

HISTORY OF "THE OAKLANDS ASSOCIATION INC."

Updated May 2020

"Oaklands" was converted from farmland to residential lots around October, 1951, and the developers set aside a 'Reserved Area' for a 14 slip dock. This dock provided Inland Lot Owners access to tidal waters and stipulated that the right of use of this area would expire on January 1, 1968, unless a corporation was formed by the inland lot owners, that they take title, and assume responsibility for taxes and maintenance costs. The "Reserved Area" was to be open for membership to all owners or future owners of all inland lots.

In October, 1967, plans were initiated to form a corporation. An attorney was hired to draw up the necessary papers. On December 5, 1967, the Articles of Incorporation of the Oaklands Association was signed by the acting officers and filed with the Department of Assessment and Taxation on December 7, 1967. The total incorporation costs were \$225.50.

The first meeting of the Oaklands Association was held on April 29, 1968. The agenda included: a reading of the proposed bylaws and their approval, and a discussion regarding dues and initiation fees, and the allocation of docking facilities.

An initiation fee of \$25.00 per lot owner was established to defray the cost of incorporation, and annual dues of \$5.00 were set to handle operating expenses, taxes, insurance, grass mowing, etc. Dock rentals were set at \$50.00 annually. A subsequent meeting was held on June 20, 1968 for election of directors and officers, a financial report, etc.

After four years, on 4/11/73, Treasurer Chacey reported a balance on hand of \$1,120, receipts of \$607, expenditures of \$380, giving a new balance of \$1,348. During this period the normal expenditures for taxes, insurance, road and pier maintenance were met and a number of other items were accomplished.

In 1970 "No Trespassing" signs were posted in the picnic area and the State Police were requested to periodically patrol the area at night because it was becoming a "Lover's Lane." In 1971 Delmarva Power & Light erect a pole and install a light in the parking area. In 1971 an additional piling was installed at the outer left side of the dock thereby creating slip #15.

In 1974 electricity was installed on the existing dock for a very reasonable \$305. 1975 was a business as usual year except for replacing two piles that had been raised and tilted by ice formation.

At a Special Meeting on January 5, 1977, the proposal for the dredging and additional dock, complete with fresh water and electricity, was approved by the members of the Association.

Permits were in hand from the Department of Health, Department of Natural Resources and the Corps of Engineers. An 8 1/2% interest loan was secured for \$10,000, the owner of 5 inland lots contributed \$5,000, and Association reserves of \$1,500.00 were available to meet the anticipated costs of dredging, construction, permits, fees etc. in the amount of \$16,550. Zack Taylor, Secretary, spent countless hours and tremendous effort in putting this program together. Work began in late 1977.

At the Annual Meeting on May 8, 1978, it was noted that all construction work was essentially completed. Installing a fresh water system on both piers was discussed and it was decided that it was too costly and the matter was tabled.

1979, 1980, and 1981 were years of business as usual, relatively calm and unexciting. No exceptional expenses were incurred or expenditures planned. And, 1982's Annual Meeting a discussion on installing fresh water at the dock was the featured item and doing so was tabled for a second time. Rough estimates indicated a cost of approximately \$4,500. Later in the year we had an erosion problem, behind the bulkhead of the new pier. A special meeting was called on December 2, 1982, but not enough members were present for a quorum. A letter was sent to all members with a ballot attached, to vote for or against the installation of riprap at a cost of about \$2,000. The erosion was stemmed in 1983 by the installation of riprap.

Significant changes were initiated at the Annual Meeting on April 24, 1984. Installing our own well and piping water to the piers was approved. The estimated \$5,000.00 cost was to be borrowed on an "as needed" basis. The By Laws were altered to open the Association to residents with waterfront. The Oaklands Association hence became a Community Corporation and its basic purpose, giving access to water for Inland Lot owners, was joined with that of acting on behalf of all the Oaklands residents. Any decisions or actions with respect to the dock area was still the responsibility of Inland Lot members, but others were and are involved in any and all other functions. Finally, at a Board of Directors meeting on August 6, 1984, Dick Moll, President for the previous four years, resigned this post for health reasons. In accordance with the By-Laws, the Directors appointed Zack Taylor as President and Bruce Hackett as Secretary.

In 1985, one noteworthy event occurred. The final payment of \$521.25 was made on the \$10,000 mortgage for construction of Dock #2.

At the meeting on April 23, 1986, the installation of low-level lighting on the docks was approved. In keeping with the change to a Community Association, the members accepted the request of Mr. Orville Wyatt that the Association take over the handling of the mosquito spraying contract that he had been doing for quite a number of years.

In 1987, the minutes of the annual meeting, sent to all members, noted the problem of dogs upsetting trash and garbage cans and requested dog owners to keep their pets from wandering, particularly on the evening before and the day of trash collection. It was also agreed that a "SLOW - YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR WAKE" sign be secured from the Dept. of Natural Resources and placed at the mouth of LeGates Cove.

At the 1988 annual meeting, the issue of the wandering dogs was still a problem. The President, Zack Taylor, wrote a letter appealing to dog owners to control their pets and he would address any problems with owners if brought to his attention. - It was at this meeting also that Howard Wampler and Donald Casson were requested to write a detailed History of the Oaklands Association.

The Association continued with stable finances through 1992, having reserves of approximately \$9,000. In 1991, the Lee Bailey Company was contracted to rebuild the bulkhead on the old dock which was found to be badly rotted. Cost for this and other dock maintenance was \$4,196. The next year our dock lighting system was upgraded with new wiring and switches at a cost of \$225. The summer of 1992 showed slip rentals were down reflecting the decline in the economy and the boating business.

