OLD ORCHARD BEACH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday November 9, 7:00 PM
Town Hall

Members attending: Kimbark Smith, Mary Pat Donnellon, Charlie Backus, Mark Koenigs

1. Updates by Members
    - Cynthia reported by email regarding Loranger Memorial School projects:
        - Students are wrapping up their Green Down project for NASA Globe - they've been monitoring seven trees of different species and recording their color changes and drop dates to help track leaf change and investigate possible connections to climate change.
        - We received 20 Atlantic white cedar seedlings and planted them. Once they settle in under the grow light, students will apply salt treatments to half the seedlings and track the impacts of salinity increase.
        - We continue to do beach profiling monthly. We had a guest speaker come from Maine Geological Survey on Thursday 10/29/26 to update students on beach profiling in Maine and help them start to graph data.

    - Mary Pat met with Connor Rague from the OOB Town Council on Friday, October 9. He's willing and happy to assist with pursuing a food waste solution for OOB. He feels that the town should offer it and that citizens would participate. He thinks he could get other members of the council to support it.

      Mary Pat's next steps are as follows:

        - Document what neighboring towns are doing regarding food waste (likely Scarborough, Saco, Biddeford).
        - Get proposals from Garbage to Garden, Casella, and possibly others for central pick up options, curbside pick up options, and possibly a hybrid.
        - Review options with Con Com and Connor and recommend top option(s).
        - Look at doing a survey of OOB residents for interest/willingness to participate in recommended option(s).

    - Mark reported:
        - Solar Farm and Blueberry Plains was brushed along the easement. DPW put new woodchips/stones down, and cleared out brush and branches. Mark cleared the Ford trust property with weed wacker as well as other areas including kiosks. Still yet to do is area around Ross Road.
        - In Milliken Mills Woods, Mark put in a new trail around the parking lot to make it easier to cross the road to the other parking lot. Mark put down wood chips with more being delivered.
        - Kiosk materials were delivered to Mr. Bowen at OOB High School and they will build them - 2 are for Ahearn Acres and 1 for Little River Road.

    - On October 24, Mark went to Maine Association of Conservation Committees in Brunswick. There were about 22 commissions represented. Speaker from Inland Fisheries is available to come out here and speak to the public. They have lots of maps and information on our resources and habitats. His specialty is amphibians and was very interesting. Second speaker was an advocate for agricultural land in Maine and an expert in soil composition. Different towns presented their projects. Mark recommends more of us attend in the future as the event was very energizing.
    - Mark talked to DPW director regarding getting new posts for OOB connector School St. extension. Phragmites invasives are starting to cover the trail. We should look at getting an estimate to remediate so we can budget for it in the future. There are also areas where trees are blocking paths. Mark took photos and provided them to DPW.
    - Unfinished Eastern Trail connector area on the Ross Road should be carved out this fall and paved in the spring. There are missing mile markers Mark identified. Tim Donnellon is representing OOB on the Eastern Trail alliance board and had a meeting with the town manager about this.
    - Please wear orange when you are hiking in the woods - it's hunting season!

- Kimbark reported that the tide gate is not totally working. The gate was down and KB got them to raise it. They agreed to leave it open until the software is fixed. KB is going to talk to him this week. KB doesn't know the status of the marsh monitoring program. He is going to UNE this week to meet the professor running the program. Mark suggested getting more volunteers or associate committee members that can manage a portfolio, specifically the tide gate.
- Kimbark recommended someone from our committee attend the Southern Maine Climate Action Workshop on November 18 with the new Town Planner and assistant.
- Charlie talked about a program overseas to use dogs to sniff out early stage invasives.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm
Minutes submitted by Mary Pat Donnellon
Kimbark G. Smith, Chair OOB Conservation Commission