

**Oakdale Civic Association
General Monthly Meeting
September 12, 2011**

Officers

President:	Carol Schwasnick	Present
Vice President:	Stan Feldman	Present
Treasurer:	Pat Kassten	Present
Corresponding Secretary:	Brian Bast	Present
Recording Secretary:	needed	
Directors:	Cathy Cohen	Present
	Ray Carta	Not Present

Minutes Recorded by Bob Mirro

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Meeting called to order:

President Carol Schwasnick called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Schwasnick asked the membership to review the minutes from the March minutes. President Schwasnick asked the membership if they had any corrections to offer. Seeing none, a motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. President Schwasnick laid out the format and agenda for the meeting. A motion was made to wave the rules for the order of the agenda to accommodate several speakers.

Treasurer's report: Pat Kassten

Financial highlights this month include income from dues of \$60, and total disbursements of \$1365. Paid membership to date for 2011 is 197 and for 2012 we have 13.

Denise Conte St. John's Episcopal Church:

Ms. Conte reported that recently St. John's Episcopal Church has been picked a part by vandals, and that there has been other vandalism in the past. Ms. Conte also explained that the Church and grounds were greatly affected by the hurricane, and explained that they are a congregation of eight people and they are struggling financially. Ms. Conte reminded the membership and emphasized that the Church is considered historic and would be a great loss to the congregation as well as the hamlet of Oakdale. Ms. Conte explained that if the town takes over the property the future of the church would be unknown and in jeopardy and could possible be sold off. Overall, Ms. Conte is reaching out for help to keep the church going and asked for help and suggestions. A motion to was made to donate \$100 to St. John's Episcopal Church to offset some of their costs of repair. President Schwasnick also suggested that a list of necessities be put together so that it may be distributed to the community to request donation of items.

Suffolk County Police Department, Fifth Precinct: Lt. Hardy; Sgt. Milton; Officer Schneider:

SCPD addressed Ms. Conte's concern regarding vandalism at St. John's Episcopal Church and Sgt Milton mentioned that this was the first he personally is hearing about this type of vandalism. The Sgt took notes and said the department would follow up. He then asked the membership if there were any issues that he could help with. It was discussed that as an alternate to calling 911, elderly residents that have a handicap can call 852-COPS and ask for a lift assist if needed.

President Schwasnick noted that one reason that Mr. Lindsay had requested the precinct representation on the community's behalf was due to the post-Hurricane Irene blackout and some reported burglaries that occurred in that time frame. The officers made note of the concerns, and stated that house burglaries, in general, are on the downward trend - however vehicular larcenies are slightly up in Oakdale. SCPD mentioned that this could possibly be attributed to more and more homeowners having home alarms installed and securing windows and doors and the thieves are trying the cars instead.

Sgt Milton mentioned that there is a school resource officer and COPE could help out. A resident pointed out that some kind of improvement in communication and dispatch could be helpful.

It was mentioned that the precinct does have a community watch program where residents are advised on how to initiate and maintain the program in their neighborhood. This may be something that residents wish to consider in preparation for weather and other events that may jeopardize the security of our neighborhoods.

- A question was posed with regard to having a community liaison from SCPD interface with the precinct on behalf of the Oakdale hamlet. The officers responded that the precinct does try to keep an open line of communication and mentioned that the 5th precinct community meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of every month at the precinct headquarters.
- A question was asked about marine coverage on the South shore and it was mentioned that there is more coverage in the summer than in the winter.

New York State Assemblyman Al Graf:

Mr. Graf introduced himself and discussed insurance as it pertains to Hurricane Irene. He noted that residents who sustained property damage should check the FEMA website for information on Assistance programs that they may qualify for.

