



TOWN OF
Ogden Dunes

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OGDEN DUNES TOWN COUNCIL—MONTHLY MEETING
July 6th, 2026-- 7:00 P.M. at the Community Room & via ZOOM

PRESENT:

Dave Snyder
Bernadette Slawinski
Scott Kingan
John Hannon
Doug Cannon

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call

Approval of June 1, 2026 Minutes

- Dave motioned to approve. Doug seconded. **Roll Call:** Dave Snyder—yes, Doug Cannon—yes, John Hannon—yes, Scott Kingan—yes, Bernadette Slawinski—yes, Minutes approved

Claims for May and June read by Amy

- Scott motioned to approve. John seconded. **Roll Call:** Scott Kingan—yes, John Hannon—yes, Doug Cannon—yes, Bernadette Slawinski—yes, Dave Snyder—yes, Motion approved.

Bernadette read aloud a recap of the severe June 11th storm. She thanked the various departments—Streets, Police & Fire for their response efforts. She noted the impact on the Town's budget that clean-up has had. It has required increased employee hours, equipment rental, temporary hires and help by outside contractors. While the Governor has declared Porter County in a state of emergency, it's unclear whether the Federal Govt. will also declare—thus making FEMA assistance available. The Town has applied for relief funds and Jeremy has created a detailed spreadsheet to track costs. Bernadette also thanked volunteers who helped with beach clean-up and who brought food and water to employees. Lastly, she thanked Dave Larson, the Fire Dept and Andrew Gurschik for rapidly pivoting the fireworks display to Kratz Field on July 5th.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Police

- Jeremy reported for June there were 11 Ord violations. During the July 4th weekend, there were 17. Total for the season -so far are 57. 26 of those are paid resulting in \$5,200 in revenue. There were 6 case reports written. 2 for fraud, 1 assist, 1 motor vehicle crash, 1 involving a suspicious vehicle in town and 1 abandoned vehicle.
- Jeremy wished to caution residents about the increase in phone scams. He said to be alert to anyone who wishes to create urgency in your decision making. End the call. If need be, confirm family member's condition, if this is part of the ruse. --Or call the police station and speak to officer on duty.
- The department is tracking more data and responses as a result of the P1 Dispatch system. This logs all priority calls that OD officers have responded to or assisted with --outside or inside of Town.

Building

- 81 building permits have been issued ytd-- which brings the total revenue to \$82,193.00 so far.
- There are 185 contractors registered in Town resulting in \$15,850.00 in fees collected.

Streets

- John reported on the new heavy duty truck the Town purchased for Streets. It's been put to heavy use since delivery.

Water

- Water board chair, Jim Slawinski, 33 Aspen, said quarterly water bills would be sent out this week.
- He shared that electric power loss due to the storm, didn't affect the system pumps because back-up generator kicked on immediately. This back-up equipment is tested on a weekly basis for reliability.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Animal Committee

- Karen Berrier, 42 Sunset Tr, reported on the successful donation drive they hosted on June 6th. They raised \$615 in cash and filled 2 van loads with pet supplies- including food and blankets. These were delivered to Humane Indiana in Miller and Gary Animal control. The employee in charge, was so thrilled and gratified that she got teary eyed.
- Karen also shared plans the committee has-- to create a memorial for Cynthia Hargarten, who was a vital member of the group prior to passing away last year.

Beach Nourishment

- Dave reported on a swimming incident where resident John Lehman was able to pull a troubled swimmer, out of the water. The incident however highlighted a problem that day, with folks leaving water craft and building tents at the very base of Access 18. This created an obstacle for emergency response. Emergency vehicles use this particular access way to get quickly to the shore.
- Both he and Scott agree that some measure needs to be taken in the future—to cordon off a portion of this area or path-- to prevent blockage.
- Jeremy remarked that we still need accessway number signs, that are visible and identify location. Dave has researched prices and sizes of aluminum reflective signs for purchase.
- Doug said he still thinks the existing lifesaving posts should be brought down to beach level. Scott thinks any changes to this, need to be coordinated with the Fire Dept.

