

**Ortley Beach Voters and Taxpayers Association**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**June 20, 2020, 9:30 a.m.**  
**Via Zoom**

Membership meeting called to order at 9:31 a.m. (Anthony Colucci)

Moment of silence for front-line workers and the more than 100,000 dead from Covid-19.  
(Anthony Colucci)

**Present:** Anthony Colucci, Paul Jeffrey, Cathy Crisafulli, Joe Cantalupo, Joan Strathern, Toni Tomarazzo, Mary Ann Giordano Wallis, Debbie Barton, Mike Wymbs. All board members present.

Membership attendance: 53 online at start of meeting, 75 at peak. Quorum established.

**Minutes** of the May 2020 Association meeting. Motion to accept. (Joan, Debbie) All accepted, none opposed.

**Treasurer and Membership reports:** Debbie Barton

37 members paid through PayPal in May

25 members paid via mail

Expenses for the month: Post office box, EventBank new membership management system (\$1,160), Beach Jam refund to Rick Jurgens, Constant Contact, Moose Lodge donation (\$100)

Paul explained that EventBank will cost the association \$1,160 a year but it will allow us to drop Constant Contact and other services, so the final cost will be closer to \$1,000 a year.

Motion to accept Treasurer and Membership reports (Joe Cantalupo, Cathy Crisafulli):  
Approved.

**Guest: Rep. Andy Kim, NJ 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District**

Anthony introduced Congressman Kim, who is seeking re-election this year for a second term. He serves on the Armed Services Committee, the Small Business Committee, and was appointed to the Coronavirus Select Subcommittee.

Rep. Kim thanked the association for inviting him and wished everyone safety. He said he wants to get everyone back to work – something he knows is very important for a summer shore community.

He said one of his roles on the subcommittee is oversight over the federal SBA loans (along with Rep. Jim Clyburn and Rep. Steve Scalise), and both sides of the aisle are determined to make the committee work. He said he was the only New Jerseyan on the committee and was selected because of his national security background. He said he is bringing his experience to bear to help us get through the COVID-19 crisis.

Security After Sandy Act: He said he proposed that all FEMA loans, including Toms River's loans, and individual debt be forgiven, aside from those proven to be fraud. That includes RREM, Recovery grants, loans. He noted that FEMA's insistence on collecting the payments has created "a tremendous amount of anxiety," and said the forgiveness would be consistent with what FEMA did after Katrina. He said the loan "clawbacks" are affecting people's ability to get through the current COVID-19 crisis.

Flood Insurance: He said there is a bipartisan effort to come up with real solutions to the flood insurance problem that do not put the costs on the public. The goal is to identify and mitigate threats. The bill proposed last year was not strong enough, he said, and there is pushback by members against their own leadership.

Small Businesses: He is the only New Jerseyan on this committee. He said he knows how tough it has been for people to get access to PPP loans. He said some of the problems of PPP have been fixed, and they have extended the program to the end of the year.

Anthony Colucci asked Mr. Kim questions that had been sent in by association and board members related to federal issues:

Question about whether the Sandy Relief Bill will lift the burden off of Toms River, which raised taxes in part to cover the payback to FEMA. Kim said yes and that he has been working with Mayor Hill and arguing that FEMA should treat Toms River like other towns that have had their loans forgiven. He said because of a weird accounting standard, Toms River is being penalized for being fiscally responsible. He said he is hoping for bipartisan support for the bill.

Question about flood insurance and the additional fee for renewal for second home owners. He said a bill last fall came out of the Financial Services Committee that both leaderships have been pushing for, but which he sees as a "bad bill," particularly for New Jerseyans because it does not have caps on increases, no transparency for FEMA's processes, etc. This is particularly concerning because FEMA is about to issue new flood zone standards. He said he told his leadership that the bill was not good enough and opponents succeeded in pushing the bill back from a vote last November. A better bill, he said, would include price controls, second home coverage and transparency. He said a better bill, which he called FEMA 2.0, could "change the game for a lot of people" re: risk. He said he is trying to get the Trump Administration to provide transparency and allow the public to see the criteria for maps, rates, etc. He said he is working with other shore members of Congress and right now the choice is between passing a bad bill or kicking the ball down the road until they get support for a better bill. He said he favors continuing negotiations to pass a better bill. He said, "This is a very important year for flood insurance discussions and I want you to know that I'm working hard for you."

Question about reducing drug costs: Mr. Kim said this is still the No. 1 issue he hears about and he thinks the current system is very unfair. He said Congress passed HR 3 to lower drug costs by allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices, but it has not passed the Senate. Previous federal legislation had forbidden the federal government from negotiating Medicare drug prices, though private insurance companies, veterans and the military systems allow price negotiation. He said the system “screws over our seniors.” He said being able to negotiate drug prices would save the Medicare system millions of dollars, allowing the government to reinvest it back into Medicare for things like dental coverage without ballooning personal and government costs. He said people on both sides of the aisle, as well as the White House, had discussed lowering costs and he is trying to see a bill pushed through in a bipartisan way.

