

OLD SAYBROOK COASTAL RESILIENCE COALITION, INC.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Location: Mindy K's Restaurant, Old Saybrook, CT

Date: January 7, 2025 6:00 pm

Attendees: Rick Bovino, Joanne Breen, Jeff Brodersen, Marie Cerino, Jay Costello, Jamie Greacen, Connie Hughes, Carolyn Lyle, Terence McGrath, Dave Pettinicchi (phone), Sally Pritchard, Robert Pulito, Ed Rajotte, Joe Russo, Michael Russo

Excused: Gary Albanese, Beth Chotkowski, Michael Cohen, Tara Gustafson, Donna Henry, David Hopkins, John Kennedy, Scott Loveland, Lewis Perry

Non-Voting Affiliate: Doug McCracken

Guest: None

AGENDA ITEMS

The meeting was called to order at 6:21 p.m.

Previous Meeting Minutes:

The previous Old Saybrook Coast Resilience Coalition (OSCRC), Inc. Dec. 3, 2024 meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the minutes; motion seconded and carried.

Secretary's Report:

Election of officers for the 2025-2026 term is as follows. An officer can serve three consecutive two-year terms. It was noted that associations need to report any new directors for the upcoming year.

Joe Russo – Chair (2 of 3 terms)

Gary Albanese – Vice Chair (2 of 3 terms)

Dave Pettinicchi – Secretary (2 of 3 terms)

Ed Rajotte – Treasurer (2 of 3 terms)

Officers reelected with no objections.

Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement forms were distributed to members who have not yet completed one when joining OSCRC. Signed forms need to be returned to the Secretary. The Conflict of Interest Policy will be sent to members who need to sign the acknowledgement form. Joe will collect forms and give to Dave.

Treasurer's Report:

The 2024 bank deposits and expenses during past month are as follows:

Deposits: None

In-Kind Donations: None

Expenses: \$180 Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce member dues

The current OSCRC balance as of December 31, 2024 is \$3,461.19.

Vice Chair's Report:

No report.

Chair's Report:

Joe Russo reminded the Board of Directors that alternate members should be available to fill in for primary members. In the event that, after three excused absences, neither the primary nor secondary are able to make a Board of Directors meeting, the primary will be recorded as an unexcused absence. Joe reiterated these attendance rules and outlined their requirements.

Joe will email a new OSCRC table listing primary and alternate OSCRC Board of Directors and Affiliate members after getting any changes from the associations.

Old Business:

1. Update on the Clinton-Fenwick-Old Saybrook-Westbrook (4 Shore Resilience) grant. The draft report originally scheduled to be posted in September 2024 was cancelled with no reschedule date. The entire project continues to be delayed with no new dates, drafts, or scheduled meetings. Chris Costa, Town Planner/Zoning Enforcement Officer for the Town of Old Saybrook, provided an in person update on the 4 Shore Resilience grant. She mentioned that the consultant on the project gave disappointing recommendations and underestimated the knowledge that Old Saybrook representatives knew about sea level rise. Consequently, the grant committee is meeting more than weekly to ensure getting a quality product. A public presentation on project results will be given on Monday, February 24, 6:00 at the Middle School auditorium. The goal is to have a final project report by March 1 of this year.
2. Update on the Old Saybrook 2024 Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) proposal. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation officially awarded on Dec. 9, 2024 \$323,400.00 to the Towns of Old Saybrook and Westbrook for the Planning to Restore Chalker and Chapman Beach Marshes and Mitigate Marsh-associated Flooding from Chapman Beach to Indiantown project. Chris Costa provided an in-person update on the working schedule for the new grant. The schedule begins with the selection of a consultant by February 26th. Joe and Doug are on the consultant selection committee. Next objective is to complete a project plan. The deadline for completing the project is August 2026. Chris noted that the project will be guided by the high priority actions in the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. She explained that a town must have a Hazard Mitigation Plan identifying problem areas and needed projects to be eligible for FEMA grant money.
3. Update on Chalker Beach Related Issues.
 - Whole Foods. Preliminary plans submitted by The Carpionato Group and Attorney Ed Cassella were reviewed by the zoning commission. The developer was looking for feedback from the commission before final plans were submitted. Commission concerns were frontage setbacks and zoning for three lots that were purchased for possible septic area. Developer stated they were cleaning up many zoning violations and were looking for a little grace from the setback to address parking concerns and a right of way for the neighboring gas station. Terence noted that the Carpionato Group came back to the Commission with a smaller store footprint to meet the Town's setback requirements. Chris Costa noted that there is some question whether Whole Foods can use the three lots purchased for a septic system because of soil properties. She also noted that there is still some disagreement on whether the building project is "renovation" or "new construction." There is also disagreement as to how many extra parking spaces will be allowed on the property.
 - The Chalker Beach, Bellaire, Indian Town beach Nourishment Study. The nourishment study is going as planned. The engineer has created concepts to be presented to the involved beach communities and to regulators for approval. Gary Albanese, in last month's meeting, discussed sand erosion issues, specific to Chalker Beach but applicable at all beaches. Need a sand dune and living shoreline

plantings to cut wave action, but there will be resistance from owners due to blockage of beach views from their homes. Overall, \$7MM - \$8MM is estimated for the potential new sand needs, but there is grant money. Just need to do the legwork. Terence noted that the coastal engineer will have a preliminary meeting with CT DEEP and the Army Corp of Engineers to review the proposed concept designs.