Budget & Finance

- Scott said last meeting was a good orientation for some new committee members.
- The Town will definitely need to carefully account for storm related costs that are soon to hit the budget.

EAB

- Karen Berrier spoke as the beach and water monitoring specialist. She has performed this daily task each summer for over a decade. May22 –Sept 12.
- Water is tested for E. coli levels, sent to a lab, with results dictating what color sign will be posted-- advising the community.

- Sadly, this summer's storms have affected water quality with sewer overflows into Burn's Ditch. This in turn, has resulted in some Yellow warning days and even a couple of Red closure postings. Further, to rid sand on the beach of E coli-- 4 to 6 hours of direct sunlight exposure needs happen in order to kill the bacteria. This can also be aided by raking the sand at the waterline.

General Code Review

- Jim Slawinski, 33 Aspen Rd. remarked about the letter sent to residents a couple of months ago-- reminding them of the various summer seasonal guidelines.
- Committee reviewed the Junk Car Ord. they asked council to consider broader language to define junk cars as any parked vehicle that's inoperable.

ODHA

- President Andrew Gurschik remarked about how nice the previous night's fireworks at Kratz Field were!
- He reported there are currently 340 members.
- He talked about the new bathrooms at the Pavilion getting HVAC installed to cut down on humidity inside.
- He shared the efforts of Laura Brennan to secure \$5,000 in grant money from NiSource, to continue clearing invasive plants at Polywog Pond!
- She also worked with Andrew on a proposal to Cleveland Cliffs—who granted ODHA \$12,000 to continue invasive clearing around Kratz Field!
- Bernadette took the opportunity to thank Jeremy for his fun nylon bags filled with items, distributed to the ODHA Summer Camp kids!

Parks and Rec.

- John updated on the board's intention of drafting and adopting a Park Master Plan. This will make our Park board eligible to apply for DNR grants
- Scott reminded the council that a Master Plan would also allow for some financial help from Portage Township Trustee, Brendan Clancy's office.
- Bernadette added that the Park board is down one member and wishes to fill the vacancy. Because State law says the board must be politically equal, they are looking for someone who is a Democrat or Independent.
- Doug asked about plans to remove the blue spruce trees that have died near the Long Lake Courts? John said they are aware of this and plan to task the Street crew to remove.

Beautification

- Bernadette reported that upon entering Town, the committee has done a wonderful job! They really appreciate the input of Dan Knipsel. As a master gardener, he has advised with choosing colorful plants and flowers.
- Scott reminded that the Nat Park has given us their OK to remove the invasive Siberian Elm at the front of Town.
- Doug alerted the council to the need of removing a large Mulberry tree on Town property at Access 18

Recognition

- Caitlan Maxwell nominated Angel Ford for organizing the Sandcastle Contest. She jumped right in and rescued the event from not occurring this year!
- Bernadette wished to recognize John Lehman for his lifesaving efforts at the beach!
- She also gave kudos to Dave Larson for his amazing fireworks display and for the many kind volunteer hours he spends, helping out neighbors and assisting Mike Lanovich. Thank you!

OLD BUSINESS

Peddler's License

- Gen Code Review has reviewed the existing Ord and recommends some stricter updates. This has come about after recent aggressive encounters with a door-to-door salesman.
- Bernadette indicated that after review of State Law, OD can not ban door-to-door outright. It's regarded as a 1st amendment issue related to commercial communication.
- After a lengthy discussion, the committee recommends limiting the activity to weekdays with daylight hours 10 am to 7 pm. Saturday's 10 am—1 pm and no soliciting on Sundays. There should also be updates made to the fees and penalties charged to door-to-door salesmen and women.

