TOWN OF
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OGDEN DUNES TOWN COUNCIL—TOWN MEETING
September 14, 2026-- 7:00 P.M. in the Community Room & Via ZOOM

PRESENT: Dave Snyder
Bernadette Slawinski
Scott Kingan
John Hannon
Doug Cannon

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call

ORD # 916 ***-Town of Ogden Dunes, Porter County, Indiana Vacating a Portion of a Utility Easement.*** **Public Hearing**

- Bernadette read aloud the petition by homeowner **David Hughes, 49 Aspen Rd** to vacate a portion of a public way that is contiguous to a portion of his property. The reason for the request is so homeowner can upgrade his septic system. The easement to be vacated is situated between lots 18 & 19, both of which are owned by this petitioner. No extension of any utility is planned for the easement to be vacated.
- Bernadette opened the public hearing to any comments or objections in the room or by anyone following on Zoom. There were no comments-hence the hearing was closed.
- Bernadette then read Ord. 916 aloud-which is based on the presented petition.
- Scott motioned to suspend the rules of a 2nd reading in order to pass Ord. 916 on the 1st read. Doug seconded. **Roll Call:** Scott Kingan-yes, Doug Cannon-yes, John Hannon-yes, Bernadette Slawinski-yes, Dave Snyder-yes. Motion Passed.
- John motioned to approve Ord. 916. Scott seconded. **Roll Call:** John Hannon—yes, Scott Kingan—yes, Bernadette Slawinski—yes, Dave Snyder—yes, Doug Cannon—yes. Motion Passed.

Approval of Town Meeting Minutes for: July 6th, Aug 3rd and Aug 12th Special Meeting

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

Amy read the July & August Claims.

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

Bernadette wished to recognize everyone who helped our community cope with the effects of the August 11th Storm.

Special Thank You to all of the first responders during the derecho who rose to the occasion. Jeremy Ogden, Bob Gosbon, and the police department, Eric Kurtz and the fire department, Gerry Scheff and the CERT team Mike Lanovich and the street department. Tavis Lattimer for providing technical support wherever he could to keep us connected. There were many volunteers throughout the crisis to assist the community. Thank you to all who provided food for the fire department and volunteers during the storm cleanup. The Community Room remained open for the town's people to use for charging their phones, tablets and other equipment. Our second century has been noteworthy causing us to survive without internet, television, air conditioning and even telephone service if we wanted to or not. We learned that generators are a good investment as well as satellite service, and that kindness, helping your neighbor and volunteerism is appreciated and rewarding. Thank you to all who donated money to provide food for NIPSCO crews and the street and police departments and office staff as the cleanup continues. We are all just a little stronger than we were before and the heart of Ogden Dunes shines a little brighter. (Maybe less tree cover).

DEPARTMENT and COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police Dept.

- Jeremy reported for August that there were 48 traffic stops. 27 ordinance violations resulting in a total of 97 for the season. 66 have been paid resulting in $13,200 in fines. There were also, 4 case reports.
- 279 calls for service were logged in August.
- Delivery of the new Police truck has been delayed because it went directly to vendor who installs the spotlight.

Building Dept.

- This year to date, 124 building permits have been issued resulting in $118,489 in revenue.
- There are 210 contractors registered with fees totaling $19,875.
- Due to the storm, contractors are permitted to work on Sundays.
- He also thinks some of the inflated pricing, by some contractors—to remove trees, is beginning to come down.

Street Dept.

- Mike L. thanked officer Bob Gosbin who has been very helpful to the Street Crew—operating clean-up equipment. He also thanked the fire department for their help too.
- Residents in Town, have generously donated funds and food to keep the street crew & staff fed each day!
- Mike reported on the closure of the Portage compost site for dumping debris. This occurred about halfway through clean-up efforts. It required a pivot to unloading debris in town & dropping off at a designated area on and around Boat Club Rd.
- Mike said the Street Dept's 1st priority was opening blocked roads and removing trees. From there, they transitioned to larger clearing efforts by removing debris from the road sides.
- All of this massive work—with the related labor costs and equipment expenditures have been logged and tallied on a spreadsheet for FEMA reimbursement. Mike thanked Jeremy for creating this & maintaining the spreadsheet and for his procurement of needed supplies. He's gone above and beyond his duties!
- He also reported on the upcoming street repaving project – with milling down of designated roads set to begin today by Milestone Contractors.
- After all these prioritized phases of clean-up and repaving are completed, Mike hopes to return soon to normal street operations and prep for upcoming fall leaf season.

