

Jane Greene - Ogunquit Conservation Commission
Christopher Nobile - Ogunquit Shellfish Conservation Commission
Pam Sawyer - Ogunquit Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee
Avery Seuter - Town of Wells Select Board
Suzanne Williams - Healthy Rivers Ogunquit
Ilene Kanoff - Town of Ogunquit Liaison



Ogunquit Watershed Group
March 19, 2026
11:00 AM
Ogunquit Town Office - Room 237
31 School Street, Ogunquit, Maine

Connecting by computer or mobile device:

Register in advance or at the time of the meeting:

<https://ogunquitpd-org.zoom.us/j/89534216704>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation e-mail with information to join the meeting.

Connecting by landline/telephone:

If you want to call into the meeting, dial:1-646-931-3860 or 1-929-436-2866

Webinar ID: 826 0376 8809

Password: 641577

Agenda

- 1 **WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER**
- 2 **MINUTES**
 - 2.1. Approve February 19 2026 Meeting Minutes
- 3 **PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS & RESOLUTIONS**
- 4 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
 - 4.1. Septic Survey: Final Feedback, Timeline, Implementation, Incentives
- 5 **NEW BUSINESS**
 - 5.1. Outreach Materials for Visitors: "What *You* Can Do to Keep the Ogunquit River Watershed Healthy"
 - 5.2. Ideas for Wells Junior High School Student Participation
 - Watershed Clean-up
 - Helping to create materials
 - Providing hands-on support at Family Event
 - Classroom support
- 6 **PUBLIC COMMENTS - BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS**

The Board/Committee/Commission welcomes the public to comment and ask questions about Board/Committee/Commission matters. Questions are not always answered immediately; the Board/Committee/Commission has agreed to answer questions by the next regularly scheduled meeting whenever possible. We ask that people keep comments brief and to the point (no more than three minutes and one time per meeting, except when public comment is solicited on specific agenda items) and that your comments be respectful of the community we aspire to. We also ask that if you have a complaint or concern, it would be most helpful if you also offer a solution or solutions. Please begin your comments by stating your name and your affiliation with Ogunquit (i.e., resident, taxpayer, voter, business owner, etc.) or state the Town you are from.

7 * COMMUNICATIONS

8 ADJOURN

WATERSHED GROUP

February 19th 2026 Meeting Minutes

MISSION STATEMENT

To restore the health of the Ogunquit River for its aquatic ecosystems, for the safe recreation of residents and tourists, and for the local economy. As residents within the watershed, we collaborate to implement the actions outlined in the 2025 Ogunquit River Watershed Based Plan to meet and maintain the water quality standards established by the Maine Department of Environmental protection.

There is now a Watershed Group page on the Conservation Commission Webpage with all past documents. Thank you, Ilene Kanoff!

BUDGET REQUEST

Jane reviewed the WG’s Budget Request that she had submitted.

2027 Budget Requests for The Watershed Group (FINAL)

1. Outreach Materials for Residents/Visitors/ Landowners

4.g.	Create an outreach plan to provide information to landowners on actions they can take on their own property to promote watershed health.	Develop and implement an outreach plan, utilizing hands-on workshops, social media posts, and targeted mailings. Include outreach on sustainable landscaping, vegetative buffers, rain gardens, limited fertilizer and pesticide use, alternative landscaping, septic systems, etc.
4.h.	Create a flyer to place in hotel rooms and rental homes with tips on how visitors can help protect the environment.	Develop some options for fridge hangings, bathroom cards, etc. that educate on different ways visitors can protect the environment while they are recreating in the watershed. The goal is a total of 200 rentals or hotels to have outreach in them by 2034 (with interim goals of 30 by 2025 and 60 by 2028).
4.c.	Continue the Healthy Rivers Ogunquit pet waste outreach program.	Continue the same outreach that has already been done by HeRO in the past (see Section 4.3). Add pet waste stations at areas in the upper watershed that are popular for dog walking, such as GWRLT lands.

- Graphic design for watershed map with identifying landmarks and best practices for homeowners: \$800
- Graphic design: “Be a Friend to the Ogunquit River” simple logo: \$300
- Printing cost: (500) 3x4 refrigerator magnets with tips for Septic Maintenance: \$310
- Postcard design and print (1000) with tips to protect the watershed: \$380
- Mailing costs for 800-1000 postcards @ \$0.61: \$488 - \$610
- Purchase and install 6-8 new pet waste stations in the upper watershed: \$2600

