

**Oakdale Civic Association
General Monthly Meeting
December 14, 2009**

2009 Officers

President:	Ray Carta	560-4650 - present
Vice President:	Stan Feldman	523-8835 - not present
Treasurer:	Pat Kassten	589-8222 - present
Recording Secretary	Carol Schwasnick	589-7455 - present
Corresponding Secretary	Marilyn Triolo	589-5981 - not present

Directors

Cathy Cohen - not present

Minutes Recorded by Carol Schwasnick

www.OakdaleCivicAssociation.org

President Ray Carta called the meeting to order at 7:35pm, and initiated the pledge of allegiance.

President Carta allowed a few minutes for review of the minutes from the November meeting. He asked for a motion to accept the minutes as presented. A motion was made and seconded.

Senator Brian Foley is scheduled to speak this evening, but is apparently unable to attend.

Treasurer's report: Pat Kassten

This month we had a disbursement to the Oakdale Improvement Society of \$250 for holiday decorations. Income from dues was \$320, and we have 24 paid members to date. A membership mailing did go out in the last few weeks, and the responses have been good so far.

President's Report: Ray Carta

President Carta recapped a question that was brought up at the last meeting about trees on Town property encroaching on the North side of Stuyvesant Rd. President Carta had an update from Councilman Flotteron, who has stated that the work order has already been given to the contractor. Mr. Flotteron's office noted that the removal should be complete within a month and a half.

President Carta noted that he will give the OCA Scholarship form from the district over to Barbara Schermerhorn. Ray asked if everyone was still OK with the \$500 amount, and asked if anyone in the membership thinks we should raise it. President Carta asked for a show of hands to indicate interest in further discussion of this matter, and stated that he will discuss with the executive board and the membership should think about it - and we can discuss further any changes and vote for any recommendations at the next meeting.

Denise Conte called recently about the stables that are located back by the pool on the St. John's property. The pool had been condemned, and recently someone ripped off the entire roof that was made out of copper. Ms. Conte has been working with the town historian - Robert Finnegan - to see about making the structure into a national landmark. It has significant historic and artistic value. Ms. Conte suggested we look into this with St. Johns, this action is very upsetting.

At our last meeting the question arose as to whether Oakdale has a regular police patrol. In light of the home invasion last night in Bohemia, President Carta reached out to 5th Precinct Commanding Officer Aristides Mojica. Officer Mojica responded in a very detailed email, which President Carta read to the membership, in which Mr. Mojica suggested that we request an officer

to visit and elaborate on patrol coverage of Oakdale. In a nutshell, the email stated that the Oakdale area continues to receive patrol sector car coverage, and a source of confusion is that the police department expands and contracts the number of units deployed with expected workload, to maintain this with consistency. During bad weather, or crime trend, etc., additional resources are deployed as required.

A member commented that he believes we do not have a night car – from 11pm to 7am, there is no patrol of our area. This is more reason to have an officer come in to our meeting next month and explain. Ideally the patrol of our neighborhood should be in place as a preventative.

A cell phone tower is being proposed at Byron Lake Park. Tomorrow from 9-11 at Byron Lake they are going to raise a crane to test height and placement. A member emailed a photo of a small sign present at the entrance to the park. The park is Town of Islip property. Member Lisa Vaccaro asked how could the Town even suggest this in a children's park and asked why can't they double up with the tower that is already behind the storage facility on Montauk Hwy? One member recalled that we fought the tower behind the storage unit years ago, because it is right in the middle of a residential area, not on the fringe. President Carta encouraged anyone who can get down there to go and get more information and please report back. Another member spoke to the Town this morning, and it is in the bid process.

President Carta stated that the next two topics have to do with the School District. First, he discussed the Community Budget Development Committee (formerly the BAC). This organization will have a different format than in past years. The old committee used to meet on a separate night but now they will actually meet during the general Board of Education meeting. Secretary Carol Schwasnick will serve as the representative this year, but a volunteer for a secondary representative was requested. One member stated that she knows someone who may be interested – and will contact us with the name. President Carta continued that the State is now making cuts – it will be a tough year. We also have a survey from the district to take a temperature of the community and our wishes. All community organizations are being asked to distribute this to our memberships and to collect them at our January meeting. The requirement is to fill them out here and hand them in here at the January meeting. President Carta will be asking Dr. Groveman come to that meeting to answer any questions from the membership. Once we complete the surveys, we will return them to the district so that a budget can be put together by the end of January. President Carta then distributed copies of the survey. This is a good opportunity to get input back to the district. On the district website there is a link to the survey and supporting information, for the public's access and review.

