but that the police department themselves are in favor and are always in favor of anything that might help alleviate pop-up problems, juvenile problems, or any other problems in Ortley Beach and in Toms River in general. He did indicate that he does not know the reason why Toms River is not in favor of the curfews and that is an issue that we should most likely address for Justin Lamb.

There were some questions with regard to dogs being on the beach. Lt. Bachonski indicated that dogs are technically not allowed on the beach and at the urging of some of the general membership, indicated that the Toms River Police Department will attempt to take a more aggressive stance to potentially keep dogs off the beach on Ortley.

There were relatively few questions for Lt. Bachonski, which he seemed appreciative of, and that was the end of him addressing the general membership for our May meeting.

8. Guest – Toms River Councilman, Justin Lamb - Toms River Councilman, Justin Lamb addressed the general membership, answered questions from individual members as well as from the Board of Directors. He was questioned as to what was going on with the curfew in Ortley Beach for the 2023 season. Councilman Lamb indicated that the council itself voted against it as the council did not want to implement a curfew throughout all of Toms River and impose those restrictions on the mainland portions of Toms River. Councilman Lamb felt that in his experience as an officer at Lavallette, that the curfews were not effective but that a beach closing ordinance is much more effective in Lavallette. Councilman Lamb indicated that at upcoming council meetings he will be pushing for a beach closing ordinance and asked the general membership who might be in favor of such an ordinance and a clear majority of those present at the OBVTA meeting appeared to be in favor of the beach closing ordinance as a way to curtail the juvenile problems and the potential pop-up party problems.

Councilman Lamb also addressed the problem with the online kayak reservation system that took place for the first time this year involving the kayak slips at the Six Terrace extension boat launch area. At least one of the members who had previously had a problem had contacted the town and he indicated that he was placed on the wait list and was ultimately awarded a slip. There was much

discussion as to whether or not additional slips could be placed at the Six Terrace extension boat launch area and it was agreed that we did not want to lose what parking was presently there but that if it could be worked on, additional slips would be welcome by both the OBVTA and Toms River itself. It needs to be seen whether the owner of the property where the boat slips are located would agree to additional slips being placed at this location. It was also discussed as to what the proper way to award these slips in the future might be. Councilman Lamb did indicate that, as we have discussed at our previous meetings, that a lottery type system might be the best solution and that he would look into that on behalf of the OBVTA.

9. Notes from the President – The OBVTA President, Anthony Colucci, addressed some issues to the general membership as a whole. Mr. Colucci explained that Mayor Mo Hill was willing to attend the May 2023 General Membership meeting but given that the OBVTA is a non-political organization and we do not support any particular candidates, that given the upcoming Republican Primary Election, it was probably best that he not appear so that we would not show any favoritism from one candidate to another. President Colucci did indicate that it is possible in the later part of the year before the final mayoral election that they would have both of the candidates address the OBVTA if the membership and the Board of Directors thought it was best.

In addition, President Colucci briefly discussed the upcoming Board of Directors elections and specifically indicated that there are three director positions up for election this year. Two of the current Board of Directors are running again and there are two nominees for the vacant seat left by the departure of Toni Tomarazzo who is no longer an Ortley Beach resident. Anthony Colucci indicated that Toni originally had hoped to purchase another home in Ortley Beach but was unable to do so. Anthony Colucci acknowledged the appreciation that he had and the Board of Directors had for Toni Tomarazzo's long commitment to the Ortley Beach Voters and Taxpayers Association and the time and commitment that she dedicated to the organization and Ortley Beach as a whole. A nice round of applause was given for Toni Tomarazzo dedication and commitment to the OBVTA.

Anthony Colucci also indicated that as many of the members have seen, there has been a lot of discussion of EMS on the islands by both our current Mayor and the

mayoral candidates. President Colucci indicated that this is most likely due to the pressure of the upcoming election and the desire from votes from the Ortley Beach voters themselves. For whatever reason, the OBVTA is grateful that we are moving towards having full-time EMS vehicles on the barrier island as this is clearly a life and death dilemma that we have here in Ortley Beach.