Question about helping small businesses vs. big corporations: He said small businesses are on the front lines right now and history shows they are the first to get hit and the last to recover. He said the situation is even worse now, and he fears many will never recover. He said the goal of the aid programs was to push billions to small businesses, but still many with fewer employees were left out. The PPP needs to be fixed, he said, because the big companies jumped to the front of the line and sucked up all the resources. The federal government is little by little recouping funds, including millions from publicly traded companies that have other means to get money. He said he wants to see a change in the rules for PPP loans allowing non payroll expenses to be greater than 25% and to extend the payment period. The goal, he said, is to get the money to those who need it most, like restaurants. He said most restaurants can’t make a profit with just 30% or 40% allowed capacity. He said he has been working with the state on plans to get them back and also get them more assistance, as they have the longest road to recovery and need the most amount of help. He said a committee hearing was held a few days ago to explore ways to help.

Mr. Kim said his office put together a small business handbook that puts all federal and state information about assistance together in one place, and that it is available by contacting his office. He also advised small business owners who are having trouble navigating the bureaucracy to contact his office, and staff will assist them. He said there has not been enough guidance for forgiveness and too much paperwork from the federal government; the committee is now trying to streamline processes.

Question about business loan terms and whether the basis of loans can be changed to consider higher rents. He said the original terms of the loans allowed just an eight-week window to spend the funds, and people rushed to spend the money, but that has now been extended to 24 weeks. He also said there is \$100 billion still available in the PPP. Congress is also trying to target some businesses so that emergency disaster loans are not forgiven but the interest rates would be low. He also mentioned a tax incentive program for employers.

He said the information is on his website and that the majority of his staff is in the district, not in Washington, D.C., to be available to help constituents. He said the offices field hundreds of calls a day and staff is working through them as quickly as they can.

Questions from Anthony about how we can prepare so we avoid future disasters like this one. Mr. Kim noted his national security background, when he was a diplomat with involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a national security official, serving in the White House and under both Republican and Democratic administrations. He said he comes at the issue with that hat on: How do we try to save lives, safely reopen, and prepare for the second wave? We are still in the thick of it, he said, and need to prepare with adequate supplies of PPE, ventilators and testing, and he is very worried about that right now. A second strategy, he said, is to “supercharge” a vaccine. He said the government is trying to accelerate vaccine development at a speed never done before. Third, he said to prevent future shortages, we need to develop our own PPP supply chain. By not having that, we left ourselves extremely vulnerable. He said we need manufacturing capability in the United States and that he has been talking to many businesses that can and want to do this, as long as the government provides a steady stream of contracts. Fourth, he said we need a better testing structure and that we were in disarray in February, March and April and did not have the test or testing level that were needed. He said he sought a testing site in Toms River and FEMA “flat out said no.” Fifth, he said we need to support and protect those most vulnerable, ie those in nursing homes, senior living communities, long-term care facilities. The government wound up triaging resources to them, an absolute tragedy that resulted in the 0.6% of the people in nursing homes accounting for more than 40% of the deaths. Employees of those facilities also must be protected, he said; many were asymptomatic and introduced the virus, which then spread like wildfire. “I pray that we never have something like this again, but we have to be prepared.”

Question about whether one still needs a doctor’s referral to be tested. RiteAid at Mule Drive has drive-through testing that is quick, easy, with no prescription required and a two-day response. How can we get more of that? Mr. Kim said he is glad RiteAid is offering that and you could Google to find other sites. He said he is trying to get more testing sites available but he is also working with Rutgers to get at-home kits developed in which one could spit in a cup, mail the sample out, and then get results back in the mail. He said, meanwhile, another \$25 billion is needed to expand testing and Congress is urging the White House to support it.

Question about the accuracy of the current tests. Mr. Kim said he has a lot of confidence in the results if one uses a reputable company and a saliva-based test. Still, he said he was sick and tested negative, so he still quarantined himself for 14 days. He said the false positives and negatives are frustrating, but they are the best we have right now. He said he is a little concerned about the antibody test because we don’t yet have the scientific evidence on whether having the virus gives one immunity. He said he is pushing the CDC on getting a definitive answer to that big question and he is trying to find out what research is going on. He noted that, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, he was concerned about reports that some sailors seemed to test positive after recovering from COVID-19. He said it’s not clear if that’s an immunity problem or whether it’s the result of tests varying dramatically in effectiveness.

