

THE OGUNQUIT BREEZE

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

Town News

- As Delta variant worries increased, hybrid meetings introduced
- Masks are now **required** at the Dunaway Center
- Thanks to the Fire Department staff for recently hosting their first vaccination event. 36 vaccinations were given, though 100 doses were available. A second event will be on September 9th - pass it on!
- **Lindsey Perry resigns from Select Board**
- **Jerry DeHart resigns from Budget Review Committee**
- Special Town meeting November 2nd; absentee ballots available October 1-28th

What's Happening to Ogunquit?

Ogunquit is more a feeling than a place. It is a state of mind where memories of carefree days at the beach in a quaint village abide.

Still, tourists arrive to capture that long ago version but instead find today's reality: outsized signage, contaminated waters, demolitions and McMansions, over 50 liquor licenses, businesses' wares lining the streets...all claiming what was once the character of an art and lobstering community.

Although in some quarters this is called 'progress', this insult to the environment needn't be the only way for business to prosper. Enforced codes and collaboration between leaders and residents could avert the obvious deterioration of this beautiful place by the sea.

-Letter printed in York County Coast Star

As the **Covid Risk** for York County rises to **HIGH**, wearing masks indoors is recommended regardless of vaccination status.

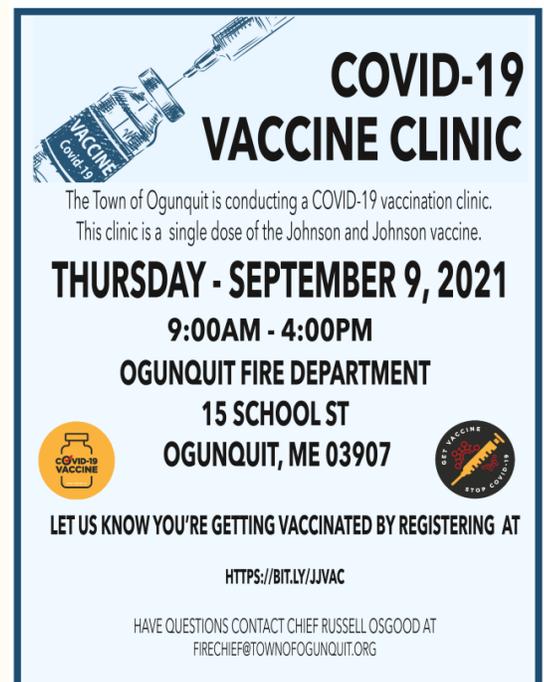
More than 50% of new infections in Maine are in people less than 40 years old.

[See Table](#) from Maine CDC for explanation

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- Performing Arts Festival at the Beach

Watch for our October
Special Election issue on Warrant
Articles and State Referendum
Questions for the November ballot



COVID-19 VACCINE CLINIC

The Town of Ogunquit is conducting a COVID-19 vaccination clinic. This clinic is a single dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 9, 2021
9:00AM - 4:00PM
OGUNQUIT FIRE DEPARTMENT
15 SCHOOL ST
OGUNQUIT, ME 03907

LET US KNOW YOU'RE GETTING VACCINATED BY REGISTERING AT
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/JJVAC](https://bit.ly/jjvac)

HAVE QUESTIONS CONTACT CHIEF RUSSELL OSGOOD AT
FIRECHIEF@TOWNOFGUNQUIT.ORG

Faces & Places

Darren Dixon : Yet Another Goodbye



As he began his tenth year working for the Town of Ogunquit, Facilities Department Director Darren Dixon suddenly found himself transferred to the Public Works Department, stripped of his supervisory responsibilities and facing a severe reduction in pay. Why? Another unexplained reorganization!

Bringing his skills in the building trades as an airplane painter and

aviation hydraulic mechanic, he moved from Public Works to the newly formed Facilities Department created in 2017 by Pat Finnigan. He revamped beach bathhouse cleaning and trash collection in the busy tourist season, and maintained all town facilities year round.

Sorry to see him leave, we wish Darren the best and thank him for the dedicated job he did for our Town.