4. OSCRC volunteer team reports:

- Literature creation (Dave Pettinicchi). Dave posted a modified OSCRC brochure onto four Facebook websites. He suggested individual associations post a brochure on their website. Dave has sent out copies of a brochure to association representatives, but can send them again if necessary.
- Joe has a small quantity of OSCRC rack cards for use by other OSCRC Board members.
- Planning, permitting, and performance (shovel-ready) project proposals (Joe Russo).
 - Update on Fenwood seawall. CT Department of Transportation shored up the Fenwood seawall damage for the winter and strengthened the drainage pipe repair they did a couple of years ago. CT Department of Transportation will return in the Spring to make more permanent repairs.
 - Update on the Constellation Energy \$500 grant entitled “OSCRC Living Shoreline Education.” Marie shared a version of the Constellation “Living Shoreline” information sheet that was generated for social media prior to this meeting. The social media version was approved by the Board. Marie stated that Constellation approved the use of the information sheet as designed.
 - Update on Jay Costello’s application for submitting grant proposals to the RTX Connect Up Charity. The submitted proposal entitled “Support for the Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition Education” for \$5,000 was not accepted by RTX Corporate Social Responsibility Team.
- Donations (Joe Russo). Joe has been researching possible donors. No new activity.

5. Update on government agency and private corporation funding opportunities.

- Connie Hughes reminded the Board of CT Sea Grant funding opportunities, specifically the LI Sound Resilience Planning Support program (Expression of Interest due Feb 7). She shared a document detailing the LI Sound planning support expression of interest submission.
- Update on Julia McGrath (Grants and Special Projects Coordinator for Congressman Joe Courtney) federal funding opportunities and resources for grant seekers. Joanne reported that there was nothing new from Julia.

6. Update on Climate Change presentations to satisfy OSCRC education mission.

- Joe will give a presentation entitled “Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition” on February 19th at 6:00 pm prior to the start of a joint meeting of the Town of Old Saybrook Planning and Zoning Commissions.
- Joe is coordinating with Chris Costa, Town Planner and Connecticut Zoning Enforcement Officer, to give a Climate Change presentation plus questions sometime early this year to Old Saybrook residents at the Old Saybrook Town Hall. Carolyn will help get the word out about this presentation.
- OSCRC is planning to put an article in the upcoming Saybrook Events publication. The deadline for an article is February 26, 2024. Joe will take the lead on the article and will draft something.
- OSCRC has agreed to have a presence at the Old Saybrook Conservation Commission Environmental Fair at the Middle School on April 26, 2025. Joe has made arrangements for a table at the fair. OSCRC handouts will be prepared prior to the fair.
- Carolyn pointed out that OSCRC members need to get in front of Old Saybrook boards and commissions to be sure they are aware of climate change and sea level rise issues. Joe noted that he was recently appointed as the OSCRC representative to the Town of Old Saybrook Conservation

Commission. He also mentioned about giving a presentation to Town commissioners on Feb. 19, 2025. This presentation was described earlier in this section.

7. Update on opportunities for reimbursement for damages following FEMA-declared disasters. Terence noted that the Old Saybrook Chief of Police was willing to come to a future OSCRC meeting to discuss the FEMA reimbursement program. No additional activity on this and current issues with OSPD may delay his attendance.
8. Update on relationship with Old Saybrook Land Trust. Carolyn Lyle, as the liaison between OSCRC and the Land Trust, will be attending the Land Trust meetings. She has set up an OSCRC presentation by Joe at their 2:00 pm meeting on April 27, 2025 at the Saybrook Point.
9. Update on The Town of Old Saybrook and the Borough of Fenwick Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP). Following on a recent public meeting, work continues on the hazards risk assessment, mitigation strategies, and actions to reduce the loss of life and property resulting from natural and climate-related hazards. The current draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan is available online at the Town of Old Saybrook website. Carolyn mentioned that the open space reference in the mitigation actions should include the impact of climate change and sea level rise.
10. Update on the Association of Conservation and Inlands Wetlands Commissions annual meeting and workshops, including "A Roadmap for Connecticut Climate Resilience" and "Climate Change Impact on Rural and Urban Areas," on November 16 in Bristol CT. Open item, requires further discussion. No update. Topic is considered closed.
11. Update on the Town of Old Saybrook news, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes for boards & commissions. Doug indicated he sent the link out to all last year for how to sign up on the town website for upcoming meeting notifications. He will provide future updates on related topics of interest.

New Business:

1. OSCRC Logo. There was discussion on the final design of the OSCRC logo. Some small changes were agreed upon. The logo will be first used in an ad in the Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce digital magazine.

Additional Items:

Joe mentioned that a retired structural engineer, who recently moved to Old Saybrook, was interested in the OSCRC and would try to make our next Board of Directors meeting.

Thanks again to Rick Bovino for hosting and for providing dinner prior to the meeting.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, 2025.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.