Question about what the membership can do to help with the flood insurance issue. He said he needs to revisit to see where the White House is on the new legislation. He said if anyone has a poignant or dramatic story, to let him know and he will bring it up on the floor or during House hearings. He encouraged letter writing but said he would get back to us so it is done at the right time and targets the right people. He added that he appreciates the help.

Anthony thanked Mr. Kim, who concluded by saying these are the kind of community events he loves to do in person, as then he can go to the beach with his sons, 2 and 4. "I hope you're doing OK," he said, in these difficult months. He said he is "rolling up" his sleeves and trying to help, as he cares less about the knife-fighting and partisanship in Washington than in getting things done. He said he would stay in touch and continue to try to help. Anthony told Mr. Kim that if there are any additional questions, he would send them along. Mr. Kim left the Zoom meeting.

**Surf Club:** Toni Tomarazzo

Toni read a statement, saying the OBVTA had "very exciting news." According to the mediator, hired by the OBVTA to bring the town, state and the Barcelonas, owners of the Surf Club property, together to make a deal for the purchase of the property, all the stakeholders had "advanced (the talks), concessions had been made on all points and significant progress had been made" towards a deal. She said they "are engaged in what appear to be an undertaking with a hopeful outcome in a not too long period." She said she had to be vague because nothing is signed yet, and she has no details. She added that it remains a very complex situation and nothing is assured until the documents are sealed. She urged members to refrain from asking questions today. She said when we have more information to share, we will immediately update our membership. But she said OBVTA's involvement "seems to have borne a benefit that will greatly help our community."

**Annual Election of Board Members:** Anthony Colucci, Mary Ann Wallis

Anthony announced the annual election of board members and explained that, because the meeting is being conducted on Zoom, as the result of COVID-19 and social distancing, the methods of voting had to change. However, he said the intent of the vote this year was to follow as closely as possible to methods used for in-person voting in previous elections. Votes would be cast using Zoom's voting system. One difference, he said, was that the results would not be known or posted immediately, as we had to wait until the Zoom session ended to get the official report of the vote.

Five seats were up for election. There were no opponents for two officer positions, held by Paul Jeffrey (VP) and Mary Ann Giordano Wallis (secretary). With no challengers, Mary Ann, as secretary and according to OBVTA by-laws, cast votes for Paul and herself to continue in those positions for an additional term.

Five people were seeking three at-large board seats:  
John Clarke (challenger)

Cathy Crisafulli (incumbent)  
Gail D'Amico (challenger)  
Joan Strathern (incumbent)  
Toni Tomarazzo (incumbent)

74 people were on the call at the time of the vote. Each voter was asked to select three from the five-candidate Zoom ballot. After a last-call for votes, the voting period was declared closed.

Following the meeting, the Zoom vote was tallied by Paul Jeffrey, Debbie Barton and Mary Ann Giordano Wallis. Mary Ann affirmed the vote as follows:

Out of a total of 56 votes cast (some for only one or two candidates, none for more than three candidates):

Cathy Crisafulli, 48 votes  
Toni Tomarazzo, 47 votes  
Joan Strathern, 46 votes  
John Clarke, 12 votes  
Gail D'Amico, 10 votes

Cathy Crisafulli, Toni Tomarazzo and Joan Strathern were re-elected to their at-large board seats. The results were shared with the members via email and on the OBVTA website.  
CHECKING – THIS RIGHT?

**Guests:**

**Council Speaker Maria Maruca:**

Ms. Maruca thanked Andy Kim and his assistant, Ben, for coming and for trying to get FEMA to forgive its Sandy loan to Toms River. She noted that Toms River residents received a 15% discount on their flood insurance because the township keeps a flood management coordinator, Bob Chankalian, on staff.

She announced that, starting today, the beaches would be open and staffed every day.

She said the weekly food distribution to address food insecurity during the Covid crisis, which had taken place on Fridays in the Third Avenue municipal parking lot, was slowing down now that things were opening up. She said, going forward, the food will be delivered to those who request it. She said if the need for the parking lot delivery picks up, the service will resume.

Preparing for outdoor dining, per the governor's executive order, had gone very well, she said. The town had worked very hard to turn around the required permits in one or two days, and had waived fees to help the restaurants return to business. She said closing Washington Street

to facilitate outside dining had gone very well, and she was heartened to see meals provided for first responders.

On June 23, the Town Council will be back to meeting publicly. Attendance is capped at 50, which is quite low considering the number of council members and necessary staff that must be in the council chamber for the meeting. There will be no honoring resolutions or presentations, she said, just basic business conducted. In answer to a later question, she said the meeting will continue to be streamed live on the Toms River website, but there will be no opportunity to ask questions that way. Asked if masks would be required, she said she believed they would.

6<sup>th</sup> Terrace street elevation: Ms. Maruca reported that 90% of residents have responded to the letter sent in preparation for the work and staff was working on the project.