Community Crossings Project

- John reported on the INDOT Grant Process. OD is recommending acceptance of Milestone bid which is \$405,424.50. This is to repave 9 sections of roads in Town.
- After we execute and sign the proper documents—INDOT will review, then award us 80% of the project bid amount. It is up to the Town to finance 20% of the project or \$81,084.90. John listed the 9 roads in the project. It is slated to begin in September, after Labor Day.

Town Website

- Scott reported on the status of the new website. The base features are pretty much done. There is still editing and fine tuning of the forms that will be provided online.
- He believes we're on track to rollout the new site at the end of July.

NEW BUSINESS

State Funding & Tax levy updates

- Scott reminded everyone that the property tax system is built on levies. The State sets the maximum levy growth each year.
- Next year's levy growth max is 6%. He thinks it's generally positive that the State hasn't put more of a cap on the max but he also thinks it's likely that the actual rate we end up with, will be less.

Budget plans for 2027

- The process will begin with Dept heads making their needs for next year known. That will occur this month.
- The timeline for the Public Hearing is tentatively set to occur on September 30th with the actual adoption meeting being held on October 12th.
- Storm clean-up costs will definitely impact decisions-- because we don't know if there will be any FEMA relief funding. Another unknown is next year's cost for Insurance.

Town project at Access 2

- A Community Grant was awarded for improvements to be made at Access 2= \$4,500. Another \$500 will be coming from proceeds of Centennial Committee-- for a total of \$5,000.
- Dave has assembled project invoices for 1) new benches, 2) building material and 3) labor by Doug for installation.

Dave motioned to approve the invoices equaling \$4,663.61. John seconded. Roll Call: Dave Snyder—yes, John Hannon—yes, Doug Cannon—abstained, Scott Kingan—yes, Bernadette Slawinski—yes. Motion approved.

Town Hall Conference Room Redo

- Bernadette shared that funds were allocated to allow for a Town Hall Conference room redo.
- She wants to coordinate people's schedules so that file cabinets, furniture and carpeting can be removed to make way for volunteers in Town to begin painting.
- Doug doesn't recall any discussion by the council regarding the scope of work.
- Scott thinks a formulated plan should be voted on. Dave thinks we should finish the budgeting process before fully embarking on this project. He thinks it should be postponed until November.

Fireman's Ball

Reminder that this will occur on evening of July 25th. Please support this event!

TOWN COUNCIL REMARKS

- John and Jeremy brought up the need to hold a public hearing in September. The purpose is to facilitate a petition to vacate an easement at 49 Aspen Rd.
A resident has purchased this house. Before he can remodel, the septic system needs to be updated. There's a platted utility easement on the resident's property that would interfere with installing a new septic. It's been determined that no actual utility runs through there even though it's on the plat. Jeremy suggests holding a public hearing at Sept meeting.

In addition to this, Jeremy wished to advise residents that effective August 1st, the State will no longer approve existing drywell septic- if owners wish to do large remodels.

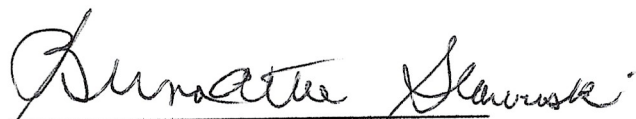
- Dave spoke about the need for a bicycle rack at Access 18. He thinks this should be considered. He also wanted to give a shout out to the ice cream truck during the Sandcastle Contest. It was very popular. Thanks to Heather and Andy!
- Bernadette advised of another law going into effect on July 1st. It requires towns with volunteer fire depts to increase the clothing allowance and vehicle allowance in their agreements.

Bernadette wished to remind everyone to be kind to each other. We need each other. We are a Town built by volunteers. It is just as easy to say thank you as to criticize. Happy 250th Birthday America!

NO RESIDENT REMARKS

MOTION TO ADJOURN

- Scott made the motion. Dave seconded. Scott Kingan—yes, Dave Snyder—yes, Bernadette Slawinski—yes, John Hannon—yes, Doug Cannon—yes. Meeting adjourned.


Bernadette Slawinski, President