If the Select Board is serious about finding a permanent Town Manager, why now is an Interim Town Manager **firing, demoting and eliminating** Town departments and employees?



What happened to the voter approved June budget for these positions and departments?

Ogunquit: Is There a Way Forward?

Although the *Breeze* doesn't often editorialize, ignoring reporting on recent examples of Board misconduct, chronic absences, and sidestepping concerns affecting the residents of Ogunquit (to name a few) would seem like a dereliction of duty when citing Town news.

If you haven't been paying attention to who is setting policy and what that policy means to your quality of life as a resident of Ogunquit, then you may be unaware of the dysfunction that now exists in our municipal government.

Watching Town meetings becoming more disrespectful to residents and, in some cases to members of Committees, leads one to wonder how our Town can go forward in an inclusive way to tackle the many current and upcoming challenges we face as a community.

Here are a few questions generated while watching various meetings:

- Why aren't **resident's questions** to the Select Board answered when asked, but instead put aside to the next meeting where they are rarely addressed?
- Why are **Select Board Liaisons** voicing their opinions on what actions should be taken by the sitting Committee they are assigned to?
- How are **lapsed or unappointed members** of Committees permitted to vote on decisions such as at a recent Zoning Board of Appeals meeting?
- Why are important issues consistently being decided by a **5 to 4 vote** on the Charter Commission instead of working towards successful compromise and consensus?
- Where is it written in the Select Board Rules that it's ethical to **campaign or lobby** for a candidate or an article on the warrant?
- Why does there appear to be a revolving door of members and candidates barely spending time on one Board before being elevated to another while other **qualified applicants** are denied participation?

Why Aren't These Followed?

Code of Ethics: "The professional and personal conduct of Members must be above reproach and must avoid any appearance of impropriety. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, from making personal charges or disparaging remarks, or from verbal attacks upon the character or motives of Members of Town boards, committees, or commissions, or Town Staff or the Citizens."

Select Board Rules: "....may not make any comments referencing support or opposition for any candidate for political office or political cause."

"The **Chair and Vice Chair** have the responsibility for intervening when actions of Members appear to be in violation of the Code of Ethics."

Can One of Ogunquit's Greatest Natural Resources Make You Sick? POSSIBLY!



Increasingly higher fecal bacterial levels are occurring all over Maine's coastal beaches; Ogunquit is no exception!

Maine Healthy Beaches (MHB) in partnership with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection has been working with over 60 participating Municipalities since 2003 to ensure saltwater beaches remain healthy and clean.

In Ogunquit, water samples are collected every Tuesday morning from Memorial Day to Labor Day by the lifeguards. Results of the testing are made available the next day. The tests monitor for fecal indicator bacterial, called enterococci, which can come from human, animal or bird waste. As there are so many bacteria that could be tested at much higher costs, the fecal bacteria counts are used to indicate the presence of other disease-causing organisms that can make swimmers and waders sick. Additional tests are taken after heavy rainfall as stormwater runoff can wash pollutants into the beaches that negatively affect water quality.

When a certain unsafe threshold is reached, advisories are issued at the beach with signs and on MHB's website. These advisories may be a Contamination Advisory – "Bacteria levels may be unsafe. Water contact is not advised," or a Rainfall Advisory – "Rainfall can increase bacteria levels. Water contact is not advised." An advisory will remain in place until further testing indicates that the concentration of bacteria is below the safety threshold.

A good rule to remember is: **DO NOT swim for at least 24 hours or two full tidal cycles after rainfall ceases before going into the water.** Open beaches (Main, Footbridge, Moody) will most often be much safer for activity than beaches fed by rivers or where catch basin stormwater enters the area (Riverside, Little).

