

**Oakdale Civic Association
General Monthly Meeting
March 8, 2010**

2010 Officers

President:	Ray Carta	560-4650 - present
Vice President:	Stan Feldman	523-8835 - present
Treasurer:	Pat Kassten	589-8222 - present
Recording Secretary:	Carol Schwasnick	589-7455 - present
Corresponding Secretary;	Marilyn Triolo	589-5981 - not present

Directors

Cathy Cohen – not present

Minutes Recorded by Carol Schwasnick

www.OakdaleCivicAssociation.org

President Ray Carta called the meeting to order at 7:35pm, and initiated the pledge of allegiance. President Carta asked for a motion to accept the minutes as presented and distributed. A motion was made and seconded.

Treasurer's report: Pat Kassten.

Highlights for this month include total income from dues of \$240. Paid members for 2010: 180
Paid Members for 2011: 3, due to prepayment.

President Carta requested a motion to waive the rules for the rest of the meeting to bring on the guest speaker. A motion was made and seconded

Guest Speakers: Renee Bernardini and Dr. Donna Ciampa from Connetquot Foundation for the Advancement of Children (CFAC)

Dr. Ciampa noted that CFAC has been a formal nonprofit since 2004, conceived in 2001-2002 by Connetquot's Superintendent and principals at the time. Its purpose is really to fund programs that the district would otherwise not be able to accommodate. To date CFAC has funded \$40K in grant money for programs. Only 2 schools have not received a grant, and neither has applied.

Recent grants include funds for the High School multimedia science lab, the Middle School robotics program, and dance dance revolution and climbing wall funding for elementary school phys ed programs.

OBMS earned \$5000 to renovate the courtyard. The kids will design it in conjunction with an architect. Slocum got money for a club for knitting. Tactile club that is something they enjoy, and reintroduces this craft. Over the years the group has tried to come up with ways they can be more effective in the community. Premm was awarded a stove for teaching baking. Dr. Ciampa is also a professor at Suffolk County Community College. She has worked on a CFAC program which offers academic support for families financially needy and at risk. Approx. 50 students are enrolled, and meet once/week. They have volunteers from local colleges, the Future Teachers Club and Honor Society. This is free support for these children who are academically in need. The program is working out very nicely and has doubled in size since the start.

Dr. Ciampa stated they need volunteers to help start and run programs. Member Joanne Festa volunteered her background in dance to help with a future program in this area.

Member Denise Conte posed a question about the tutoring program and asked how often they meet. Dr. Ciampa stated they meet once a week at Connetquot Public Library. She continued to comment that CFAC is committed to awareness of the federal laws regarding the privacy of these children, and that the organization understands the security issues at hand. Dr. Ciampa offered that she is also a member of the community with children in the district.

Renee Bernardini announced that the Fashion Show fund raiser is coming up Thursday March 11 at the Hyatt Regency in Islandia at 7pm. This is the second annual fashion show; the models are teachers and administrators in the district. Ms. Bernardini stated that one successful fundraiser per year would be great, and the OCA membership is encouraged to participate. Presently CFAC membership is hovering around 200. They do an annual membership drive which has been helpful. The CFAC site is now linked to the OCA website, and vice versa. CFAC's web address is: <http://www.connetquotfoundation.org/>.

President's Report: President Ray Carta

President Carta reported on the potential closing of State Parks which has been suggested by Governor Paterson. Recently emails with petitions opposing these actions have been circulated to the membership.

A member stated that a recent letter to Newsday made a good suggestion: Pay a fee during the week. Most people would be glad to pay it to keep the parks open rather than just closing them down. For example, the local Bayard Cutting Arboretum is packed with seniors who use and enjoy that park.

Vice President Stan Feldman stated that the threat to close parks is a political ploy from Gov. Paterson. Why don't we do the right things instead? Go after Medicaid fraud not Medicaid – or our parks. Our legislators get paid to do a part time job and have two offices. Standards like this must be changed. Mr. Feldman stated that in the south, the State of Florida is looking at a much worse scenario. By continuing to elect the same people over and over again we have put ourselves in this position. State government employees didn't go into work over the summer - the state Senate did not do their jobs - and they got paid anyway. Senator Foley was at the recent demonstration at Hecksher to save the parks, and he voted FOR the MTA surtax. Payroll at local businesses will get hit with .34 cents per 100 to patch MTA budget gaps, when the folks that work for these local businesses do not use MTA services. We are all supporting a very inept LIRR and the City of New York.

Member Denise Conte noted that she sent an email recently regarding a suggested Amendment to have Congress do more for their pay. Serve one term and leave and still get a pension. There is an Amendment going into law now. This email is to be distributed to the membership by Secretary Schwasnick.

A letter opposing delay of NY State tax refunds was also distributed. The ability to get our rightful refunds back is in jeopardy right now. It seems as of now it will be only one month delayed, but there are no guarantees and people are worried.

Government reform is needed. Paterson's community relations person who just resigned was making \$175K per year. That is an outrageously high salary for that role.

