

THE OGUNQUIT BREEZE

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

Select Board

Code of Ethics #6

Decisions Based on Merit

"Members shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand. No member shall make promises in advance as to how they will vote on a matter, which shall properly come before the board as a whole."

- In years past, volunteers interested in applying to sit on a commission or committee felt they should prepare themselves before submitting their application to the Town Clerk.
- It was preferable that they familiarize themselves with the history of the Town and its workings which takes time to develop.
- Attending Select Board and Planning Board meetings was encouraged and extremely helpful.
- Before applying for a seat on a committee, you attended meetings to educate yourself in order to be ready to serve when appointed.

Sitting on committees requires hard work and dedication. Those who apply don't expect, nor should they accept, their motives questioned nor their sincerity challenged. They expect to be judged on their substance, the skills they bring and the merit of their character. Competence and sincerity should be the benchmark. # 6 of the Select Board Code of Ethics recognizes that this is the case.

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Quote from the Select Board

"I don't have to agree with people we don't have to be friends and for crying out loud we don't have to like each other but if you don't work well with others ***if I feel you're not honest or trustworthy***, I wouldn't appoint somebody to a board or committee and I apologize if that hurts your feelings but ***quite frankly too bad***. I think anyone up here has earned the right to try to surround themselves with people who want to move the town forward..."

June 20, 2023 at 1:53

Town News

- **Budget Review Committee appointments**
 - a. Full Member Chris Nobile
 - b. 1st Alternate Sheldon Drucker
 - c. 2nd Alternate Barbara Ferraro
- **Comprehensive Plan Presentation** August 17th 6:30-7:30 PM
- **Chamber rent for Town building** \$3,000 monthly plus taxes & expenses July 1st-January 2024
- **DO YOU EVER REMEMBER THE SIDEWALKS, STREETS, AND BEACHES OF OGUNQUIT LOOKING SO DIRTY?**

Faces and Places

Mile Marker

Is this how we care for our local historic sites?

Historians like to point out the stone markers laid out along former Post Roads throughout the eastern part of the country. Many of the milestones set down in the 18th century still lie next to these old roads. The mile marker that sits on Old Kings Highway in Ogunquit (yes, it's still there) is not the easiest site to find. You have to be looking for the marker as it's size is only about 16"x16."

Many of today's routes #1 and #1a in the area, which began as Native American pathways, made use of sections of the old Post Road. In some cases, the original name, King's Highway, has endured. Its name is derived from King Charles II, who, soon after being crowned, asked the governors of his colonies to establish a line of communication in 1660. The entire length of The King's Highway did not become a continuous wagon road until about 1735. Its benefits included commerce and travelling especially for coastal fishing towns, and the availability of social, political and cultural exchange.

As such, this landmark is considered a significant symbol of our area's past. Thus, in December of 2006, the newly formed Ogunquit Historic Preservation Commission completed the application for the mile marker on Old Kings Highway to be designated an Historic Site. This was voted to be an addition to the Ogunquit register with 6 other properties by the Select Board on January 27, 2007. The inscription reads, "B, 89, 1769" meaning that the stone was on the Boston Post Road, 89 miles from Boston, and was placed in 1769.



Mile Marker stone in 2006



Mile Marker stone today

Benjamin Franklin himself once wrote, "Historians relate, not so much what is done, as what they would have believed." In some reports, "large granite blocks" were placed along the post roads radiating outward from Boston. In Maine the milestones were set along the early post road from Kittery to Portland in 1760. We have evidence to the contrary given that our landmark was dated 1769.

How was the mileage measured? Franklin has been given credit for devising a measuring tool that, by being attached to a wagon wheel and by counting the number of rotations, the calculation of a mile could be accomplished. In addition, the myth lives on that Benjamin Franklin either set out or ordered the Boston Post Road Milestones when he was postmaster general from 1753-74.

In fact, he was *deputy* postmaster for the colonies along with William Hunter. (He did not become the first Postmaster General until after 1776). Before that time, Post Office officials had neither the responsibility nor the budget for building and maintaining roads, bridges, ferries, or milestones. Also, milestones were of no particular use to the postal service, since post riders had travelled the old roads delivering mail since 1673. On the other hand, they may have been very convenient for other travelers as indicators of tavern locations where most communications were delivered regarding the Revolution and other events in Boston.

Whatever the reason for the placement of these milestones, our historic marker, the only one in Ogunquit, is now set in concrete (many were originally part of a stone wall) in a no longer well-travelled part of the Town. As the two pictures indicate, the marker is not well cared for. Doesn't our history deserve better preservation?

