

THE OGUNQUIT BREEZE

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



Town News

- **Absentee Ballots** available May 13-June 9th
- **Elect** 4 positions on Budget Review Committee among 8 candidates
- Planning Board Chair and member **rescind** their resignations
- Conservation member resigns; joins **Planning Board**
- All other committee, board, task force & commission resignations (**unnamed**) for the past year were accepted by the Select Board on April 19th
- **Without a public call for new applicants**, 3 appointed to Comp Plan

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Operating expenses should not be disguised as Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) in order to appear to lower annual property taxes or to pay for bloated expenses

The Town borrows money (long term bonds) to fund Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) that pay for acquiring specific assets to serve the community for many years.

While interest rates are low (1.95-2.5%), it may be a good time to borrow. On the other hand, borrowing adds to the long term burden by pushing payments into the future. A **responsible** Operating Budget should reflect all the regular costs balanced against revenue **BUT NOT** enable the budget to balance by offloading expenses onto bonds.

For example, according to the [Multi-year CIP plan](#), street paving and replacement of police cruisers are annual expenses (warrant articles #48 and #50). Why are they not in the Towns' operating budget instead of creating debt?



2030

Over the course of 5 years, the cost of these loans (\$75K and \$55K) will be \$8,157 in interest.

How Much Do We Want To Borrow?

- Proposed Capital Improvement Project (CIP) expenditures on the June Ballot total **\$2,098,000**
This amount will triple our current debt
Annual Debt payment will increase 125%
- If all CIP are passed, \$249,487 interest will be paid over 5-10 years at the current rate.
- Proposed equipment borrowing accounts for \$373K (articles #46-#50).
- Three large CIP projects are on the ballot for a total cost of \$1.725 million (articles #51-#53)

See the details on Page 3

Have You Noticed?

Covid in Ogunquit wastewater
the highest EVER!

[See Chart](#)



Warrant Articles of Note on the June 14th Ballot

Land Use

Article #7: Zoning Change & Official Zoning Map

Summary: There are 16 official zones (7 are Shoreland) in Ogunquit. Currently there are **more than 200 properties** that are divided into 2 or more zones. **Depending on the zone, there are specific standards for lot sizes. When building, the more restrictive zone must be followed. If this passes, this vote will set a precedent for changes in zoning and subsequent building.**

A Yes Vote: Will allow individual owners to request a change in their zone (\$5,000 fee). **Owners could then be allowed to split lots and create more density and impervious surface than allowed under the existing zone.**

A No Vote: Makes no changes in the existing zone(s). This allows for the Comprehensive Plan Committee to review the entire zoning structure for Ogunquit and make a strategic plan for the entire community.



"Voting is a right best exercised by people who have taken the time to learn about the issues."
-Tony Snow

Article #20: Natural Resources Coordinator (\$120K)

Summary: This position will assist Code Enforcement and develop stormwater management programs. The position is included in the Land Use Office budget encompassing water quality testing and support for several environmental Town Committees and Planning Board. According to the Town Manager, the Coordinator will have a background in Environmental Sciences. [See full job description](#). Both Select Board and BRC voted approval.

A Yes Vote: Will fund entire Land Use package **including new position** (\$559,920).

A No Vote: Will fund at the level of previous year (\$392,602) and without new position.

Article #41: Conservation Reserve Fund

Summary: This fund contributed to the purchase of the Boston Farm as conservation land, thus depleting the account. The Select Board voted for **NO funding** (\$0) 3 to 2; BRC 3 to 2.

A Yes Vote: Will leave the account at \$0 dollars.

A No Vote: Will continue to fund the previous annual amount (\$25K) to start to replenish the reserve account.

Note: This is a reversed vote - to vote in favor of replenishing the reserve account, you vote NO.

Warrant Articles of Note on the June 14th Ballot

continued



Big Ticket CIP

Articles #51 and #52

Summary: These are on the ballot to ensure they are completed whether or not there will be FEMA funding to supplement the costs. These needed repairs and improvements have been delayed and need to move forward. Together they cost \$850K and, if the entire amounts are borrowed by the Town, will accrue almost \$107K in interest over 10 years. Both voted in favor by Select Board and BRC.

Article #51 Marginal Way (\$250K)

A Yes Vote: Will fund planned repairs to add to the already existing \$332K (a fraction of the \$1.2M originally granted but then reversed).

A No Vote: Will further delay the repairs.

Article #52 Main Beach (\$600K)

A Yes Vote: Will provide funds (adding to almost \$104K from FEMA) for the reconstruction of the parking lot revetment and slope to fix damage caused by the March of 2018 storm.

A No Vote: Will delay the Project.

Article #25: Culture and Recreation Director (\$117,314)

Summary: The Parks & Recreation Committee originally asked for a part time position (\$30K). *It isn't clear how this budget item was then transformed into a full time position to oversee event planning for many additional Town Committees without their consultation.*

See [full job description](#). No qualifications have been listed.

