

# Orchard Beach Community Group

Annual Meeting June 10, 2017

1:00pm – 3:00pm

## Minutes

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and unanimously approved. Motion by Tom Mullins, Trustee. Seconded by Eric Campbell.

The 2016 minutes were then unanimously approved as submitted by a motion from Jim Loder, Secretary-Treasurer, and Eric Campbell seconding the motion.

### Treasurer's Report

Jim Loder reviewed the financial report with the members. (See attached). Erika Aust, Vice President, noted that she had also reviewed the financials for accuracy. Jim Loder also reviewed a proposed budget for the 2017-18 year. He noted that he is not recommending any increase to the baseline water bill. This will remain at \$400.00 per connection per year. Jim L. proposed on behalf of the board that Curtis Casey's water bill for 2017 be reduced to \$200 as a way to thank him for the ongoing onsite stewardship of the pump house and other system components and his support in reading meters on the system as we begin to set a benchmark for water use. The members then voted to accept the proposed budget for 2017-18. Billing for the water bills for next year will happen in September of this year.

### Old Business

#### Water Meters

Jim Farrell, President, then moved to "old business". Jim Loder provided an update on remaining water meter hook-ups. There are 5 properties that need to have a hook-up completed. Two of these are the responsibility of the community to complete (the Kane property, from when it was owned by Griffin, and the Cressey property) as the homeowners paid to have these meters installed in 2013. From the research we have, these two were missed at the time of the group install. Of the remaining three, two have a plan to get their meters in, and the final property is hoping to have theirs done when we can address the two that the community will install. The challenge with the latter is finding the original connection.

Discussion also revealed that there may be an illegal connection split off at the line feeding the Campeau property. This was only discovered when an attempt to install a meter found no water at the system connection. The board will look into this and then make a plan to address the situation (which may involve a neighboring property not on the system).

#### Capacity Analysis

Erika Aust provided an update on the work being done to move our system's operating permit from the state Department of Health out of "blue" status, which limits our ability to manage connections, and into green, which gives us more flexibility. We also hope to acquire additional water rights via the Department of Ecology so that we can avoid conflicts down the road regarding water availability for full-time use.

Jim Loder added to the discussion regarding the initial results of the pump test conducted June 7 as part of the work to expand our water right. The results underlined the need to replace the existing, aging, pump for Well #2, our primary well. The current pump is not powerful enough to provide the 120 gallon per minute flow needed to support our water-right application. However, the positive finding was that Well #2 is in very good shape and “theoretically” should be able to deliver the desired 120 GPM water draw, once a larger pump is purchased and installed.

Tom Mullins noted a “do better” for the board is to post a physical notice well ahead of any planned work to ensure that residents who are at their homes have time to plan for an outage. In this case, the outage associated with the June 7 pump test never actually occurred due to the use of the back-up well – but that fact only added to the confusion around the water outage communication that did occur.

The members then held a short discussion about water rights and reaffirmed that they want the board to continue to move forward on this issue to help bring it to resolution. While we discussed what “status quo” could look like – it was clear that we should not avoid this issue. Water access will only get more regulated and it’s in our interests to resolve this, both from a property value point of view and as a way to protect all of us from increased costs later.

The board will call on Northwest Water Systems next week to discuss options to keep expenses down while addressing the needs of the system.

### **Community Beach Access**

Jim Farrell provided a short update on the question of the community beach access. He is working with the Mason County parks office to determine what they are willing to do (or not do) to improve the safety of that access. Our present direction is to not do any improvements ourselves. The conversation will continue.

Jim Farrell asked if there was any additional discussion or questions needed around “Old Business”. As none was offered, he moved on to “New Business”.

### **New Business**

There was a discussion about how we might begin to look at water usage beginning in the 2018-19 water year. Erika provided information that most water utilities charge a base amount and then additional costs for usage above certain amounts.

We will begin the conversation this year to see what costs will look like if we use the following structure.

Base - 0 – 4,999 gals per month (covered in \$400.00 annual fee)

Tier One usage - 5,000 – 9,999 gallons in a month – charged at .005 per gallon above 5,000

Tier Two usage – 10,000 gallons or more in a month – charged at .01 per gallon above 5,000

We will use the next 12-month period as a way to track current usage, so that members will have a clear understanding of how much water they are using, to see if they would go above the base rate.

Jim Loder also asked for comment regarding those members who ignore their bill and do not pay (as opposed to those who are responsive and arrange to make payments). The members agreed that communication is key and if a member does not make arrangements to pay, we would send two certified letters prior to shutting off their water access. This has an impact, as once the water access is lost, there is a hook-up fee to reconnect, and they may not be able to get back on the system. Jim will incorporate this information into the next water bill.

We had a brief conversation about [www.nextdoor.org](http://www.nextdoor.org), which functions as a web-based neighborhood bulletin board. Jim L. will do a little research and send out some clarifying instructions for those who want to use nextdoor.org as a communication tool for our community.

Finally, we asked the members if we wanted to revisit a past practice of holding a community picnic or potluck this summer. There was interest. The board will take this under advisement and look at some possible times to hold a party.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02pm.