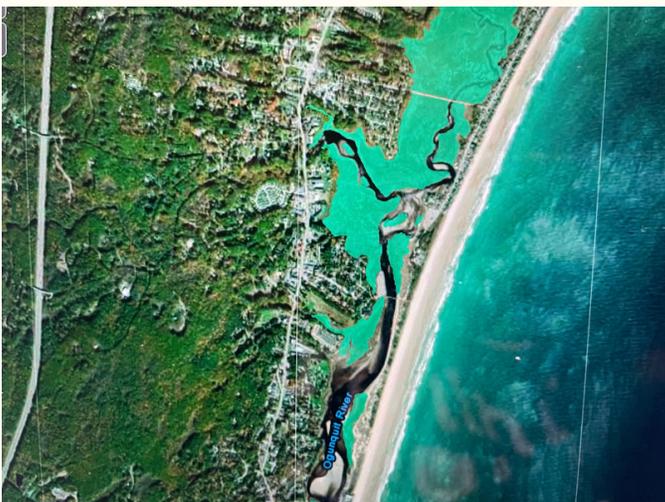
Natural Resources

Marsh Migration

Repeated reports warn about the negative impacts of climate change and sea level rise. These reports relate to larger storms and tides, increased flooding, erosion, infrastructure loss and socio-economic vulnerabilities. One other coastal hazard, not often discussed, that will impact Ogunquit and other coastal towns with wetlands is marsh migration.

Marsh migration is a natural way for wetlands to ensure their survival by, over time, creeping away from sea level rise toward higher, drier land to avoid drowning. Initially small puddles that appear in the salt marsh that look like an over watered house plant can turn into larger zones called mega pools. Eventually ground where wetlands migrated from is flooded and converted to open water forever. Persistent migration means that benefits such as carbon storage (wetlands store ten times as much carbon as forested land), erosion control, storm surge protection, absorption of wave energy, reduced flood damage, pollution abatement, and preservation of wildlife habitat and biodiversity are continued.

The Wells and Ogunquit marshes are the second largest salt marsh complex in Maine, including extensive areas of undisturbed habitat. They also support several rare and exemplary natural communities and ecosystems along with a number threatened and endangered species. The three estuarine systems that comprise the Wells Reserve (Little River, Webhannet River and Ogunquit River) encompass three broad habitat types – wetlands, upland (both natural and developed), and beach (sand and rocky). The dominant habitat is approximately 1200 acres of saltmarsh. Of these, 97 acres are in Ogunquit and are at risk of flooding.



The light green area is expected migration in Ogunquit



Example of a house built along a marsh, Ogunquit River, Wells. (Photo by MoVaughn123)

As wetlands migrate, they convert the upland habitat, allowing plants and organisms to reestablish themselves. As sea level rises, the grasslands or forest become saltier and able to support marsh habitat. In order for salt marshes to survive with rising seas, they must grow vertically at a rate equal to the rate of sea level rise and horizontally above the low tide line. The marsh grows in height by accumulating vegetative root material and trapping the carried sediment, altering high tide.

Marshes can migrate landward to keep pace with sea level if there are no physical barriers such as steep slopes, rock walls, roads, bridges, buildings, etc. hindering migration and impacting their movement. Not all upland areas are suitable to become tidal wetlands. Those suitable are usually shoreline that is natural and free of structures that act as a barrier, have gentle slopes allowing wetlands to inch up gradually, and have poorly drained spoils that create the saturated conditions that wetlands need.

Often salt marshes are conserved, but adjacent uplands are not. In areas where the saltmarsh cannot migrate inland because of adjacent development, marshes will be submerged, resulting in the removal of critical ecosystem and buffer.

Given that these coastal wetlands are important to our community, how should we plan ahead immediately to ensure their future along our coast?

How do we make room for marsh to migrate ?

- Protect them against development
- Install physical barriers to prevent erosion
- Revert and restore areas to coastal wetland
- Address habitat loss through education, outreach, messaging to landowners and working with State and Federal Agencies to plan ahead. See [Wells Reserve at Laudholm](#)

When will Ogunquit have a plan for ensuring Marsh Migration and what will it include?



Maine Healthy Beaches

Enterococci Bacteria Counts

Safety threshold in marine waters:
104 MPN/100mL

Date/Count	Riverside	Little Beach
June 6, 2023	132	185
June 20, 2023	374	246
July 5, 2023	565	327
July 6, 2023	496	448
July 11, 2023	98	10
July 18, 2023	309	422

Since water is only tested on Tuesdays, there could be many other days with high counts after rain events.

Trash from fireworks washed up on the beach with the tide on July 6th & 7th



Thank you to the volunteers for the clean up!

Why a Citizen's Petition?

Over the last decade, there have been several Petitions placed on the ballot by citizens and/or members of Town Committees.

Petitions are governed by State law (MRSA Title 30-A) and have requirements for the number of signatures from Town voters to qualify. The Select Board may move to put the petition on the ballot, however, there are other avenues to do so.

The motivation for these petitions has usually been related to a perceived need, or a lack of action on the part of Town Government.

Some failed:

- Funding for OVS in 2016
- Allowance of bike kiosks in 2018
- Revised Comprehensive Plan in 2018
- Extra funding for conservation land reserve 2021
- Proposal to renovate the police area in 2022

Some passed:

- Prohibiting private helicopter landings in 2016
- Term limits on Planning Board members in 2021
- 55+ housing development on Route #1 in 2022

Even when a petition failed, it may have brought the issue to the forefront, prompted revisions or abandoned the proposition. It may not have been a priority at the time given other demands.

If **You** could write a petition and get support for it, what issue would you address for the Town to consider?



The Breeze welcomes your questions on Town issues. Your confidentiality will be maintained. Comments are moderated for relevance and civility.

Sign up at ogunquitbreeze@gmail.com