



Town of Old Orchard Beach
Office of the Town Manager

1 Portland Ave, Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Phone: 207.937.5626

Web: www.oobmaine.com or

www.oobmaine.com/town-council

Town Council Workshop Minutes

June 30, 2026

I, Tim Fleury, Secretary to the Town Council of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, do hereby certify that the foregoing document consisting of 9 pages is a copy of the original minutes from the regular meeting of the Old Orchard Beach Town Council held on 6/30/2026.

Prepared By:

Tim Fleury

Approved By:

Old Orchard Beach Town Council

Approval Date:

8/4/2026

Respectfully
Submitted,

Tim Fleury
Town Council
Secretary



Town Council Workshop Agenda

June 30th, 2026 @ 5:00pm
Council Chambers - 1 Portland Avenue

www.oobmaine.com/town-council

**Members of the public wishing to view the meeting from home may tune into Local Access TV (Channel 3 or 1301 - check with your provider) or by clicking the Meeting Videos link on oobmaine.com.)*

There will be a Town Council Workshop to discuss public safety and weekly firework displays.

Chair: Shawn O'Neill

Chairman O'Neill opened the hearing at 5:00pm.

Police Chief Elise Chard started the meeting by reading a statement from the OOB Police Department.

Chairman O'Neill- in awe of how long chaos lasted Thursday night - fight involving a firearm. Concerned on risks regarding the groups coming into Town with weapons.

Guy Fontaine - Halfway - fireworks are heritage in OOB - not seasoned officers down in square, new officers starting out in the force. Mr. Fontaine was around during the riots in the 1980's. Doesn't want to see that happen

again. Concern on firearms with gangs and a potential active shooter situation. Concerned about PFAS toxins coming from fireworks after shows. Fireworks now contain plastic instead of paper as in the past. Alternatives are available, drone shows. Safety of the public is the foremost issue. Good with seeing fireworks on 4th of July and Memorial Day.

Councilor Rague – is there anything that the Council can provide the PD?
Police Chief Chard – the issue is the juvenile population that is coming down to OOB to cause chaos during firework displays. Councilor Rague – if fireworks are shut down, will they come another night? – Police Chief Chard – could happen, have had to call in support from other jurisdictions.

Vice Chair Blow – if juveniles are arrested what happens? Police Chief Chard – most times only parents can be called. Vice Chair Blow – state law. Police Chief Chard – 2 officers assaulted and captain had items thrown at them – Captain was there – Captain Ciampi – families were down there enjoying fireworks and quickly left when 100's of juvenile individuals came down to Square area and were milling around and causing issues – talked to families as they were leaving to get an idea of why they left – gentleman staying at Grand Vic came down to ask officers to do something about crowds – 400-600 kids down in area, corral and shelter offenders, and officers can't find perpetrators –

Councilor Kelley – late 70's and 80's – riots down in square, literally fought for officer's lives down there – can't take chance of officers being assaulted over firework show – AC – here in early 90's families watched fireworks, ate food and went home. Bars closed for evening; issues came out after. Now, kids are out and feel empowered to cause issues. Few weeks ago, had similar issues on First Street with similar aged juveniles

Steve Cowen – Royal Anchor – hospitality perspective – OOB differentiates itself with the fireworks on Thursdays – guests come down because of the

fireworks and choose OOB for the fireworks – wants to make sure decisions are made not based on 1% that give problems to PD – penalized tourists that want to come down for fireworks – understand the need for a safe environment for families – if fireworks are cancelled, what is the next thing that will bring issues and need to be cancelled? – last two seasons have not been the best in OOB for hospitality – issue is bigger than just the fireworks.

Michael Halle – OOB Chamber of Commerce – empathize with situation society has put them in, elected reps need to prosecute juveniles to full extent of the law – Mr. Halle read a prepared statement.

