

THE OGUNQUIT BREEZE

A MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMUNITY
FROM THE OGUNQUIT RESIDENTS ALLIANCE

Town News

Election Results

Undesignated Fund Balance

- Budget items fail: Enforcement car, leasing church lot & building reserve fund: total \$165,000
- All other Budget items pass: total \$1,185,000

Capital Improvement Projects

- Both Budget items pass: total \$4,875,000 (without interest)

Debt Increase: from \$26,920,706* → \$31,795,706
*according to November ballot
Debt as of June, 2021 ballot: **\$8,550,238** ↗

*As the Town Budget Season Approaches,
here are the Select Board priorities
directed to the Town Manager:*



Additional Town Staff

- A Police Detective
- A second Code Officer/Natural Resource Officer
- A Recreation Director (part or full time)
- Additional firefighters (2-6)

Construction

- Many more sidewalks
- Finding a solution to safely walking on the south end of Shore Road
- Re-paving more streets including tearing Shore Road up, fixing drainage & re-paving

Paid Parking

- Standardizing fees and time limits on all Town parking spaces/lots

[Select Board Meeting](#) October 1st: at 2 hours 27 minutes

CONTENTS

- Election Results
- Next Budget Priorities?
- Volunteer Spirit: Arleen O'Donnell
- PFAS Part II
- Local Events & News

Natural Disaster Fund

- What are the criteria for using this fund?
- How do we estimate how much it should contain?
- Do we understand **how** to advance action to protect against disasters?

Attention Readers!

In our next issue, we will be publishing your comments. They will be screened for relevance and civility. No identities will be revealed. Please send your comments on Town issues and concerns to ogunquibtreeze@gmail.com



Faces & Places

The Volunteer Spirit: Where Do We Get It From?

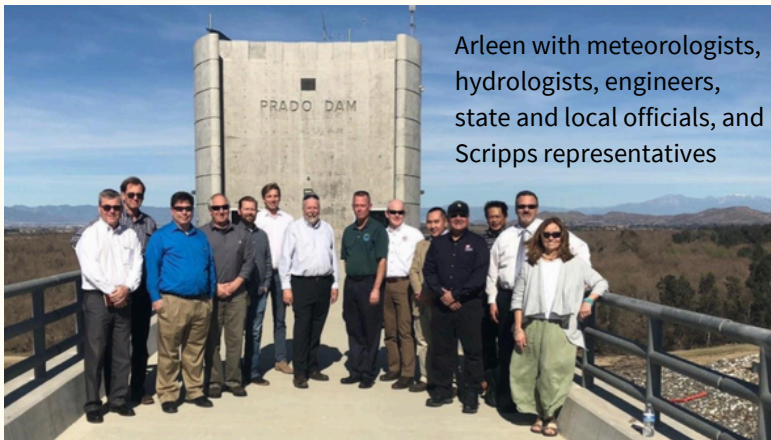
We often think of volunteers as being homemakers or retired folks. Not true of full time resident Arleen O'Donnell. Besides counting plover chicks, weeding the Marginal Way and parking Ogunquit Playhouse goers, Arleen works for a consulting firm on climate resilience strategies, mostly now travelling to the West Coast.

She attributes her attraction to the natural world to growing up in a small town in the Berkshires ("More Cows Than People" was the Town motto) and her volunteer spirit to a mother who organized scholarship funds and hot lunch programs in schools. Her Dad taught at UMass which was where Arleen earned a degree in Biology.

After graduating, her pursuit of a rewarding career led her on a trial and error journey. Sea sickness as a student intern with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute where she was sent to the Bermuda triangle in February for three weeks, kept her on land but still interested in water. At the New England Aquarium examining samples from the "foul area" dumping ground in Boston Harbor and the thermal effluent from the Brayton Point Coal Plant near Fall River taught her that lab benchwork kept her too much inside.

Next was the job as the Planning and Conservation Coordinator for the city of Braintree while development was expanding into wetlands and floodplains. Aerial photos helped to enact a bylaw that made activities on properties responsible for *any* downstream run-off. Documenting a junkyard filling the abutting wetland led to the first case of criminal charges being filed, setting a precedent in the State.

Her ability to navigate among potential adversaries led to a position with Land Use and Environmental Planning with the Boston Regional Planning Agency. But the desire to really understand the science prompted a return to school in Civil Engineering at Tufts where her thesis was on Hydro-geology and the environmental impacts of groundwater withdrawal.



Arleen with meteorologists, hydrologists, engineers, state and local officials, and Scripps representatives

Prado Dam provides 2.5 Million people with water in Orange County, California. The project resulted in \$6M worth of water savings over the last year.



Six years after joining the Massachusetts Audubon Society as Director of Environmental Affairs, she can look back at laws she helped pass including the first State Endangered Species Act, regulations around pesticide use, and the protection of wetlands, rivers and watersheds. After more than 18 years with the State Department of Environmental Protection, concluding with two years as Commissioner, she emphasized streamlining the regulatory process to secure buy-in for more environmental protection.

