

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Ocean Park Civic League
Plenary Session
Thursday, November 4, 2004
Ocean Park Volunteer Fire and Rescue Station**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by President Chris Hendricks. After the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and welcoming remarks, Hendricks introduced OPVRS President Kreg Kinney. Hendricks noted the good relationship OPCL enjoyed with the OPVRS, and offered the prospect of continuing this by establishing a liaison between the two organizations under the guidance of Ronda Morrison, OPCL Co-Secretary. Hendricks also extended an invitation to members of OPVRS to attend the OPCL Christmas Party as honored guests.

Mr. Kinney's stated goal was to address staffing concerns raised at a previous meeting by a previous speaker, William Bailey, President of the local chapter of the International Association of Firefighters, who addressed the league on September 9, 2004. Kinney noted that Bailey's perspective involved serving the interests of the city's Fire Department and the Union he represents.

Mr. Kinney described the primary service area of the OPVRS as bounded on the west by the water tower on Shore Drive, east to the Atlantic, and in the south on a line from the Bayside Recreation Center to Cox High School. There are 10 squads, with OPVRS being identified as Squad #1. He went on to describe the disposition of other squads throughout the city and said that at any given time, there were to be a minimum of 8 ambulances on the street, at least 2 manned 24/7. If staffing fell below standard, the city's paid professionals were engaged.

In the question and answer period that followed, concerns were raised about the increased demand on resources by the development of the site of the Duck-In into multiple residential units. Kinney reassured the individual that response capability would remain adequate. In answer to questions about the location of OPVRS and the city's fire station, Kinney stated that the volunteer location would remain on the west side of the Lesner Bridge, its location near the population center of the service area, while the city's Fire Department location would move to be near the geographic center of the service area. The relocation of the city's Fire Station was not expected to be completed until summer, 2006, due to logistical steps still to be taken.

Concern was raised about the level of training on and availability of defibrulators, citing an incident over the summer where the administration of such treatment did not occur in a timely fashion. Kinney answered that all first responders within the service area were trained in the use of defibrulators and that there were now an adequate number. A final question about financial support revealed that OPVRS was supported entirely by donation, with the exception of utilities and liability insurance, which were covered by the city of Virginia Beach.

In the next agenda item, Stuart Terrell, member of the Social Committee, announced that there would be a meeting of the committee at the Terrell home on Monday, November 5, 2004, to finalize plans for the Christmas party.

Dave Metzger then presented a tracking report on the status of the Pleasure House Point development. He cited a response to his letter to the Mayor expressing the concerns of residents of Ocean Park about the impact of increased population density and loss of open space associated with development of this parcel. The Mayor acknowledged awareness of these concerns and

promised to keep the civic league's position in mind. The Mayor's response was copied to James Spore, City Manager, Cindy Curtis, Director of Parks and Recreation, Robert Scott, Director of Planning and Jim Lawson, Public Works/Real Estate. The Mayor's response is posted on the OPCL Web page. Hendricks noted that the league now has a relationship established with city government. A discussion ensued about whether it was time to undertake a letter writing campaign, with residents initiating personal letters expressing individual positions. Metzger pointed out that a salient point might be that the city benefits from the tax base already established in Ocean Park, and that residents are watchful of reciprocal benefits. From the floor came the cautionary that letters must be individually creative and respectful in order to be effective. Hendricks reminded members that letter writing tools and samples were posted on the Web page. In answer to the problem of some members not having Web access, Hendricks offered that all issues of note were available at each plenary meeting in hard copy form.

Treasurer Anne Kane remarked that the previous developer had worked with the league, but this opportunity might not exist with the present developer, presumed to be Sandler brothers, Art and Steve, a fact not yet confirmed. Hendricks suggested that a new petition drive is labor-intensive and might be in order if we knew what we are dealing with specifically. The Web site will soon have a questionnaire on this subject. An informal poll of attendees showed that a majority of attendees wanted to see no commercial or residential development of the property. Metzger said he would respond to the Mayor's letter.