Article #53: Municipal Campus Project (\$875K)

Summary: Proposes to finance as yet unapproved plans for the Dunaway Community Center, police station and Old Village School (OVS) renovation, demolition and/or construction. Interest on 10 year bond will be \$110,027. Voted approval by Select Board and 3-2 in favor by BRC.

A Yes Vote: approves the bond.

A No Vote: sends the project back for re-bid.

Article #42: American Rescue Plan Funds (\$98K)

Summary: To allow the Select Board to accept and spend these Covid recovery monies (not yet specified) "in the best interest of the Town."

Allowable uses include:

- Regular municipal services such as roads and bridges, public health and resident services
- Water, sewer and broadband infrastructure

Expenditures not allowed:

- To reduce taxes, pay down debt or subsidize budgets
- Road improvement or equipment replacement

The cost is included in the budget of the Parks and Recreation Committee (plus their request for additional \$4K). Select Board voted in favor 3 to 1; BRC 3 to 2.

A Yes Vote: Will fund Committee (\$20K) and Position for a total cost of **\$137,314**.

A No Vote: Will fund Parks and Recreation Committee at last year's level (\$16K).

Natural Resources

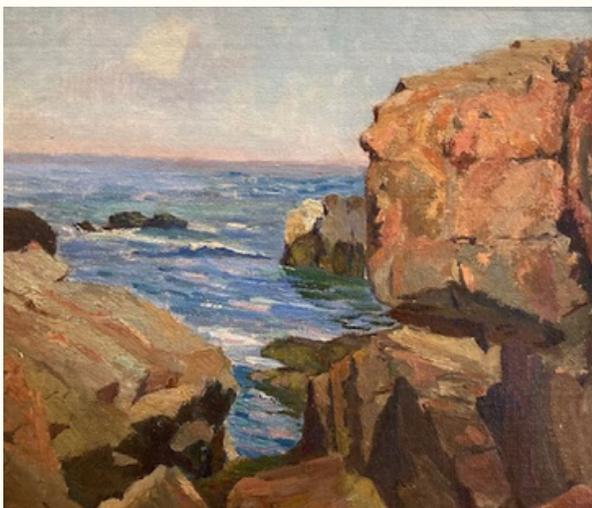
Tales of Trails

By now, it's widely known that The Marginal Way was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 23, 2022. Vice Chair **Elaine Cooper** of the Marginal Way Committee along with its Chair, **Joan Griswold**, conducted the arduous research necessary to establish its historic and cultural importance as well as the integrity of its location. It's extremely rare that a trail is ever recognized. It's interesting to see how our mile and a quarter long path stacks up to some of the better known trails on the list that it's now part of.

The Iditarod Trail in Alaska is 2,400 miles long going from Anchorage to Nome and hosts the famous sled dog race every March. First mapped and marked in 1908, between 1910 and 1912 over 10,000 prospectors used the trail during the gold rush. Most of the trail is located on public land and is managed by the State of Alaska or federal agencies and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

The Marginal Way is maintained by the Marginal Way Committee whose due diligence through the years has preserved the historic integrity of the walk by not altering its location in any way.

The Cliff Walk in Newport Rhode Island, part of the Ochre Point-Cliff Historic District, is a 3 mile long footpath running along the crest of the Cliffs with the sea below and the gardens of the District's estates on its westside. At one time, the estate owners wanted to limit public access to the walk and erected gates across it to prevent public use. The outraged native Newporters won a court decision preventing this from being done and the barriers came down. In the 1930's and 1940's, it was maintained by the Works Progress Administration with the municipality taking on the responsibility after that. It was added to the Register of Historic Places in 1978.



Ogunquit Rocks by Elizabeth Jewel, 1925



One of many paintings by Leon Durand Bonnet, 1930

The Town of Ogunquit has never had to resort to lawsuits to keep the Marginal Way open to the public because Josiah Chase donated the walk to the Town in 1925.

Mt. Desert Island Hiking Trail System consists of 110 hiking trails covering 117 miles mostly all within the boundaries of Acadia National Park on Mt. Desert Island Maine. Covering jurisdictions in Bar Harbor, Seal Harbor, Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor, all the trails were set up between 1844 and 1942. There are iconic views recorded by artists like Thomas Cole that have captured the natural grandeur of the surroundings. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on April 15, 2022.



The Coast, Ogunquit, Maine by Edward Potthast, 1923

The Marginal Way's magnificent views of ancient rock formations formed by shifting tectonic plates millions of years ago and the everchanging movement of the ocean currents and tides below them have attracted artists through the years. Their varied interpretations of their surroundings are hanging in museums and homes throughout the world. It's amazing how much beauty is contained in this mile and a quarter trail.

Congratulations