

**TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Thursday, August 28, 2014
POLICE COMMUNITY ROOM
6:30 p.m.**

A Town Council Workshop of the Old Orchard Beach Town Council was held on Thursday, August 28, 2014. Vice Chair Quinn opened the Workshop at 6:35 p.m.

The following were in attendance:

**Vice Chair Bob Quinn
Councilor Jay Kelley
Councilor Joseph Thornton
Councilor Kenneth Blow
Councilor Michael Tousignant
Town Manager Larry Mead
Assistant Town Manager V. Louise Reid
Chief Dana Kelley
Deputy Chief Keith Babin
Lieutenant Timothy DeLuca
Parking Enforcement Officer Joseph Levasseur**

Absent: **Chair Shawn O'Neill
Councilor Malorie Pastor**

The purpose of the Workshop this evening was hopefully to develop a set of guiding principles and a proposed process to address parking issues not only in Old Orchard Beach but in Ocean Park as well and to take recommendations to the Council accordingly. Some of the issues discussed included parking on Temple Avenue; parking on other streets in Ocean Park, possible revised parking plan for Seaside Avenue between Colby and Randall; possible permit parking; possible remote parking; and use of the Shuttlebus. Any parking changes on Seaside Avenue, which is the emergency evacuation route, (West Grand Avenue being the alternate route will have to comply with the requirements of an emergency route.)

The majority of citizens in attendance at the Workshop were citizens from Ocean Park and some from Old Orchard Beach. Discussion was very positive and all who provided comments did it in a very affirmative response to the need for some changes to be made.

The following citizens made statements and suggestions during the workshop time frame: Cliff Kenney, Bob Reynolds, Mary Kerrigan, Nancy Kenny, Bob Hindley, Pete Gregory, Charlene Capeze, Kevin Hepburn, John Bird, Laurie Stunger.

It should be noted that the major shareholders in the discussion of parking issues include the Town Council, Parking Enforcement, Police Department, Planning and Code, Community Development, Assessor, Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Transit (Shuttlebus), Chamber of Commerce, OOB365, Condo Associations, Ocean Park Association, Business Owners, Merchants, Tourists, and Citizens.

One of the concerns mentioned by several was that whatever is done to make parking safe and easy to use. It was stipulated that maximizing spaces and not blocking driveways is a priority. Also looked at was the potential for some parking on both sides of a street but there should be safety concerns that fire apparatus and police can get down the street. The suggestion was made to look at widening shoulders abutting some of the streets. It was obvious in the discussions that for the administration Temple Avenue parking is the most pressing public safety concern. Pedestrian safety and emergency vehicle passage is a priority.

There was some discussion of possibly issuing parking permits to residents of Ocean Park but there were many additional concerns in this regard. The suggestion that it would save a place in front of their homes for parking if they had a permit is not the case. There was also the suggestion that the legal issue in this regard needs to be looked into for assigning of public parking spaces to residents may not be able to be maintained.

Discussion by Chief Dana Kelley provided information on the many Streets in Ocean Park including Porter, New Salt, Blaine, Sand Piper, Weymouth, Randall, Temple, Colby, Ancona, Winona, Oceana, Casco, Tioga, Dune, Roanoke, Hampton, Seaside, West Grand Avenue, Union Avenue, Atlantic Avenue, East Grand Avenue, York Street, Walnut Street, Heath Street, Camp Comfort Avenue, Pearl Avenue, First Street and Old Orchard Street. The Chief did an assessment of locations in Ocean Park as well as additional areas of Old Orchard Beach where installation of metered parking is feasible. It was evident that some of the places identified were in front of private residences and may impact someone's ability to park in front of their home. In the Ocean Park area, even though there are no business specific on street parking sites, several rooming houses have historically used on street parking for their guests. In discussing the area around the few businesses in Ocean Park, time limit restraints for parking was not popular with abutting businesses. There was also the request for better signage which has been a concern from many citizens in both Old Orchard Beach and Ocean Park. All attending agreed that orderly flow of vehicle traffic by supervising all municipal parking areas is vital to the success of any plan. Along with the need for more signage, marketing of the laws and/or ordinances related to parking need to be promoted more aggressively. It is evident that in a tourist community residents and tourists are competing for the same parking spaces.

It was also recognized by those in attendance that the Town is facing fiscal difficulties and significant budget deficits. Therefore the installation of meters is also a revenue consideration. It is going to be necessary to raise the fees in order to provide the level of service that the citizens are requesting and expecting. Again the success of the parking plans and the revenue source is a private/public partnership. It was also indicated that those visiting for a short period of time have the availability to use public transportation – Shuttlebus and the regular bus service.

The Chief also, prior to the meeting, presented a petition from the Linwood Arms Condominiums, 32 East Grand Avenue, expressing concerns with the safety issues resulting from the creation of parking spaces on East Grand Avenue. They indicated that the spaces have made it extremely difficult to pull out into traffic from either Dube Street or Aldine Terrace as oncoming vehicles cannot be seen. Also pedestrians and bicyclists are not seen until the last moment when coming out from between parked cars to cross East Grand. This is an issue the Town Manager and Police Chief will review. Also the issue of addressing the parking lot behind the Town Hall was raised and would be considered at another Workshop.

Also during the Workshop the issue was raised of the increase in the taxes and it was indicated that it was a minimal increase in the Town's budget and the bulk of the increase was a result of the RSU 23 school budget.

The final determination, with it appeared agreement from Ocean Park and Old Orchard citizens attending, to set a public hearing for the following streets and consideration of meters being installed. It should be noted that the Town currently has metered parking in the downtown from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekends, as well as municipal pay lots. Last year in order to increase revenue the number of seasonal parking meters were increased, with meters added along East Grand Avenue from Kinney Avenue to Walnut Street. The suggestion to put parking meters in Ocean Park drew opposition from property owners in particular sections of Town. Ocean Park is a Chautauqua community which sponsors interfaith spiritual, educational, and recreational activities in the summer. The suggestion was also made to put parking meters on side streets in Ocean Park but the Council decided to hold off on that because there were concerns that residents would not have parking places in front of their homes. The Council indicated it would consider adding 18 metered parking spaces along West Grand Avenue from Colby to Ocean Avenues. This will not only add parking in the area but increase metered parking. The Council also is considering adding parking meters on the other side of town including adding spaces on:

Ocean Avenue from Seaside to the Beach

York Street

Walnut Street from West Grand Avenue to the beach.

Heath Street from the intersection of First Street to the end of the Dollar Store parking lot (right side going up.

Camp Comfort Avenue.

Pearl Avenue.

First Street between Heath and Atlantic Avenue.

Consideration being given to allowing motorcycles to park in any metered space is also under discussion.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Vice Chair thanked those who attended the Workshop and the Assistant Town Manager indicated that in her eleven years this was the most positive discussion by citizens and council members on parking issues to which there was applause.

Respectfully Submitted,

**V. Louise Reid
Town Council Secretary**

I, V. Louise Reid, Secretary to the Town Council of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, do hereby certify that the foregoing document consisting of four (4) pages is a copy of the original Minutes of the Town Council Workshop of August 28, 2014.

V. Louise Reid