At this point, it was time for another change, probably the last one in public service. In 2008 she started a job with a consulting firm (Eastern Research Group) that holds contracts with the federal EPA, OSHA, NOAA and other governmental agencies and institutions. She's part of a team that is making a measurable difference using innovation, science and common sense.

For the last 10 years she has worked with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to use improved forecasts to manage dams for drought and flood resilience. She uses her policy and engineering experience to secure agreement among stakeholders and translate technical jargon into meaningful public information.

So how does pulling invasive plants near the Bird Sign on the Marginal Way fit in? Her volunteering started with family encouragement, a Town conservation group and water testing. The opportunities to make a difference, paid or volunteer, seem to be everywhere for her. Becoming a homeowner five years ago and now here full time, Ogunquit is lucky to have her!

Natural Resources

PFAS Part II: What Are Ways to Protect Yourself?

(See Part I in last issue of the [Breeze](#))

With more than 12,000 individual PFAS compounds in existence, there is limited understanding about their toxicity or their occurrence in the environment. Last April, the EPA announced its final rule setting the Maximum Contaminate Level (MCL) standard for six PFAS substances (PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxS, HFPO-DA and PFBS). PFAS can last thousands of years because of their carbon-fluorine chemical bonds which allow for their longevity and resistance to degradation in our ground water and water treatment plants.

As there are few studies showing what levels are concerning or lead to health effects (which could be greater in infants, firefighters, and those who work with the chemicals), the most efficient means to reduce contamination is prevention. Ogunquit voters recently approved \$75K for PFAS free turn out gear for our firefighters. Identification of contamination is important to eliminate an ongoing exposure. The 17 wells and soil within a quarter mile of the Fire Dept Training site have been tested for PFAS with results pending.

Sludge and State Wide Farmland

As you may know, the sludge from sewer treatment was spread over many farmlands as it was thought to be good fertilizer. Unfortunately it is now understood that it was contaminated with PFAS. This practice is now banned in Maine (it must be sent to a landfill), but government agencies like the EPA have set low levels as acceptable. Only sludge is required to be tested, not the waste entering the sewer plant. The most recent test at the Ogunquit Sewer Plant showed a level well below the threshold requiring further treatment.

As part of a coalition, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) is actively advocating to support farmers whose land has been contaminated. Find out more about what you can do to support them [here](#).



What You Can Do

- If you use well water, get it tested by a state certified laboratory. (Public water is tested by your utility as below). If your drinking water has elevated levels, use a water filter at the tap certified to remove PFAS. Talk to your physician if you are breast feeding and/or using premixed formula.
- Limit the use of food packaging such as grease-resistant takeout containers, microwaveable popcorn bags, and pet food bags. Remove the food from these containers before heating or reheating
- Avoid using non-stick cookware. These contain coatings to give them that slippery surface that leach into food as the surface degrades. Use cast iron or ceramic pans instead.
- Reduce the use of water resistant and stain repellent treatment and clothing. Seek out PFAS free retail products. This includes cosmetics, carpet, furniture and leather. The chemicals are often listed as PTFEs on the labels
- If you suspect you may have high levels in your body, your blood can be tested although the test can not tell you if or how it will affect your health
- Check local fish and game advisories for any contamination. In early November, there was a Do Not Eat advisory for deer and wild turkeys in areas in Maine



Government regulation of PFAS production and support for environmental clean-up is needed to reduce and eliminate exposures, and to provide for land and water without contamination

Local Water Source

The water supply from the Kennebunk River Well (KRW) has been the only source within the KKW Water District that tested positive for PFAS contamination. PFOA and PFOS are the two primary PFAS contaminants found in raw (untreated) water. A treatment system using granulated carbon for filtering PFAS has been installed and is in use. Since treatment, these levels at the Well are now undetectable. Of note, The District received \$2.6 million from the Class Action litigation against the chemical manufacturers 3M and DuPont

Local News & Events

Perkins Cove Schedule

- Bridge span down late October
- One third of dredge work month of November
- Dredge re-starting January 20th until March 1st
- Federal grant covers dredging cost (\$2.85 mil)
- New pier as part of winter construction
- Bridge span reinstalled April 1st
- Construction of new bridge starts Fall 2026



Dredge Arrives in Cove

Learn more about [Sea Level Rise and Coastal Storms Along the Maine Coastline](#)

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

12:00pm – 1:00pm

with marine geologist Peter Slovinsky
Wells Reserve at Laudholm



More Rocks Dropped at Main Beach Parking Lot



Get Tickets for [Winter Wonders at Sandy Hill](#)

A Light Show experience located nearby in Eliot with over 2 Million Lights on a 14-acre light display, the “Largest and Most Immersive Walk-Through Light Show display in New England”
November 22nd-December 31st



Sign up at ogunquitbreeze@gmail.com
or go to our [website](#)

Or if you travel farther.... [Gardens Aglow](#) at the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden, Boothbay
November 16-
December 31st