Mr. Graf also discussed the fact that many Oakdale residents called LIPA and received varying degrees of information pertaining to outage status. Some of the more persistent callers made some inroads with higher levels of LIPA and reported that there seemed to be a status communication disconnect between LIPA officials and the help desk. Mr. Graf explained that he went down to LIPA to attend their press conference pertaining to restoring electrical outages. Mr. Graf mentioned to LIPA officials that Oakdale had approximately 3500 meters and over 3100 were without power. He also mentioned that there was no significant improvement in that difference two and three days into the outage. Mr. Graf mentioned that LIPA officials assigned a liaison to concentrate on improving the response to Oakdale. Within a day or so after that, power started coming on to more and more parts of Oakdale. However, some members pointed out that it seemed as though LIPA would come to the area and fix one problem, leave for a day or so and come back. The question arose of why LIPA did not stay the course and work the entire area until it was significantly restored. Once Oakdale was on LIPA's radar, Mr. Graf expanded the liaison to other local communities. Mr. Graf mentioned some confusion that arose with regard to evacuation maps. He mentioned the difficulty that residents had with viewing and zooming and making sense of the evacuation process. Mr. Graf mentioned that during, as well as since the storm, he has been working on a site that condensed pertinent information. You can find them on Facebook at: Assemblyman Al Graf Notification. Mr. Graf is working on addressing issues with LIPA in other ways including addressing the "NYPA-LIPA" act which currently prohibits LIPA from purchasing cheaper hydro power supplied by NYPA.

- A question was raised with regard to simplifying the computer version of the evacuation process and maps.
- A member mentioned that a hurricane preparedness notice was sent through regular mail. It was noted however that this mailer did not address specific evacuation zones.

Mr. Graf mentioned that the town and the county are actively working to improve the local communications during future similar situations.

Mr. Graf is also working on a round table discussion for colleges to match programs they offer to the community they reside in, and on a grant writing clinic called "learn to work" which would focus on internships for young people.

Town Councilman Steve Flotteron

Mr. Flotteron praised the 9/11 Memorial Service that took place at the Oakdale Train Station. He also discussed the process and status of the grant writing and road fixing that has gone on in and around Oakdale. Mr. Flotteron urged all residents to stay plugged in and involved. He mentioned the importance of staying on the problem and keeping the Town informed on the conditions that need attention. In response to the membership's concern about flood maps he noted that he would look into having a representative from the Town's dept of emergency management attend the next meeting to address.

- Mr. Flotteron introduced John Cochrane who is running for Islip Town Council and,
- Anthony Musumeci candidate for County Legislator 8th Legislative District

Bill Lindsay, Suffolk County Legislature 8th District

Bill Lindsay began by discussing the 10th anniversary of 9/11 and various memorials. He mentioned the movie called *American Requiem* which was developed right here on Long Island. The movie depicts real life folks discussing their experiences as opposed to actors. The film had debuted at Stony Brook University over the summer and will be shown in Sayville on Wed Sept 14th at 7 pm on the common ground.

Mr. Lindsay discussed some of the situations and illnesses that have resulted from 9/11 and that the Zadroga Bill – which was passed over the summer by the Congress – was intended to help these individuals with just compensation for their needs and limitations, but was interrupted by a filibuster vote in September. Mr. Lindsay distributed a petition that is aimed at getting this bill back on track so that deserving victims and first responders of the crisis can receive care and compensation.

Mr. Lindsay discussed the status of the improvement project that is slated for Montauk Hwy. He noted work should be starting in October. Mr. Lindsay also discussed the progress and status of the dredging of local Oakdale canals.

- Mr. Lindsay introduced Renee Ortiz who is running for Islip Town Council
- Alexis Weik who is running for Town Receiver of Taxes was also introduced
- Olga Murray introduced herself and is running for Islip Town Clerk

Monica Musetti Carlin: President, Oakdale Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Musetti Carlin introduced herself and mentioned that she is employed by the Suffolk County News and is an active member of the Oakdale Chamber for over ten years as well as being a member of the board for the past few. Ms. Carlin mentioned that there would be a Networking Business Card Exchange Expo at the View restaurant on the September 20th at 7 pm. Refreshments will be served with a cash bar, and a discussion will take place with regard to what is going on in the community and chamber going forward. All are welcome and community residents can become resident members of the chamber for \$25. Ms. Musetti discussed plans for the fireworks and boat parade, Easter Egg Hunt, Firecracker 5k, Taste of Oakdale, and other events. Ms. Carlin mentioned that in December the Chamber hosts the Tree Lighting at the Oakdale Train Station complete with hot chocolate, candy canes and Santa. The latest information pertaining to chamber events can be found at their new website located at Oakdalebiz.org. Ms. Carlin stated that her mission is to improve the communication and marketing of businesses in Oakdale and is committed to having community people and local business working together. Ms. Carlin mentioned the development of a 'Shop Oakdale Card' that will help the Chamber as well as local residents while encouraging people to shop locally. It can be purchased for \$10 at several local merchants and is good for various local discounts over the next 18 months. Ms. Carlin mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce meetings are held at Dowling College and the Chamber Office is at the Oakdale Train Station. Ms. Carlin also mentioned she is an author of several cookbooks called the "Country Comfort" series and is currently accepting casserole recipes for inclusion in her latest volume which is nearly in its final draft. You can email your recipes to Monica at mmmjmc53@aol.com