Continued ➤



Riverside Beach stats
 2004-2019:
 0-6 advisories/year
 2020: 9 advisories
 2021: 10 advisories
 The highest bacteria count in 2020 was 1,860
 This year the highest:
 2,909
 (safe range 104 mpn/ml)

Why should you be concerned? Illness. Water illnesses can be gastrointestinal, respiratory or skin related. Contact with contaminated water may cause nausea, diarrhea, stomach cramps, chills, fever, sinus infections, and other flu-like symptoms. Illnesses can include skin rashes and eye, ear, nose, and throat infections. If you experience these symptoms, your doctor should be contacted and the water-caused illnesses should be reported to the [Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Recreational waterborne illnesses may be contracted by swallowing or having contact with contaminated water at the beach. Some of the sources of contaminated water are:

- Children not properly cleaned after using the bathroom and then entering the water
- Improperly disposed of diapers
- Swimmers with diarrhea
- A fecal accident or vomiting in the water
- Waste from wildlife, domestic animals, pets and birds
- Malfunctioning subsurface wastewater septic systems
- Malfunctioning sewer collection systems
- Contaminated stormwater runoff
- Boaters discharging waste into the water

How can you help keep Ogunquit's beaches clean and you and your family healthy?

- DO NOT swim when a beach advisory is posted
- Do NOT swallow the water
- Avoid water contact after heavy rainfall
- Use good sanitary and diaper habits – frequent bath breaks, handwashing, proper diaper disposal
- Shower before swimming
- Properly dispose of pet waste
- Maintain and routinely pump out your septic system
- Report questionable discharges to your plumbing inspector – have your lateral pipe checked (the one you own that goes from your home to the Sewer pipe)
- Plant native vegetative buffers along waterways

Support our safe beach and waterways by good personal practices and by efforts of Town Committees to improve conservation and environmental protection!



The Good News

203 fledged plovers have been counted in Maine. A number not reached since 1981!

Ogunquit Dog Park

Today there were 15 cars parked along the roadside leading to the dog park. One by one, though they were not the chauffeurs, the dogs gracefully and eagerly jumped out; there's the Poodle out of a Mini Cooper, oh a Great Dane in a Subaru, quickly comes a Dutch Shepherd in haste to meet the curious Chihuahua already running around the park, and then there's Ruby, the Wheaten (mayor of the herd), dressed in her denim Red Sox playsuit today greeting all comers.

For this is the place that brings together the community of dogs and dog lovers creating immediate friendships among all species despite political, religious, gender or any other schisms. It is a place where celebrations are hatched and also losses are grieved. It matters not to remember a human's name but forgetting the name of a four-legged pet would be a travesty!

The possibility of a dog park had always been brewing for the dog lovers as other communities had them and the allowable time for 'free range dogs' on the beach was limited to just five months during the year. So in earnest, in 2009, five people gathered in a living room and using the Kennebunk park as a model and the Director of AWS as a mentor, the plan was hatched. The application to the Planning Board that October read in part, "We wish to establish a dog park for providing an area for the socialization of dogs and their owners.

The park would be opened year round seven days per week from dawn to dusk. It would be a fenced in area of approx. 1 acre with a parking area to accommodate 10 vehicles. The surface inside the fence would be natural with a wood chip covering and the parking area would be gravel covered..." With traffic studies, modifications of applications, donations from businesses, fund raising from the Brownie Troop, and final approval from the Town, on Martin Luther King Day in 2011 the Park opened to the barks and cheers of a crowd and ribbon cutting by Ruby.



In the past ten years, our park has flourished; friendships forged, a community built, puppies born, smiles on humans and wagging tails on the best of us. You are invited to join the fun at the [Ogunquit Dog Park!](#) [Facebook page](#)

Canines for Clean Water Help Protect Water Quality



On **Sept. 9th** see volunteers on the beaches, trails & parks. Take the Pledge and get some treats for your furry friends. Hosted by HeRO:

[Healthy Rivers Ogunquit \(HeRO\)](#)

Ogunquit Performing Arts
Presents
Cappriccio Festival of Kites

Portland fiddler/singer
Andy Happel
with high flying music
on Ogunquit Beach

September 11th
Two concerts
10-11:30 am & 2-3:30 pm

[More info here](#)

Sign up to receive the free Breeze email newsletter - contact: ogunquitbreeze@gmail.com