TOTAL = \$5000

2. Targeted Water Testing

7.a.	Continue to collect yearly baseline water quality data in the Ogunquit River (DO, temperature, bacteria).	Continue hiring a contractor to perform yearly water quality sampling. Review the sites each year to ensure hotspots and BMP effectiveness are targeted. See Section 6.4.	2025-2034, yearly and ongoing
7.c.	Perform targeted water quality sampling in Main Beach parking lot stormwater catch basins to better determine the effectiveness of the bacteria filters installed in November 2022.	Hire a contractor to develop a monitoring plan to sample stormwater both before and after the bacteria filters. Sampling should occur during a large storm with preceding dry weather. See Section 6.4.	2025

7a – Justification:

This is not endless testing with no action. It is testing AND action. It is continuing to test the fresh water “hotspots” that FB Environmental was testing (OR 18, 16, 15, etc.) as a *baseline* - while at the same time implementing specific actions – for example: raising landowners’ awareness on what *they* can do to improve water quality; extending the *Canines for Clean Water* program’s reach north into Wells; installing riparian buffers between intensely used areas and the river. It is necessary to determine if actions are having an effect.

The testing would be six sites/year-round. The OG pipe would continue to be tested three times a year in wet weather.

7c – Justification:

Are the catch basins actually working? Testing water before and after it enters the catch basins would give us valuable data. The testing would be year-round.

TOTAL = \$9500

GRAND TOTAL = \$14,500

ESTIMATED COSTS (from WBP) on 7a and 7c

7a

Targeted Water Testing on Estuary

Cash/10 years = \$80,000
 Previously 6 sites (FBE) = \$80,000
 Cash/1 year = \$8000

7c

Catch Basins

Cash/10 years = \$15,000
 Cash/year = \$1500

7a & 7c WATER TESTING

\$8000 + \$1500 = \$9500

OUTREACH = \$5000

WATER TESTING = \$9500

TOTAL = \$14,500

Ogunquit resident, Kirstin Ross asked about testing site: 15-1 – which she believes to be on her property. She informed the group that she had reached out to FB Environmental. Site 15-1 had been on the list to test the efficacy of a BMP. However, they chose not to put the BMP somewhere along Levitt Stream on Jotham’s Lane or in her subdivision. The BMP was moved to Young’s Crossing, so 15-1 was removed from the testing protocol.

Kirstin stated that the talk of 15-1 being considered as a testing site had caused her distress. Jane apologized for causing her any distress. She assured Kirstin that she had been heard. Jane stated that she appreciated Kirstin’s historic knowledge of water testing, and thanked her.

Jane added that any testing on private property would need permission from the landowners. The group is far away from any testing on the estuary. At this point, they are just trying to raise funds to resurrect water testing upstream.

“FRIENDS OF THE OGUNQUIT RIVER” AS A NON-PROFIT

Suzanne Williams shared a PPT outlining steps to creating a 501C3 and things to consider. Suzanne stated that this was not legal advice, this was her research.

4f Securing funds for OR Watershed Plan Implementation

Considerations and Next Steps for FOTOR to become a 501C3

Included in the PPT:

1. Rationale for FOTOR to become a 501C3
2. Option B: Establish a town reserve account to fund projects

3. Steps for FOTOR to become a 501C3
4. Additional steps for FOTOR operations
5. *Friends of the Ogunquit River* start-up materials
6. *Friends of the Ogunquit River* start-up activities
7. Many ways to “Be a Friend” (Clean-up, plan, donate, create, restore, connect)
8. Ideas for possible start-up activities
9. Consider annual or semi-annual fundraiser events:
 - o Fun Run (Run for the River, Watershed Run Off)
 - o Green Crab derby
 - o Paddleboard/Kayak event
 - o Auction
 - o Polar Plunge
 - o Native Plant Sale
 - o Film Screening
 - o Dinner/concert/mixer

Members discussed the Watershed Group’s role in FOTOR. There needs to be coordination between the two groups, but FOTOR would be a separate entity. A member of the Watershed Group would serve solely as a liaison or non-voting member. Creation of a 501C3 would require somebody to carry the flag in organizing this.

Ilene shared that she had found an attorney that would help create the non-profit pro bono – although the filing fees would still need to be paid.

Members raised the issue of working with other towns in the watershed. If funds were kept in a Town account, could they be used in Wells, South Berwick and York? Jane had previously reached out to Mandy asking for help on whether or not other towns could be included. Mandy said that if the warrant asking for a Town account was written to include the other towns, then it’s permissible. The voters just need to know what they are voting for.

Jane stated that, among other things, FOTOR is a fundraising tool. She asked if that was possible if it was a Town account. Doesn’t it have to be a 501C3?

Suzanne said that implementing this ten-year plan is going to be costly. It’s crucial to garner support from residents, from businesses, and then all pull in the same direction. Important to separate the securing of funds from the activities – which will happen either way.