- John gave kudos to the Street Dept.—full-timers, part-timers and temporary crew. Because of them, the Town has not had to hire an outside contractor—as is the case with many neighboring communities. If all goes as expected, FEMA will hopefully reimburse 75% of OD's storm costs. Of the remaining 25%, it's hoped that IN Homeland Emergency will pick-up an additional 75% of that balance.
- With the start of this 4th cycle of repaving now occurring, John also thought it was a good opportunity to point out to residents—the impressive amount of paving in OD, that has been accomplished in the last 4 years.—2023, 2024, 2025 & beginning today- 2026.
- Approx. $1.5 million has been spent paving our local streets. Of that amount, $1.1 million has been covered by INDOT through Community Crossing Grants. 75% has been leveraged through careful management of the grant, bidding and paving process. Once again, it's notable that this has been accomplished in-house—by staff & officials, without hiring outside consultants!
- Dave wanted to know if there have been updates on the Topkick vehicle going to auction? His concern was that Jonathan Graft website said Sept 16th was the last day to enter consignment items for their vehicle auction. Mike said he would call the auction firm to follow- up.

Beach Nourishment

- Scott reported on the beach accessways at 7 and 9. A decision was made to remove the steps at both points—because of lake levels and possible damage caused by future shelf ice. This call is a cautionary measure.
- Scott also reported the very good news—that thanks to the committee's careful attention to recent dredging permits-- filed by Cleavland Cliffs to the DNR and to the Nat. Park Service, the sand, that in the past, would have been dropped offshore, now—by law needs to be placed on the beach. The committee caught the permit application in time and gathered enough signatures from the community to force a public hearing with the DNR. Cleveland Cliffs agreed instead to actually place the sand onto the beach! This is expected to be 100,000 cubic yards of sand primarily placed to our east –on Portage beach-- in hopes of artificially creating a literal flow to OD. This is scheduled to occur in the Fall. Very exciting!

Budget & Finance

- Scott & committee have been closely monitoring the storm costs & spending. So far, the toll has not been as severe as first appeared. Hopefully, State and Federal relief money will come back to O.D. He said that all the budget choices made since 2021, have positioned the Town in such a way, as to allow it to withstand and manage an unforeseen disaster, such as this summer—without dipping into rainy day $.

EAB

- Tom Davenport, 1 Locust Rd., reported on the successful completion of beach monitoring season despite storms. They hope to enhance some of the data gathered next summer. He also discussed plans for a community fund, grant work plan-- focused on invasive tree species removal and proper tree selection. Lastly, he thinks we need to work with NIPSCO about being more proactive on how they trim and cut around their poles.

Women's Club

- Barbara Schultz reported via zoom, on the Fall Bash last Saturday at the Pavilion. It was a great success with over 180 attendees They raised over $23,000! She said the band and food were fabulous. Kudos to Cami Kristoff, who chaired the event and all the volunteers who helped out!

ODHA

- Andrew Gurschick reported that quite a bit of tree clearing has occurred on ODHA property. He indicated Access 14 as an example. Also, damage was caused by a tree at Access 9. ODHA took care of the stump removal.
- There are some trees that need to be addressed north of the sandtrack parking and a large tree just west of the Kratz septic system.
- He was happy to report on the Soccer Club's Girl's team. They're currently 2nd in their league with a 4-1 record. 2 girls on the U8 team have been moved to the U10 team because their skills and play are that good!
- Lastly, Andrew shared that they're continuing to sell bricks. These will be installed in the Fall.

Plan Commission

- Scott reported on an upcoming public hearing the committee will hold in October to review the Town's zoning rules. This is required by the state as part of HB1001-intended to support more growth in housing. Most of the items don't apply to OD because they deal with duplexes & multifamily units. These can't be supported by our septic systems.

Beautification

- Dave shared his conversation with resident Eric Jensen regarding his wish to replace a fallen tree at the Hillcrest triangle area across from Kratz field. This tree was planted by a group of women, in memory of his mother Nancy. He'd like to plant a new one.

