

Minutes of the
Orchard Beach Community Group
Annual Meeting, 2021
June 12, 2021

The annual meeting took place at the home of Jim Loder and Todd Green.

Members attending: Jim Farrell, Erika Aust, Jim Loder, Allen (Curtis) Casey, Patrick Brockhaus, Chuck Wardle, Jill Wardle, David Spaulding, Dan Benitez, DeeDee Benitez, Teresa Hancock, Roger Ewart, Wendy Frandle, Sandy Sipe, Ingrid Phelps, Eric Campbell

Election of Officers: Jim Farrell, the lone candidate for the office of president, was re-elected by acclamation to a 3-year term.

Finance Report: Jim Loder, Secretary/Treasurer, distributed the most recent annual financial report and detailed various expenses, transactions and obligations, including:

- The two largest OBCG annual expenses are to Northwest Water Systems for sampling, testing and reading meters, and to Mason PUD No. 3 for electric power to the wellhouse.
- OBCG is now on the list of utilities/organizations being alerted when someone calls 811 for locator service. There is a cost of \$1.25 for each alert, so OBCG has paid ahead.
- \$20,000 was moved from the OBCG checking account to savings, to obtain a better interest rate.
- The next billing goes out in September, for payment in October. It is expected to generate \$18,000.

Jim Loder reviewed the rate structure and the board's recent adoption of a tiered approach, which is intended to encourage conservation -- as community water systems are required to do by the state. The new tiers took effect June 4, 2021 and apply to monthly consumption even though meters are read every other month. Member costs associated with the tiered rates will be billed twice annually.

Because the board had already made the decision, as the bylaws allow, there was no need for a membership vote. But members informally indicated they agreed with the board's action, with the knowledge that the tiered rates can be revisited.

New Business:

- There were inquiries and comments from members about the tiered structure, water usage, the community water right, and private wells within the community.
- Jim Loder and Erika Aust reminded members about the OBCG website (obcg.org) and their ability to go online to see their latest meter reading. This will allow members to track their usage. It also allows them to see if their usage is higher than expected, indicating a possible leak.
- In response to a member question, it was stated the water available to OBCG members is of good quality and meets all state standards. A copy of the latest water analysis will be provided. There was a brief discussion about water filtration/purifying systems at the household and systemwide level.
- Members indicated interest in learning how to operate the generator that provides auxiliary power to the backup pump/well.
- There was discussion about forming a work party to paint the wellhouse.

Report on System

OBCG has 37 active connections. There are 68 properties in the service area. To accommodate the demand from potential future members, and ensure the continuation of safe and reliable water delivery to existing members, OBCG will eventually need a more robust distribution system. It is important to plan for that now.

The underground pipes are old and brittle and are the weakest part of the infrastructure. Also, water delivery would be improved with a new pump, added storage capacity and perhaps even a new well. The scope of these improvements could be in the range of \$500,000.

Members were reminded OBCG has a primary well/pump capable of providing 60 gal/minute and an older well with a generator-assisted backup pump in case of a power outage or when demand exceeds the primary pump's capacity. The backup well casing is out of compliance with state regulations but resolving that is not an emergency.

At the board's behest, Wendy Frandle is investigating the availability of outside revenue (federal/state loans or grants) to address anticipated infrastructure investments. This includes

exploring options for state sourcing -- a low interest loan, no-interest loan, or a grant. Funding may be available for the engineering and planning phases of improvements, in addition to materials and labor. She explained how applying for a grant might require a 25% match from OBCG, which is another reason to want a sizable reserve.

There was discussion about continuing to build the group's reserve, to address emergency needs without needing to assess members, and to position OBCG for loans and/or grants related to infrastructure.

One member voiced a concern that the \$500 annual fee may not be enough to do that and noted an additional \$10/month from each member would grow the reserve faster. No motion was made.

Other New Business (not water related):

- Dogs are not being controlled by their owners. One member reported seeing a leashed dog being attacked by unleashed dogs. Title 4.08.050 of the Mason County Code (excerpt here) is clear on the subject.

4.08.050 - Animals at large. It shall be unlawful for the owner or keeper of any animal to negligently allow such animal to enter or trespass onto private property of another without the express permission of the owner or caretaker of said property; or to allow said animal to run at large onto any public property or the public right-of-way within Mason County.

- Members expressed strong interest in having safe access (by foot) to the beach accessed through the Mason County-owned property at the south end of Orchard Beach Drive (designated as "Orchard Beach Public Park" on the 1954 plat of Madings Orchard Beach).

Erika Aust explained board members intend to meet with the Mason County Parks & Recreation Board, to discuss what might be done to make safety improvements – most likely using resources (labor and materials) donated by community members.

- The Orchard Beach Fourth of July observance will be back for 2021. Parade participants should assemble at the north end of Orchard Beach Drive at approximately 1 p.m. When the parade ends at the south end there will be a community potluck at the county-owned land.