Chris asked which activities would carry a high cost? Suzanne mentioned replacing the culverts – which would be a big-budget item. The Watershed Group would be

overseeing that. It's a ten-year plan. There are some instances where the culverts need to be changed now – not because they are at the end of their life, but because they are not performing the proper function.

Chris stated that we could be best at the educational support – in terms of testing, awareness, etc. – and that can be accomplished by having voter support.

Suzanne stated that to secure funds for the Watershed Based Plan implementation is an action item: 4f. It doesn't have to be an entity outside of the Town. One of the suggestions in the plan is creating a FOTOR.

Avery said that a 501C3 is good to have in mind long term, but that perhaps it makes sense to go through the spring and summer with a couple of small-scale events to give the community a sense of what we're doing, and then come back to how we want to fund raise long term.

Jane added that after gaining momentum, it will be easier to raise funds for specific actions. Ilene agreed that the subcommittee needs a track record with the community about *doing* things. People usually want to see some results before they will do something – especially if it involves giving money.

Ilene said that every time we have an event, we should be getting people's contact information, so we can keep in touch - perhaps a newsletter letting people know what's going on. That could be done through the Town's Facebook page, the Town newsletter.

Jane thanked Suzanne for her presentation, and sought consensus from the group on how to proceed. Members agreed that a track record of events this year in order gain visibility and support from residents and visitors is the way to go. That way, we have a stronger statement when seeking funds.

SEPTIC SURVEY

Ilene stated that the survey will be sent out electronically – posted on the Town website and Facebook page with the link. The same could be done in Wells. Since it's been a while, she will plan to send out the link to the Google Form (or a PDF) for members to review it again before sending it out.

Paper copies of the survey will be available at the Town Hall.

Jane asked about implementing the survey in Wells. Avery said that having the Town Manager, Michael Pardue and Public Information Officer, Rebekah Kelley review it would be the proper procedure.

Timeline for implementing the survey was discussed. The beginning of May would work. June 9th is Election Day. The idea of having a table on Election Day was raised. Once the survey is live, it would stay up a while. We could send it out in May and then use the Town Meeting as a closer.

Jane asked Avery about contacting Michael Pardue and Rebekah Kelley. Should a PDF of the survey be sent to them? Could it be on their Facebook page and Town newsletter. Perhaps a flyer with a QR code could be created for Ogunquit and Wells.

Suzanne raised the possibility of incentives for completing the survey – a free pump-out for instance. She agreed to look into that idea.

FAMILY EVENT

Jane raised the timing of the event. Should it be in the fall rather than in the spring? Should we consider having the event take place on the Ogunquit River rather than Main Beach?

Members discussed possible routes for a River Run, with Avery suggesting a River Float. Suzanne added that Parks and Rec has an event – *Anything That Floats* - in September or August. She raised the idea of collaborating with Parks and Rec for this event.

Jane stated that the group could provide educational materials at the beginning and at the end of the float – with participants experiencing the river in between. Chris added they float down towards the Footbridge and that the educational materials could be there at the end.

Avery asked how much a Trolley service would cost to ferry people back from the Footbridge. Suzanne suggested that the Trolley could have advertising in it about ways to protect the river.

Jane asked for consensus on the idea of making the event in August or September, making it Ogunquit River centric. She asked if that is the direction that people want to go. Members agreed.

Jane will reach out to Parks and Rec to see if they are open for the group collaborating on *Anything That Floats*.

NATURAL RESOURCES POSITION

Chris asked if there was consensus among members to write a short statement to the Select Board endorsing the hiring of a Natural Resources Coordinator.

Chris explained the connection between a proposed Natural Resources Coordinator position and the number one priority in the Comp Plan, which is protecting and preserving Ogunquit's Natural Resources. He stated that the Watershed Group is in a good position to emphasize the need for a Natural Resources Coordinator.

Jane said that supporting this position was important because the Priority #1 in the Comp Plan is protecting Ogunquit's natural resources. It's crucial to have somebody looking at the Town through an environmental lens; that makes sure that every decision is made with an eye on protecting the natural resources.

Members discussed whether specific details about the job should be included. Discussion was around the need for a person with experience in the field of managing natural resources, what sorts of credentials this person should have, and the need for transparency. There should be no question about what we're asking - either of the candidate or for the position.

Avery added that it would be great if Wells had a professional that they could go to for guidance in managing the natural resources. A member added that maybe some costs could be offset in exchange for that expert insight.

Chris offered to draft a letter saying that the group unanimously supports the hiring of a NR coordinator, and send it out to the group to review.

Meeting **ADJOURNED** at approximately 12:25 PM

Septic Survey

Thank you for taking this 5-minute survey! It was created by the Ogunquit River Watershed Group, a Select Board approved sub-committee of Ogunquit's Conservation Commission. The group's mission is to restore the health of the Ogunquit River by implementing action items in the 2025 Ogunquit River Watershed-Based Plan.