Richard Panetta, Chairman of the Board, CM Performing Arts Center

Mr. Panetta represents CM as their Chairman. He is a community member and began by discussing the history of the theater and its presence in Oakdale. Mr. Panetta mentioned that there are many volunteers that help with various aspects of the theater such as lighting, set design, sound, ushering as well as acting and teaching.

Mr. Panetta mentioned several upcoming programs such as:

Shout - The musical magazine that brings back the smashing sounds that made England swing in the 60's.

Phantom – About the love the phantom holds for his beautiful protégée, Christine.

Annie - is about a spunky Depression-era orphan determined to find her parents, who abandoned her years ago on the doorstep of a New York City Orphanage

Smoky Joes Café - Smokey Joe's Café is a musical trip through the 50's and 60's.

Mr. Panetta discussed the educational programs that CM has to help children become involved in arts and the theater. He also mentioned that CM helps other non-for-profit groups as a fundraiser for their particular group. Mr. Panetta also explained the new association developed with the prior Airport Playhouse, which closed several months ago. He also handed out coupons for community members to encourage them to visit the theater, which in turn helps support and benefits the entire Lighthouse Commons shopping center in Oakdale. Mr. Panetta mentioned that there are more and more local restaurants participating with dinner-theater packages and that CM continues to try to bring more of the shows and entertainment that Oakdalers want and have come to love.

Mr. Panetta encouraged those who are interested in theater to go to CM's website at:

www.cmpac.com

Cathy Cohen: Town Report

There is an application for the planning board for a community member asking to legalize a structure in the Artist's Colony. The senior housing facility called Providence on the Sunrise Hwy North Service Road is coming to the planning board to try to convert existing units to non-age restricted rentals from senior owner occupied units. Oakdale Golf came before the planning board asking them to rezone the land for a senior community. An update was given with regard to the status of the St. John's property. It seems as if St. John's is trying to make the education business work, and is still working through the town on their PLP district first. Potential buyers have remained quiet.

The status of the gas station was discussed, and it was noted that the curb cut along Oakdale Bohemia Road had to be moved south – closer to the intersection of Montuak Hwy. There will be a formal intersection with traffic light, right on red, a cut in for a bus, there will also be sidewalks and cross walks that are properly designed for safety – which are part of the County's improvement plan for Montauk Hwy that Bill Lindsay mentioned. There was much discussion on best routes and traffic flow in and around that area.

The town put out a request for proposals (RFP) for the Peters property. One person came to the initial bid meeting and professed interest but has not submitted a proposal.

The new building next to the smoke and music stores does not confirm to the Oakdale Vision Plan because it was developed and approved prior. It had been dormant for a period of time before proceeding so people didn't remember what had been approved. The new structure will be an office building.

Oakdale Yacht's recent proposal for a dock expansion has remained quiet.

President's Report: Carol Schwasnick

President Schwasnick mentioned that there will be two Meet the Candidates Nights in Connetquot, one on Oct. 5th at the Bohemia Middle School at 7:30pm and one on Oct 17th at Ronkonkoma Middle School at 7pm. Ms. Schwasnick mentioned that she gave her contact information to representatives of the LIRR the purpose of asking about maintenance and improvements to the Oakdale Train Station building. Ms. Schwasnick explained that the County opened a dog walk park on Cherry Ave, just south of the Bayman's soccer fields.

Open floor

No additional issues were raised.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:15 pm, motion seconded, meeting adjourned. Our next meeting will take place on Monday October 10, 2011 at 7:30 pm.