President Carta spoke about GPS – and Race Place in regards to reports of trucks frequently turning down this residential dead-end street. There are two large companies that update maps with GPS. It's a big job to update. They often don't bother updating. Any change that is required won't propagate in the system for a while. Member Joanne Festa noted that cesspool rigs, 18 wheelers turn down this street. She has been calling trucking companies as she can, reading numbers off offending trucks.

Discussion was held on the Locust Ave. railroad crossing. If you catch it wrong with your car, you go airborne. Ray Carta witnessed a piece of the rubber flying out and breaking someone's leg at another station a few years back. He has contacted the LIRR said they would send an inspector out to evaluate the crossing.

The Council of PTAs is hosting drug awareness night where they are bringing in experts. The event will be held March 22, at the High School from 7-9. Speakers will include members of the Suffolk County Police, Youth counselors, etc.

The Chamber of Commerce will be coming out soon. The OCA is working on branding, and has taken out an advertisement that serves as a public service announcement regarding resident concerns on drug awareness. This is a quarterly advertisement that the Oakdale Civic participates in.

A member stated that most people on Race place on the curve of the street have witnessed drug connections right in front of their homes. There are individuals – mostly young people that wait for their "connection," they appear very nervous. These connections also happen at Best Yet. Another member noted that there is a crack house they took down in the neighborhood, with a DEA officer living right across the street.

On a lighter note: the Oakdale Chamber of Commerce has their Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday March 27 at noon, on the Great Lawn at Dowling. Denise Conte asked that you bring down a food donation with you to help stock a food pantry. Volunteers are needed and should be there at 10am. Contact Denise Conte at creativeforce@optonline.net if you are interested in participating.

Monica Musetti Carlin is chamber Vice President, and has announced that they were looking to create an Oakdale historical society. President Carta noted that he would look to connect her with hooking her up with Glenn Siemsen, a member who also expressed interest in this at a recent OCA meeting. Monica's number is 521-6979 for anyone who is interested in contributing to this effort. Or, you may attend the Chamber meeting which is the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the library of Dowling College.

Denise Conte noted that the Annual Earth Hour is March 27 at 8:30pm. One of her passions is the environment (along with animals, etc). On this date, everyone should turn off their lights for one hour to show their support for saving energy and supporting our environment. The Empire State Building, the Pyramids in Egypt are examples of sites that have committed to participate. The reason for the event is to create awareness of shutting down cities for clean air act. Last year 1 billion people, 4100 cities, 87 countries on all 7 continents 80 million Americans in 318 cities participated.

Next month, Richard Baker the acting Commissioner of the Town of Islip Department of Public Works is scheduled to be the guest speaker for our meeting. We will discuss with him topics such as Victoria Court as a non-dedicated road, stop signs, flooding in Oakdale Bohemia Road, potholes, President Carta suggested to residents to bring pictures of Stuyvesant Rd. and the issues that arose when the old trees were finally taken down recently. The tree company ripped up the grass and did not repair it – it's a mess. The name of the tree company is Trees R Us from Bay Shore as per the side of the truck. There is no listing for this business that can be found. They left debris all over the lawn, branches and pieces of trees were everywhere. They came in the middle of a snowstorm and cut the branches and let them fall where they may.

Resident Joanne Festa noted that Oakdale Bohemia Rd. has been flooding terribly. Since the new condos went in and the woods were leveled, it has become worse. When it rains hard it is like a river. Member Terry Naimoli noted that she has a low car, and water came up to the bottom of the headlights, which is very hazardous. President Carta suggested that the DPW Acting Commissioner has suggested that he has a contractor that might help. Because of traffic, once you are on Oakdale Bohemia Rd. you cannot even turn around to avoid the flooding. It is a serious issue.

Open Floor

Denise Conte spoke about the copper roof that was recently removed from a building here on the St. John's campus. Now that she has addressed this issue publicly. Her access is being denied to the property. Denise heard through one of the St. John's caretakers that it was a fire marshal that told them they had to tear down that building, but that is a questionable response. The roof was hacked off. It was ornamental, and this was not typical demolition. Vice President Feldman stated he would seek an answer from Jay Conley of St. John's. Ms. Conte spoke to Rob Finnegan, the Town Historian, she talked to Town Attorney and he put a cease and desist on it. By January it was to have landmark status according to the Town Historian. Vice President Feldman stated this is still private property. It is one of the few remaining estates on the south shore, and Jay Conley is in charge of the St. John's property. The Town cannot apply for landmark status without involving him.

Cell phone towers: no application has been made for one on the Byron Lake Park property.
Gas station on the corner of Oakdale Bohemia Rd. and Montauk Hwy.: this is fully approved to move forward. Timing to be determined.

A new business – a tattoo parlor – has opened in the building next to the farm stand. They offer body piercing and tattoos, and display a neon sign. A member asked if we have anything restricting neon in this Town. President Feldman stated that theoretically any sign exposed to the public has to be approved by the Town of Islip. There must be a permit for any sign, and the thought is that no neon allowed. Any sign on the store or in the window must have a permit.

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 8:35pm.

The guest speaker for our next meeting will be the acting Commissioner of the Town of Islip DPW. Come with your relevant issues for discussion.

The next meeting will be April 12, 2010 at 7:30pm.