

ORTLEY BEACH VOTERS AND TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

General membership meeting

Saturday, July 16, 2022

Meeting minutes

1. Call to Order – A call to order was requested by OBVTA President Anthony Colucci.
 - A. Moment of Reflection – A moment of reflection was conducted by board of director Mike Wymbs for those affected by gun violence and was observed by the board of directors and the general membership.
 - B. RollCall - Roll call was conducted by Secretary John Clarke and the following Board of Directors were present; Anthony Colucci, Paul Jeffrey, Debbie Barton, John Clarke, Cathy Crisafulli, Joan Strathern, Joe Cantalupo, and Mike Wymbs. Tony Tomarazzo was excused from the meeting and was not present.
 - C. Establishment of Quorum - Under the bylaws of the Ortley Beach Voters and Taxpayers Association, a quorum of 40 members present is needed for voting purposes. Secretary John Clarke confirmed that in excess of 40 members were present and that a quorum was established. Approximately 150 people were in attendance.

2. Guest Police Chief Little – Toms River Police Chief Little address the general membership at length. Discussion was had with regard to the EMS services being provided to the island. Chief Little felt that the coverage that was being provided was sufficient and was arriving in a timely fashion and in case of an emergency that Silverton would be providing back up assistance. Chief Little did admit that like many areas, staffing is an issue. Chief little felt that both volunteers and paid employees were still hard to get and that additional staffing would aid in providing better coverage and services.

Chief little spoke at length concerning the issues with minors and that the passage of the new law involving marijuana has drastically effected how the police are able to engage with minors. The police at the current time have their hands tied in that if they are addressing minors, and do so in violation of this new law, they, themselves, could be subject to a third degree crime. This is an issue that has been plaguing not only ortley but the state for a substantial period of time. Chief Little has indicated that the chiefs of police in the state of NJ and the Toms River Police Department have voiced their concerns to the New Jersey Attorney General as well as our applicable legislators and that they are hopeful that there will be some modification to the law in the future. The membership was then reminded in several instances that the only real way that this law is going to be changed is that if everyone themselves contacts the NJ Attorney General's office and their legislator asking for changes to be made. The Ortley Beach Voters and Taxpayers Association ourselves will be sending a letter to the appropriate representatives asking for change and have asked the general membership to write into the ONVTA granting permission for their names to be used on a petition so that that may accompany the letter.

Residents had questions and concerns concerning rental properties overflowing with minors with no adults being present in the home. There seems to be a situation evolving whereby families are renting multiple properties and having the minors stay at 1 property while the adults stay at another. This issue was addressed at length through multiple questions and ultimately that if the miners are being unruly, disturbing the peace, or are acting otherwise illegally, then the police should be called. Otherwise, Chief Little felt that Housing department should be contacted. Once again however Chief Little did stress that with the new laws effecting how police deal with minors, in many instances their hands are tied.

One issue that was raised was that even if police are unable to do anything about questioning a minor concerning their use of marijuana, they could, in fact, be cited under the no smoking ordinance in Toms River. Chief Little admitted that this could be done. Other issues that were suggested were having curfews for the beach and/or closing the beach at night. These ideas were discussed on both sides and tabled for the time being.

Guest Mayor Mo Hill – Mayor Hill addressed the general membership and did also address the problems with the juvenile law. In terms of an update, Mayor Hill did indicate that there was potentially some new legislation being proposed that might amend the problems with this juvenile law and help alleviate the problems the police may have in dealing with minors.

Mayor Hill also addressed the beach replenishment program. Mayor Hill indicated that the bids for the beach replenishment would go out through the Army Core of Engineers hopefully in the beginning of October and that the actual replenishment would, hopefully, be taking place in the winter and/or spring.

Mayor Hill also was questioned and addressed why Toms River has not even attempted to determine the costs of hand rails at the beach access points that could assist the disabled or elderly in accessing and leaving the beach. Mayor Hill indicated that this will not be looked into until after the beach has been widened in the winter or spring by the Army Core of Engineers.

Guest Justin Lamb – Our Toms River council representative, Justin Lamb, also addressed the general membership. While a variety of issues were discussed, Justin's primary focus was additional legislation in the form of town ordinances that would, in his opinion, reduce some of the effects of the problems that we were having with minors. Justin Lamb indicated that in Toms River there are additional ordinances that limit the public's access to the beach at night and that this might help alleviate some of the public gatherings involving minors on the beach at night. Councilman Lamb also discussed various ordinances that are in effect in Lavalette that could help address with the housing problems that are addressed above.

3. Following the guests speaking, the vast majority of the general membership left the meeting and president Anthony Colucci brought the Meeting to a close.