A member asked if it is true that keeping things the same as they are now will equate to a 7% increase – because we have heard that this is so. Member Bob Mirro stated that he has heard that 60% of budget goes to salaries. This year 6% is to go to TRS to make the teacher's retirement whole, and because of the troubled market they need to "make up" funding for this. President Carta stated that when Dr. Groveman comes to talk to us can he can hopefully answer these questions and educate us as to what is going on. Dr. Groveman cannot answer specific questions on contracts, anything else is fair game.

A member asked about the home invasion that happened on Sycamore Ave. in Bohemia last night. President Carta noted that this was a very unfortunate incident, and that the homeowner unfortunately was killed. Hopefully an explanation will come to light as the investigation unfolds.

Open Forum

Member Beverly Ruggiero offered the following on the Oakdale Tree Lighting: On the delightful side, on behalf of the Oakdale Chamber of Commerce -thanks to President Carta for being our Santa Claus this year for the Oakdale tree lighting at the train station. Mr. Carta made a charming, classic St. Nicholas and his demeanor was really great. Due to the rain, the event did not go exactly as planned. The 6th grade band and Idle Hour chorus were scheduled to appear; both had to back out due to the heavy rain. A rain date was not possible, there is so much

involved in setting up a rain date and the demand for the portable stage from the Town is very dense so it is difficult to schedule. There is also generally a lot going on this time of year- but the event was a great thing anyway. It was fun and cute, almost everyone that attended was actually on the stage, enjoying their hot chocolate.

President Carta noted that we did receive an email from Linda Hart of the Oakdale Improvement Society thanking us for the donation for the decorations. Another member made the St. John's Landmark lighting. Lights were put up on the church. The lighting was very cold but lovely. It's been a thrill driving east to see the church – it glitters through the woods. Suffolk County Legislator Bill Lindsay lit the tree on the countdown. David Kennedy from Kennedy electric put all the lights on the tree. He also put the lights on the Oakdale Train Station tree. Many thanks to Mr. Kennedy.

Member Rita Kushner asked why we can't get the catch basins (sumps) on Montauk Hwy. cleaned out? President Carta suggested that since this is a County Rd., a call to the County would be logical. The County never fixed the bus stop in front of Best Yet, nor have we seen a follow up to the County's plan to continue improvements along the North side of Montauk Hwy. Jim Anthony at Bill Lindsay's Office is the contact. Secretary Schwasnick volunteered to give him a call.

A member asked about the new sidewalks on Oakdale Bohemia Rd., because the sidewalk on the west side still floods out when it rains. Secretary Schwasnick noted that the response we received from the Town when asked was that it was the contractor's responsibility to simply install sidewalks, and there are larger issues with grading of the road that were not within their scope. The question then was how the Town pays contractors such as that one. Member Bob Irwin stated that Town Hall holds a bond on the contractor. Any complaints should be forwarded to the DPW Supervisor.

The membership asked if we are going to have a replacement for John Eder in regards to putting together the monthly Town Report, which was very valuable in getting us current information about properties and issues in Oakdale. President Carta stated that Carol Schwasnick has volunteered to take this on. Member Nancy Flynn asked if it might be possible for the Oakdale Chamber to share a resource for this purpose with the Civic. President Carta stated he will give Chamber President Ron Beattie a call to talk about the interest level in sharing a rep.

Member Lisa Vaccaro asked who decided it was OK to bring a crane in to Byron Lake Park to even test this as a possible location. There is so much commercial land on Montauk Hwy, and on Sunrise Hwy. to consider, rather than in the middle of a residential area. Plus they put up a sign that nobody can see. President Carta suggested that one tactic is to make lots of calls to the Planning Board. President Carta asked for a show of hands on concerns over this proposed cell tower location. A majority of hands were raised. We will let them know there is concern within the Civic and we do not want to allow it. Bob Mirro: is there any other land anywhere – other sites that would be acceptable. Town is interested in it because they get revenue from it. Name of company proposing to install: Suffolk Tower.

President Carta called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm. A motion was made and seconded. Next month we will try to have Groveman attend to discuss the budget process and the survey.

Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of our membership. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 11 at 7:30pm.