In 1993 the name of the Association changed to the OAKLANDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION. This more accurately reflected its commitment to serve the entire community. - At the April meeting, the membership dues were increased to \$25 to keep pace with inflation and the increased scope and expense of services offered. Additionally, the community property was resurveyed to define the legal boundaries; the SE side of the property was cleared and maintained; picnic tables were added, and the pump-house cover was replaced. At year's end our cash assets were \$11,900.

1994-1995 were fairly stable years. For the first time, membership in the Association included all but 3 Oaklands families. Over \$2,500 had to be spent for tree service as a result of the February '94 ice storm. Year-end 1995 cash assets were \$14,400.

1996-1997 saw a new floating dock placed along side pier #1 and a new, very attractive "OAKLANDS" sign at the entrance of Oaklands Road. A well attended community picnic was held in June. As of December 31, 1997 our assets in checking and savings totaled \$15,883.

In the spring of 2002, Bailey Marine completed the removal of Dock #1 and the installation of a new dock with finger piers for 10 of the slips. The total cost of this project, approved at the 2001 annual meeting, was approximately \$45,000.

2004 was a relatively quiet year. Exceptional expenses included the repair of electrical line damages by hurricane "Isabelle" and the installation of a new electric feed to dock #2 as results of some shoreline repair work. All slips were rented and the treasury was stable.

2005 and 2006 were relatively stable times with limited maintenance expenses for shoreline erosion control, tree removal, and routine dock maintenance. In September 2006 the Association held a very successful crab feast for the community and it appears that it will become an annual tradition thanks to the outstanding efforts of President John Flohr. Also, during the year, the Association was able to pay off the balance due on a \$19,500 loan that had been taken to replace Dock #1.

At the 2007 annual meeting in April, it was decided that we should have the maple trees (along the dock property lane) pruned, cabled, and fertilized as a precaution against another sleet storm that had caused so much damage in the winter of 1993-94. This resulted in an expenditure of \$6,000 and a lot of hindsight as to whether or not it should have been done.

After more than twenty years as an Association officer and ten years as President, John Flohr resigned due to growing work commitments. Our appreciation for his strong leadership and initiation of programs for the Community was expressed. Bob Merriken was elected as the President in 2008. His first order of business was to seek the removal of a derelict pontoon boat from the dock.

In 2010 a beautiful large oak tree along the shore line toppled into the cove and we decided to have it removed and a large segment of a large popular tree along the lot boundary broke off during a storm. We spent roughly \$3,000 for tree services this year.

Also, in 2010 we installed a gate across the entrance to the dock parking area. This was done in response to numerous complaints regarding “partying” and some instances of minor theft and vandalism on the boats. Most unfortunately was the loss of a dingy and motor. Since the gate has been installed, the partying has been significantly reduced.

2011 and 2012 have been relatively quiet. We installed “security cameras” on both docks and posted signs in an effort to deter thefts and vandalism at the docks. Coupled with the entrance gate to the parking area, the parking area and docks are relatively secure. Out of necessity we had to have some maintenance work done on the well pump to insure the supply of water to the docks. This year we obtained estimates for the replacement of dock #2 and its expected life expectancy. We are planning our financial reserves to facilitate replacement in 2014 or 2015.

After more than 20 years as dock director & historian for that matter Calvin Yowell stepped down from the dock director duties. Chris Schindler took over as dock director and his first item of business was replacing dock #2.

In March 2014 we accepted a bid from Bailey Marine Construction the same company that replaced dock #1 and replaced dock #2 soon after. The cost in the amount of \$38,127 was paid for out of the reserves set aside. We tried to enhance dock #2 to include finger piers similar too dock #1 but the state would not allow due to SAV and the affects finger piers would have on its growth.

The Oaklands Board elected to make some changes to the slip lease structure in 2015 designating 3 different classifications and increased the fee allotted to guest slips to twice that of a resident while also limiting the slips available to guests. The new designations are resident, lineal and guest giving priority to a lineal relative of a resident over a guest with now lineal connection.

In 2016 at the suggestion of dock director Chris Schindler the board approved a new kayak/canoe launch area at the site of the oak tree that fell into the water in 2010. Chris worked with Lane Engineering and MDE and received approval to install a gradual sand launch area that would allow access to Legates Cove from shore for the first time in Oaklands Dock history. Slayden’s Excavating & Hauling was contracted to grade the slope and move some rip rap around to allow for the new launch area.

February 2017 brought about some more updates to the policies and practices document and is the current edition used.

2017-2018 saw the return of some malicious mischief and theft with someone burning a whole in dock #1 where the seating is located, and several items were stolen from boats. Bailey Marine replaced the boards at no cost to the Association.

In 2019 the board approved the installation of a real surveillance system to help prevent what the gate and fake cameras were no longer preventing. Dock Director Chris Schindler and Association President Scott Carter worked with SafeHouse security and installed a 3-camera system which records onto a device located at the dock that can be reviewed by connecting a monitor. To this time, it seems to be working well to prevent mischief and theft.

For a more comprehensive and detailed version of the Association's history, please contact the Secretary. The Association is very appreciative of the efforts of Don Casson and Howard Wampler to compile the detailed historical information in 1988.

Please accept our apologies for any oversights or mistakes that you may observe in this directory.
Please submit any corrections and additions to the Association's secretary. Thank you.