Andrea Perrone – 61 years resident – no way PD can have enough officers to control the amount of crowds – issues lies with juvenile system, judges, and district attorney – juveniles chased away from Hampton Beach and have started coming to this area – PD hands are tied – love fireworks and have been blessed to have them all these years – concern on Saturday night for the 4th of July

Rich Redman – 8 Morgan Avenue and from Pier – front row seat to fireworks for 35 years, director of security – times have changed – Lewiston is having meeting about violent juvenile crime – 2 years ago, juveniles shooting fireworks at PD officers – PD has responded with new plan for last July 4th, made Town safe – community needs to be involved, not just PD, business owners and residents need to back up PD – want safe community and support for businesses –

Peter Guidi – Seagrass Inn 50 West Grand Avenue – opposed cancelling fireworks – cancelling most cherished tradition does not take care of issues, it rewards the perpetrators – teen takeovers promote disruption – need to have zero tolerance with teen takeovers – small minority of online organizers intent on causing mayhem in community – agrees with OOB Chamber's Statement – bring in more police presence – OOB streets belong to families

and residents, not to people coming to cause issues for social media – families that don't return represent lost revenue to local businesses – OOB has been known as premier family destination – ask Council to adopt zero tolerance policy –

Vice Chair Blow – can we get additional assistance from State, County, other sources? Police Chief Chard – have asked for State Police and county; and when available they come in. Shortages in law enforcement across the board – not practical to hire more officers – Vice Chair Blow – how practical is a curfew? – Police Chief Chard – not practical in a tourist community – how can a curfew be enforced on all kids at all times, can't pick and choose? – Vice Chair Blow – if enforcing curfew what happens with kids? – Police Chief Chard – can only call parents and tie up officers until parents are reached – curfew is unenforceable –

Councilor Rague – essence of compromise – can't make decision tonight – would every other week help issue? – tough to wrap head around cancelling fireworks completely – would once a month help? – what are options? – Police Chief Chard – not an easy decision to make – rely on tourism for businesses and for PD – provide public safety – want to make sure public safety professionals are safe in their positions – Councilor Rague – is it the fireworks that make it unsafe or is it a different problem? – Police Chief Chard – not new problem, 9:45pm is too late for fireworks – , 2025, hange time – willing to compromise and try new things – asking for assistance in keeping people safe – Police Chief Chard – third year of issues showing up – Councilor Rague – agreed there needs to be change – Vice Chair Blow – struggle = cancelling affects business and tourism – not cancelling and cause safety issue – cancelling outright is tough – would like to see them earlier or less frequently like Councilor Rague suggested – Police Chief Chard – if no change is made, issues will continue – Vice Chair Blow – appreciates options given by public – Police Chief Chard – can't increase police presence and hire more officers, suggestions are great but unobtainable – checking social media, checking

behind the scenes for issues – Vice Chair Blow – watched in van on July 4th 2025 and saw the effort needed to keep everyone safe – can't do it every Thursday – would like to see balance to make things easier for PD and first responders – Councilor Rague – is it best to move time back?

Chairman O'Neill – Council is supportive of every department in Town to give residents and businesses best services possible – supports all businesses in Town to be successful – direction taking here – need to make a change – bad image in press will impact Town – one incident will tarnish reputation of Town – individuals coming to cause issues are not staying in hotels and providing business to local businesses – only Town with weekly fireworks; there may be a reason for that – was reserve 30 years ago with 30 officers, now down to 14

Joel Golder – questions to Chief – gangs of kids in Square in front of businesses, is it possible to move groups from area? – Police Chief Chard – officers are down there trying to keep people moving around – Joel Golder – can “no loitering” be enforced – Police Chief Chard – if people can walk around groups, they're not being disorderly and can't be dispersed legally – Joel Golder – can groups be made to leave? – Police Chief Chard – groups are asked to leave but can't force them to move unless blocking public way – Joel Golder – fireworks 2 years ago – not enough resources down there – last year had resources and no issues – can't remember an issue on Thursday nights – Police Chief Chard – doesn't disagree and looking to solve the problem by either cancelling fireworks or changing time – Joel Golder – now Friday night are slower than Thursdays because of fireworks – kids will be there regardless of time – fireworks end and families leave

