



**Spring COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES**  
**Ocean View Church of Christ**  
**May 4, 2024**

President Dave Wiecking called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

**Board Members Present:** Dave Wiecking, Margie Cyr, Bob Wood, Kate Mounteer, Don Deraska, Holly Fluty Dempsey, Kerry Hall, and George Rayburn. Not present: Paul Bradley.

**Introductions:** President Wiecking asked Board Members to introduce themselves, and also recognized past presidents of the Association still in the community, including Sharon Adams, Jeff Sella, Tris Kruger, Paul Spataro, Joe Woolman, and Dick Creswell (not all of whom were present.) He also thanked a number of active community members for their service, including Val Peizer, Marty Shecter, Chuck Taylor, Steve Larsen and Mark McCulloh. Dave introduced Donna Hugues, who was representing our property manager, Solutions Property Management.

New community members were asked to stand and introduce themselves. Dave noted with sorrow the loss of members who have passed away over the past year.

**Meeting Minutes:** Jeremy Peizer moved, David Liddle seconded approval of the September 2, 2023 Community Meeting minutes. All approved.

**Opening Remarks:** Dave Wiecking spoke briefly about the budget process and the members' role in approving the annual assessment. He explained that he would be interspersing his remarks with reports from the Committee Chairs.

**Treasurer's Report:** Bob Wood reported that we are in good shape financially.

- About \$700,000 is in beach reserves and \$550,000 in capital reserves. We are continuing a laddered approach to reinvesting CD's. We earned about \$45,000 on investments this year, which is taxable, but which adds to our total reserve funds.
- The new fiscal year started April 1, and we have about \$100,000 to cover expenses until assessment payments start coming in.
- Any 2023/24 funds not expended during that fiscal year may be either returned to members or put in reserves. The Board is likely to put these into Beach Reserves.
- David Liddle asked if we could move funds from capital reserves to beach reserves. Bob answered that could be done in case of a catastrophe.
- Jeremy Peizer noted that at one point, the use of reserve funds was very restricted, and that he hopes it is more open now. Bob directed members to the final page of the budget package, "Exhibit A: Approved uses of Reserves."
- Jeff Sella asked if the Reserve Study is posted on the website. Bob answered yes.

**External Drainage:** Dave Wiecking reported that Margie Cyr and Paul Bradley continue their conversations with Sussex County Conservation, DeDOT and DNREC to try to improve conditions external to our community along Kent Avenue. Margie Cyr reported that her relationship with DeDOT and DNREC started four years ago. DNREC agreed to do surveys about how to move water away from Middlesex. The first proposal was to move water through South Bethany's canals. South Bethany did not approve of this. New surveys were done, and produced a plan to put underground pipes through marshland and into Assawoman Bay. This has met with resistance from DNREC. A diagram of our drainage system is on the website. Jeff Sella asked if there has been any discussion of a pumping station, but there has been none.

**Internal Drainage:** Dave Wiecking reported that during March and April, 2024 we contracted with Harry Caswell, Inc., and all driveway culverts and drainage pipes in the community have been cleared. Dave noted some old stainless-steel culverts that are rusted and will need replacing. A good deal of the culvert blockage is caused by driveway stone and some rip-rap rocks that fall from the ends of driveways. However, after a large storm, most of the water does eventually drain away as fast as the external piping allows. Dave reported that a monitoring well set back from the swale at 3 Bridge indicates that the groundwater level does match the water level in the ditch within 24-36 hours of a big storm. However, there are other parts of the community where the soil is not as porous-for example 23 Bridge frequently has standing water in the yard, even though the adjacent ditch is about 12" deeper is quite dry. Our new landscaping contract includes raking vegetation from the ditch bottoms (swales) 4 times per year, in addition to cutting what they can from the actual ditches depending on water level.

Sharon Schoonover asked about grasses in ditches. This will be handled by the landscaping company. Mark Reilly asked if replacing old culverts will be covered by our capital reserves. This has not yet been discussed by the Board.

**Roads:** A Reserve Replacement Study done recently for us by the firm MillerDodson reported that some portions of our roads are showing signs of "alligating" (breaking into small pieces), and that seal-coating will not be sufficient for their maintenance.

**Landscaping:** Holly Fluty Dempsey thanked members for replying to the landscaping survey. Members' top four priorities were the entrance to the beach side at Bridge Road, the highway median signs, the areas along Beach Plum Rd, and the six pineside road entrances with signs. We have entered into a contract with a new firm, Chester River Landscaping, which will be making proposals for landscaping at these sites to include native plants. The area along Beach Plum was not part of the contract with our former landscaping firm, but hopefully will get better with this new firm and contract. Holly spoke about the pollinators' garden and the soil solarization project along Beach Plum, and presented new signs that will help define the space.