The next agenda item was an update on the status of 3608 East Stratford Road. In the absence of Committee Chair, Andrew Broyles, Co-Secretary Grace Moran reported on the progress toward re-recording the deed to the property, eliminating an existing reversionary clause. The title search has been completed, thanks to the efforts of past President William Sykes. Pioneer Title Company has advised that the league will encounter difficulties in recording a new deed, and suggested that OPCL simply record the recently received affidavit from OPVRS as a release of claim. Since the Board had previously expressed intent to re-record the deed, Pioneer Title advised the league to pursue the matter with the City Attorney's Office. Ms. Moran has been in contact with the city's attorney and a response is pending and expected within a week. In order to continue to pursue this matter, Hendricks offered a motion to fund the effort with a preliminary budget of up to \$500 for legal and professional fees to title the property in the name of Ocean Park Civic League, without reference to the Ocean Park Volunteer Fire Department. Motion was seconded and carried. A question was raised from the floor about the disposition of the property, to which Hendricks replied that there were several options to be considered at later meetings, but that nothing would be done without clean title. Another attendee raised the possibility that an environmental study would have to be done before any further action was taken, but it was established that environmental concerns would not preclude titling efforts. A suggestion was made that title insurance should be obtained at the time of deed recording, but no decision was made on this point.

Adoption of revisions to the by-laws was to be brought before the plenary session at this time. Anne Kane reported that the by-laws were ready for discussion, and that there had been substantive changes to the existing by-laws, a re-organization of the contents and an increase to the amount authorized for expenditures by the board without full membership vote and approval. A rough copy of the new by-laws is viewable on the OPCL Web site. Due to the lateness of the hour, discussion and a vote on the by-laws was postponed until the January meeting.

Zoning issues were to be addressed next. Hendricks noted that a decision was needed as to whether zoning issues should be divided into two committees, one for enforcement and one for variance applications, or whether one committee should oversee both areas. It was determined

that the Board would refine a proposal to be brought before the next full session of the league in January 2005. John Wigmore reminded the assembly that the previous official stance of OPCL was to oppose *any* application for variance. From the floor, Judy Conners, a member of the city's Board of Zoning Appeals, remarked that the North End Civic League had a very effective procedure for addressing variance applications and that OPCL would do well to consult with that organization. Another attendee volunteered that the North End Civic League had already expressed their willingness to provide input. Metzger volunteered to contact an officer of that group.

In a brief report on the Ocean Park newsletter, *the Echo*, Carol Collins stated that she would welcome more articles, that printing costs were up and that more advertising was needed. A previous offer from Dave Metzger to cover the printing costs in exchange for a sponsorship statement was brought up. This matter had been presented to the Board previously and a poll of Board members declined the offer over concerns of conflict of interest and fairness standards. However, in discussion from the floor, a call was made to revisit the offer and to vote at the January meeting whether to accept or decline.

Anne Kane delivered the Treasurer's Report, showing a balance in the savings account of \$13,510.46 and a balance in the checking account of \$2,185.39 as of September 30, 2004.

Tim Solanic spoke next about the Web site, which he created in 2001 on a volunteer basis. Hendricks noted that we now needed a more sophisticated platform and that such needs would require a level of service not available on a volunteer basis. Hendricks proposed that we engage Solanic, paying him one-half of the set-up fee of \$425, and a monthly service fee of \$40 for a period of six months. Metzger asked if the service had been shopped to other providers; Hendricks replied that it had not been, but he did get professional opinions on the fairness of the proposal. Metzger then asked if Solanic was allowed to advertise his services to others on the Ocean Park Web site. Solanic acknowledged that he was. Sykes then proposed that OPCL engage Solanic's services on a trial basis. It was decided that OPCL would pay one-half the set-up fee and a monthly service charge of \$40 for a period of six months.

At closing, Judy Conners reminded the league that Representative Leo Wardrup was presently hospitalized in ICU at Norfolk Sentara and that league members were asked to remember him in their thoughts. The Board stated that a card would be sent on behalf of the civic league.

About ten door prizes were awarded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Grace Moran
Co-Secretary