In addition, Mr. Colucci indicated that many of the issues we have the OBVTA Board of Directors deals directly with Toms River and specifically the Mayor and the Council. He stressed, however, that attendance at the council meetings not only for the Board of Directors but for the general membership as a whole, is critical in making change. The more people that we can get from the OBVTA to appear at the Council meetings and support our positions, the more likely we will have success in achieving some of the agenda that the OBVTA supports. The next Council meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 24, 2023.

10. Board of Directors Election – John Clarke, Secretary for the OBVTA, addressed the general membership concerning the upcoming Board of Directors election. John Clarke explained that there are currently three positions on the OBVTA Board of Directors up for election this year (June 2023 to June 2024). Two of those are currently incumbent seats that include Joan Strathern and Cathy Crisafulli. The third is a seat vacated as mentioned above by Toni Tomarazzo. There are two additional OBVTA members who have been nominated for that open Director position. As such, there are currently four individuals running for the Board of Directors with three positions being open. In addition to Joan Strathern and Cathy Crisafulli, Mel Persi and Michael Stramandinoli have submitted their nominations and bio's to the OBVTA asking that they be considered as candidates for the Board of Directors positions. The election will take place in person at the June, 2023 OBVTA General Membership meeting. Ballots will be handed out at that meeting, one per paid membership, and collected before the close of the meeting. The votes will be counted after the June, 2023 General Membership meeting and the results reported to the membership.

11. Beach Update – John Clarke also addressed the general membership on the beach replenishment issues that are going forward. Mr. Clarke explained there are two phases of the work involving the beach. One is the current beach repairs that are being conducted by Toms River and the other is the full beach

replenishment that will be conducted by the Army Corp. of Engineers. As is evidenced by the trucks currently on the beach in Ortley, the repairs for the 2023 beach season are underway. They began the week leading up to the General Membership meeting and should be easily completed (hopefully) by the Memorial Day weekend. The work that they are doing is to repair the entrances and shoring up the beach berm with sand. The beach berm is the area where we sit on the beach. They are currently progressing from south to north and hope to have the beach up, reach, and in good shape for the 2023 season.

The second phase is the beach replenishment that will be conducted by the Army Corp. of Engineers. It was explained that in the past, the two bids that were submitted were rejected by the Army Corp. of Engineers. Currently, the Army Corp. of Engineers is negotiating with each of the bidders in an attempt to gain a common ground so that one of the bids can be accepted by the Army Corp. of Engineers. They are optimistic that the beach replenishment program is going to go forward. It is just uncertain as to when this may take place. At the current time, it seems optimistic to think that the beach replenishment will begin by the fall of 2023 and will most likely begin, at the earliest, sometime in the winter of the 2023-2024 season.

Of interest is that there has been word from the Environmental Commission of Toms River that they are asking for the OBVTA support for Butterfly Areas in the Ortley Beach area. These Butterfly Areas are being proposed in the areas/mounds of sand that exist from the end of the roadway to the boardwalk itself. The Environmental Commission of Toms River in conjunction with Rutgers University and American Water have asked the OBVTA for support in making these areas accessible for the Butterfly Areas and for the Monarch migration. The weeds and such that are currently in these areas will be replaced with more beautiful and flowering plants that will attract the butterflies. American Water has pledged to donate \$10,000.00 to this endeavor. The Board of Directors has agreed to support this measure and John Clarke has indicated that if this matter moves forward, he will get the beach committee involved with supporting this in a more meaningful way.

12. Heart Saver CPR – Anthony Colucci gave the membership a note that Brian Kubiak submitted. The heart saver indicated that if people are interested in signing up for CPR training, they can notify the OBVTA and it will be held at the

Ocean Beach Firehouse at a date and time later determined if there is an interest in this activity.

13. 2023 Plant Giveaway – Joan Strathern addressed the general membership with regard to the upcoming plant giveaway. Ms. Strathern indicated that at the June 2023 membership meeting, tickets will be passed out to all those members who wish to get two free plants from OBVTA. She indicated that the plants will be available at Paul Jeffrey’s home at 1661 Bay Blvd. in Ortley Beach and will be available following the June, 2023 OBVTA General Membership meeting.

14. Close of Meeting - A motion was then brought to have the May 13, 2023, General Membership meeting brought to a close and that was unanimously approved.