The New Jersey state primary is scheduled for July 7, and voting by mail is available.

#### **Mayor Mo Hill:**

Mayor Hill said Town Business Administrator Don Guardian had had a medical episode at the last township council meeting. His health is improving but he will be on medical leave for an extended period. Lou Amoroso, who was in attendance, will serve as administrator during his absence.

He said there would be Fourth of July fireworks at Shelter Cove, provided by a private business owner. He said they should be visible from Ortley.

The council had drafted two resolutions urging the state to restore the homestead rebate and the senior tax freeze, he said. The council also had passed a resolution opposing the state's decision to not widen Route 9. "Ocean County seems to be the stepchild of Trenton," he said.

He reported on Covid cases and said so far, as the cases diminish, there had not been a strain on local resources. He said the numbers had dropped so significantly that we were "getting to the time when we need to start opening up." He said he was disappointed the governor had not allowed high school graduation.

Asked by Anthony if it would be possible to put signage near the new benches at the dune cutouts suggesting that bench seating be prioritized for the elderly and handicapped, Mayor Hill said to send an email and the town would look into it.

Question via chat: Had the town made any progress in lowering flood insurance elevation levels now that the dunes were completed? Ms. Maruca said that has not happened yet and FEMA, who had been legally challenged by NYS, was still using those maps. Ms. Maruca said the town is monitoring the situation and would ultimately have to approve any maps or other changes, but Mayor Hill said it is not likely that will happen for two years.

Question via chat: Can something be done with the big white trailer in the municipal parking lot, which has been there for years and is an eyesore? Lou Amoroso said he would look into it.

Question: The walkway from the beach to the Surf Club is not marked and people use it to leave the beach, only to wind up in the dunes and have to climb over them (and the boardwalk fence) to exit. Ms. Maruca said "we can take care of that."

Question about trash around the Acme and on the dunes between the boardwalk and municipal lot: Mr. Amoroso said he would get a street sweeper for the streets.

Question about kayak ramp and who empties the trash there. Ms. Maruca said she would ask Bob Chankalian.

**Sergeant Bachonski:**

Sgt. Bachonski made note of the demonstrations throughout the country and said it is a tough time for law enforcement. He said the Black Lives Matter demonstration in Toms River was peaceful.

He said there were six class 1 officers this year because of problems at the police academy related to Covid. He said two are returning officers, four are new. He said three officers are assigned at one end of the week and three at the other end, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are walking, on bikes and on ATVs. He said the outpouring of support for them has been unprecedented.

He said the town is down to only two Class 2 officers and they are assigned to town hall.

Question about whether there are officers assigned to the beach after 5 p.m. Yes.

Had anyone considered asking retired police officers, correction officers, etc., to provide additional help? Class 2 includes retired officer, Sgt. Bachonski said. He said he welcomes them and he urged them to apply. He said he was not sure whether corrections officers had the training required. He said he would look into whether the sheriff's department was taking advantage of that resource.

Question about how to close off a street for a block party. He said a permit would be needed via the clerk's office. Ms. Maruca said there was legislation discouraging closing streets and Mr. Amoroso said public safety and emergency vehicle access must be maintained.

Question about what to do about illegal fireworks. Sgt. Bachonski said to call the police if a safety issue arises, but noted that some fireworks are now legal and there are a tremendous number of calls every Fourth.

**Streetscape Project: Joan Strathern**

Joan said the OBVTA has been in communication with Dave Roberts, the town planner, who is working with NV5, a design group, to come up with a plan for improvements to 35 North via a \$1 million state grant. She said the project has moved to the next stage and NV5 was designing the plan. She said the OBVTA has been promised that we will have the opportunity to review the plans and meet with NV5. An OBVTA subcommittee of Joan, Paul, Cathy and Mary Ann had been formed to engage with the town and NV5 and offer feedback.

**EventBank: Paul Jeffrey**

Paul said the OBVTA has adopted EventBank software to manage membership. He said it is a fully automated system that tracks memberships, collects dues, allows for event management, etc. He said by opening an account, members can keep track of their own membership.

Paul urged members to follow through with the email from EventBank and set up an account. No information will be shared. A photograph is not required. If you have problems, contact us or EventBank directly.

He said having this software will take a tremendous load off the association, once it is set up. The transition will be completed in a few weeks.

**Facebook: Paul Jeffrey**

Paul said he has been posting information about businesses reopening on the OBVTA Facebook page. He noted the arrival of a new coffee shop, Pop's.

**Zoning: Toni Tomarazzo**

Toni said the board has been monitoring zoning applications. She urged members to share their thoughts with any members except Anthony, who now serves on the Zoning Board.

A motion was made to close the meeting (Joan, Cathy). The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

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