The purpose of this survey is to gather information about septic systems within Wells and Ogunquit – particularly those in the Ogunquit River Watershed. Your input is key.

We know that your time is valuable. We are grateful for your participation!

* Required

1. In which Town do you live/have property? *

Wells

Ogunquit

2. If you live/have property in Wells, on which street do you live? *

- Do not live/have property in Wells**
- East of Route 1: Blanchard Street #’s 3, 6, 15, 34, 35, 45, 55, 48, 62, 67 Candlewood Lane, Chickadee Lane, Dike Street #’s 92, 98, 99, Eldridge Rd # 76, Grenier Ln #63, Prescott Lane, Wesley Lane**
- Tatnic Road**, (west of Old County Road): #’s 118*, 119*, 130, 131, 136, 138, 150, 158, 162, 167, 168, 181, 214, 217, 228, 231, 244, 253, 266, 269, 297, 317, 347, 350, 387, 399, 407 --- to 2611
- Old County Road: #’s 38, 47, 77, 89, 135, 143, 306, 312, 320, 321, 327, 349**
- North Berwick Road even #’s only**, from 1264 – 1760
- Littlefield Road, even #’s only**, from 642 – 1738; also **Littlefield Rd. odd #’s** 1421, 1577, 1615, 1649, 1673, 1709
- Wells Highlands**, #’s 145 and up
- Audrey Circle**, #’s 21, 25, 28, 29, 36, 37, 45, 56, 59, 60, 63, 64
- Kimberly Circle #’s** 9, 12, 50, 61, 68, 81, 84, 91, 98, 217, 220, 233, 236, 249, 252, 265, 272
- Merriland Ridge Road #’s** 158, 198, 218, 220, 238, 263
- Ridge Top Lane #’s** 51, 58, 63, 117, 142
- Charlie Loop #’s** 60, 68, 76
- Preble Street** 193, 222, 241, 242, 259
- Lupine Lane #’s** 20, 27, 34, 62, 70, 80, 96
- West of Route 1: all addresses on the following streets (A-L): Allen Road, Ally Lane, Ansel Lane, Appletree Lane, Big Rock Way, Brackett Ln, Bramble Lane, Dagmar Drive, Capt. Thomas Road, Cheney Woods Road, Dragonfly Lanem Edgewood Circle, Edgewood Road, Emerson Drive, Green Road. Hickory Lane, Hilton’s Lane, Julian Huxley Lane. Libby Lane, Locksley Lane, Loop Road**
- West of Route 1: all addresses on the following streets (M-W): Moody Hts., Newhall Road, North Village Road, Nottingham Drive, Orchard Road. Pound Lane. Robin Hood Drive, Roe Street, Rose way, Royal Hts., Sacred Oaks Lane, Sherburne Lane, Spinnaker Ridge Dr., Spring Meadow Lane, Sunshine Lane, Taylor Road, Willow Bend Lane**
- Other

3. In which district/area is your property located? *

- Residential
- Shoreland
- Farm
- Other
- Don't know

4. Is your property used year-round or seasonally? *

- Year-round
- Seasonally

5. If you answered seasonally, how many months out of the year do you spend at your home?

- 1-2 months
- 3-4 months
- 5-6 months
- 6-7 months
- 8-9 months
- greater than 9 months

6. What is the average occupancy of your home? *

- 1-2 people
- 3-4 people
- 5-6 people
- more than 6 people

7. What type of septic system do you have? *

- Holding tank
- Conventional (tank and tile bed)
- Advanced (tertiary)
- Privy/outhouse
- Not known

8. How often do you have your septic tank pumped? *

- Never
- Every 3 years
- Every 5 years
- Every 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

9. Approximately when was your septic system installed? *

- Before 1940
- 1940-1979
- 1980-2000
- After 2000
- Unknown

10. When was the last time your septic system was inspected? *

- Within the last 10 years
- Between 11-20 years
- Over 20 years
- Unknown

11. Are your regular visitors and family aware that septic systems require special care? *

- Yes
- No

12. If your septic system has experienced problems, what were the things you noticed? Check all that apply. *

- Wetness in yard (unrelated to rain)
- Strong sewage smell in yard
- Slow draining of plumbing
- Sewage back-ups into home
- Well water test show positive for fecal bacteria
- None of the above

13. How willing (where **5 is most willing**) would you be to make improvements to your septic system (e.g., pumping, inspection, upgrade) to help improve the water quality in the Ogunquit River Watershed if technical assistance and/or grant funds were provided? *

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

14. Optional: Name, email address, phone number

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