Paul Golzbein – Pier – father started fireworks years ago to bring in business on Thursday nights – need to support PD and Council to prevent issues – all for changing anything to make it safe and friendly – PD needs more resources and supports giving them what they need – Vice Chair Blow – never turned down resources PD has asked for – Police Chief Chard – Town and Council

have fully supported PD – been down 2 positions for 5 years – can't find people for the positions – profession does not have the amount of people looking to get into that it used to – OOB is tough with peaks and valleys of summer and winter

J.J. Mokarzel - (On the Beach Motel, Atlantis) – can arrest people but no follow up – is smoking marijuana illegal in Town? Police Chief Chard – yes, people get arrested for public use – Police Chief Chard – drinking in public and marijuana are non-arrestable offences – state law can't change –

George Purvalis – West Grand Ave – has been around for a long time – surprised to hear proposal was to discontinue fireworks – family events for years – not convinced the fireworks are the cause of the disruptions – left early 4th of July last year – suggesting cancelling 4th of July fireworks and shifting resources to Thursday night fireworks –

TJ Hague – West Grand Ave – summers for past 22 years – truly disheartening to see what juveniles are doing on social media, planned for weeks in events – don't know why, but that's what they do – shame if fireworks are cancelled – would feel it would empower juveniles to come other nights, opinion that it's not the fireworks that bring the juveniles to Town –

Chairman O'Neill– question to Paul Golzbein and Joel Golden – both amenable to time change – would like to try a time change – 9:15 or 9:00? – Fourth of July won't change – offering 9:00 for Thursdays? – Councilor Rague – if it doesn't work, what is the next step? Revisits – Chairman O'Neill– fireworks draw crowds that allows kids to hide – willing to try earlier time but if issues continue, it may have to be shut down – Police Chief Chard – fireworks makes crowds embolden to come into Square because that's where the fireworks are – large groups are in the area for fireworks and that's where problem begins – can't tell some people they can't be there and let others in – groups are coming because they can blend into crowds

Joel Golder – historically rougher crowd comes in Spring, 9 or 9:15 is fine – can it be later if earlier time goes well? – Chairman O'Neill– understand and appreciate the question – crowds diminish after 4th of July – will keep dialog open on moving them later if issues do not persist

Peter Guidi – concern on broader subject of groups of people causing issues – if fireworks aren't the issue and it becomes the beach; do we close the beach? or the Town? Chairman O'Neill– embellishing the issue – PG – is the issue the fireworks or the groups of kids? Vice Chair Blow – issue is with groups of kids, agree on that – Peter Guidi – groups at basketball court

Joel Golder – parking lot at David's Sub shop and Dominos, can it be closed at night? Police Chief Chard – owner of parking lot wrote letter to PD to allow them to remove cars at night

George Kerr – 206 East Grand – commend Council and attendees – PD has been doing a great job – issue is with the kids – good that problem is being addressed – Diana is leaving but she has set the Town up for success – 2 suggestions – kids come in and park somewhere, need to find where people are parking and enforce issues to make it uncomfortable for them to park – need to continue to discuss the issue – PD does a wonderful job and would like to see them continue

Guy Fontaine – owners want to make money, most of Town are retired residents and pay for PD coverage – still sounds like catalyst are the fireworks – detail officers are hard to find and are extremely expensive to taxpayers – great to see problem being

Brent Pelletier – Seacliff Motel – motels in area rely on fireworks, families book rooms to see fireworks – hurt businesses if fireworks are cancelled –

Chairman O'Neill- reiterate – July 4th regular time, Thursday night fireworks are now at 9:00pm starting next week –

Chairman O'Neill closed the workshop