Recognition

- Bernadette wishes to recognize the CERT volunteers. She asked Gerry Scheff to elaborate. He explained that CERT stands for Community Emergency Response Team. They're affiliated with the Fire Dept. They work to help the community by supporting first responders. In the case of the recent storm, this group manned the Fire House and the Community Rm. They made sure there was food available and that the room was open and maintained for resident use. They are: Gerry Scheff, Dana Lattimer, Tavis Lattimer, Chris Lattimer, Mike Damiano, Carol Damiano and Hillary Woloshansky.
- She would also like to recognize Tom Stecich for his wellness checks and Jason Skeesick for his road clean-up help! Tim Morris for his help with homeowner generators. Tavis Lattimer for his help with the Starlink hook-up at Town Hall.
- Once again kudos to the Lattimers and the Damianos for providing support in the Community Rm. for at least 2 weeks straight-and Gerry Scheff for keeping things on target and for weather reports.
- Lastly, Andrew Rasutis for his help repairing one of the Little Library Boxes and helping his neighbors on Bittersweet. Thank you everyone!

OLD BUSINESS

Storm Update

- Jeremy shared his observations regarding NIPSCO. He appreciates how driven the crews were once they arrived in Town. They were easy to work with and worked really hard to get things reconnected. Critical infrastructure takes precedence. So, it wasn't unexpected to him that arrival into our Town seemed delayed. He thanks the guys on the crews!
- We kept them fed! Thanks to "Smoke on the Water", Jersey Mike's and Big Time Burgers to name a few.

Central Rock Project

- Dave reminded residents that the Town in still active in an ongoing lawsuit with Save the Dunes. He wished to point out that the Town is embroiled in a Tort Claim for repairs to Access 18 and related damage. He also said there's approximately a $12,100 shortfall in expenses.
- He added that there is no escrow account established for the remediation of Accessway 18.
- Dave wished to also remind residents on the status of lawsuits related to the East End Project too.
- One that entails $498,000 worth of mitigation. One where the Town is named in a Nat. Park suit against a resident. One where another resident says they're owed a refund.
- Lastly, he wants it known that in the last 24 months the Town has spent $125,000 of taxpayer's money on attorney fees to "defend rocks"

Mailbox Update

- Fallen trees damaged two mailbox racks. Jeremy said repair construction was to begin today. The Town's insurance carrier sent an email today requesting that we wait until an adjuster can come to Town to inspect the damage and scope of work. Jeremy added that he believes it's a simple project. Insurance has the repair estimate and photos. He intends to personally meet with the adjuster when he arrives in Town. TBD.

NEW BUSNESS

2027 Budget Hearing on October 5th

- Scott reminded that Dept heads still need to submit their lists for next year's needs.
- The date for budget adoption is October 15th.

IN Dept of Insurance Refund

- $57,900 was refunded to OD. This was due to the Dept dissolving an old insurance fund. Many cities and towns paid into this. $57,900 is our share.

FEMA meeting set for Sept.16th

- Bernadette and Jeremy to attend regarding derecho recovery funds

RESIDENT REMARKS

- **Kristine Sandrick,** 59 Cedar Tr, came to meeting to express her gratitude. During this storm she's been moved by the generosity of OD's townspeople.
- **Kathy Hinton Spiegel,** 15 Turret Rd., shared via zoom her thanks to the Town. To the Street Dept she thinks the guys have "been killing it" –doing a great job. She really appreciated Bernadette driving around town checking on folks too. Thank you, guys!
- **Gerry Scheff,** 35 Woodland Tr shared some prepared remarks. He has lived in Town for some 60 yrs. He has never witnessed a storm as harsh as what recently occurred. He thinks it has demonstrated this Town's resilience in the face of catastrophe. He named 6 individuals-all volunteers in town who went above and beyond!
- **Terry Kiwala,** 11 Ski Hill, He thanked Bernadette for her leadership. Jeremy, Mike and their teams for their response and orderly reconstruction of the town. Compared to other communities he's lived in this town's response has been really great! Thank you.
- **Mimi Ramos,** 16 Turret Rd. wished to thank Bernadette as Town President. She saw the Fire Dept, Jeremy and Police Dept. helping people out. She thinks it just proves that this is the town to live in when the chips are down. It's fabulous how folks helped each other.!
- **Sue Chandler,** 15 Shore wished to share her encounter with dog owners on the beach who didn't seem to care or to control their pets. She'd like to know how she can help to clarify the Town's dogs-on-the beach rule?

COUNCIL REMARKS

- Bernadette thanked Jeremy for going above and beyond. He's worn many hats.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

- Scott made the motion. John seconded **Roll:** Scott—yes, John—yes, Doug—yes, Bernadette--yes, Dave yes. Meeting adjourned.

Bernadette Slawinski, President