**Community Facilities:** Don Deraska announced the spring work day scheduled for May 11. He has been tracking community volunteer hours. This is the time of year when we will be working on the dune crossings, some of which have been tricky to traverse over the winter months. Fencing was replaced along Rt. 1 and the west end of Bridge Road during the off-season. New metal frames for our gates are being manufactured; the fabricator has the frame previously at

the west end of Bridge Rd as a template, which explains the temporary gate now there. Ron Thomas asked about the siding on the guard shack. The original plans called for NuCedar, but vinyl was installed because the NuCedar was not available at the time. The Board subsequently agreed that the vinyl was adequate and looks nice, and the final billing from the builder was adjusted accordingly.

**Beach Patrol:** Holden Wingate is returning to captain the patrol, and we are happy to be fully staffed for the upcoming season, with 16 full-time lifeguards and 5-7 part-timers. Hiring guards has been difficult up and down the coast. Mark McCulloh is Chair of the Beach Patrol Committee.

**Community Patrol:** Gary Graff, now in his 7<sup>th</sup> year with us, will be the supervisor of the Community Patrol. Darren Schlott will be assistant supervisor, and one of them will be on duty each day. In addition, there are 11 full- or part-time staff members. Community Patrol members will patrol the beach from 5- 7 after the lifeguards go off duty because it is frequently still busy. There are two security cameras installed at the guard shack, which are not live-monitored, but can be checked in case of reported incidents. CP members will have new uniform shirts with their names on them. Kerry Hall also reported that information leading to the identity of the notorious “Coors Light” guy will be rewarded with a case of beer.

**Sand:** Our beach is in good shape. Years ago, we were told we couldn’t get dredged sand from a borrow site without making our beach public. Later we were told we could only get dredged sand if we did the engineering study to locate a new offshore borrow site. Currently, DNREC is working on a formula to charge communities such as ours for trucked-in sand. Accordingly, we are looking into getting permits for this in case of a significant emergency. In the meantime, rows of fencing have trapped a phenomenal amount of sand and widened our dunes significantly. The placement of Mobi-mats is being carefully considered. One limitation is that the mats tend to bunch up when frequently driven over by the vehicles we need to patrol the beach.

**Commercial:** George Rayburn had little to report, except that we look forward to the opening of a frozen custard shop in our commercial district.

**Building:** Margie Cyr introduced the Building Committee members, and reminded us that they are always here to help with questions about our covenants and the building rules and regulations. Three committee members are full-time residents of Middlesex. The revised building rules, which become effective September 3, 2024, are posted on the website and in the directory. Interior repairs will not require a permit, but interior *renovations* do require a permit. Exterior repairs and renovations require a permit. The new rules also require screening of HVAC units, generators and propane tanks for new projects if they will be visible from the street. Drainage must comply with state and county regulations regarding runoff water. June 30 is the last date for construction.

In case of emergency, members are permitted to do the minimum repair work that will guarantee safety and prevent further damage, but should contact the Building Committee immediately, and must get a permit prior to any further repairs.

**Social:** Kate Munteer reported that special 65 Summers merchandise is being ordered and will be for sale (sweatshirts, mugs, and tote bags.) The season will open with a BBQ Meet and Greet picnic on May 25<sup>th</sup> on Addy Road. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Family Block Party is scheduled for July 1 on Beach Plum. A host of activities are in the works for Labor Day Weekend, when we will officially celebrate our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Happy Hours will continue monthly throughout the season. Members are encouraged to check the website regularly, and read the Community Updates that Margie sends by email every few weeks for more details.

**Budget / Assessment:** Bob Wood referred to the 2024-25 budget package that was mailed to every member, and that details every aspect of the Board-approved budget, from which the assessment is derived. The proposed annual assessment is \$3,200 or an increase of 4.1% from 2023-24.

**Voting:** Former presidents Jeff Sella and Sharon Adams were dismissed to count the ballots that were received by Solutions Property Management or handed in this day.

**Result:** The assessment was approved by a vote of 102 in favor, and 8 opposed.

**Nominating Committee:** Dave Wiecking reported that the Nominating Committee, chaired by Paul Bradley, will be seeking candidates for the Board over the summer.

**Adjournment:** David Liddle moved, Gloria Wheeler seconded that the meeting be adjourned. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Kate Munteer, Board Secretary