

OCEA Register



Upcoming Events:

- Aug. 23-25, 2023—
Basic Code Class
- Sept. 28, 2023— Fall
Conf. McAlester
- Nov. 1-3, 2023—
Basic Code Class

www.oceassociation.com

May 2023

OCEA's Spring Conference was a Success!!

Thank you to everyone that attended our Spring Conference. We had nearly 125 in attendance! The luau themed banquet seemed to be a hit. Several of you signed up to serve on various OCEA Committee's. You should hear from your Committee Chair soon to begin working together. The Board just went over the Conference Survey Results at our May Board meeting and will work to cover the topics you requested at our upcoming events. We hope to see you in the Fall at our conference in McAlester! More details will be shared soon about that.



2022/2023 OCEA Board received recognition

Pledge of Allegiance on 1st day of Conference—
nice looking group here



Tim Sun and Justin Edson from California with our very own Travis Guess representing CEOSF Board.

Janita Hatley named Code Officer of the Year



From your President—Maverick Fritsche, City of Okmulgee



Fellow Members and Colleagues,

I hope everyone is doing well and relishing this nice cool spring we have had. As I am writing this, the weathercast is calling for 90 degrees by this weekend. That means the weeds and grass will be in full throttle mode and we will surely have an uptick in the phone calls. Our board members and the in-coming board members are hard at work already planning the Fall 2023 conference and the Spring 2024 conference. If you have any new ideas or suggestions for these conferences or stories for the newsletter, I encourage you to contact the board and let us know.

On a personal note, this is my last newsletter article as your President. I can honestly say it has been a great privilege and honor beyond description to serve this membership. I have had the opportunity to work with a very talented board that has kept me motivated throughout this past year by their constant drive to keep our organization great, while keeping it fun and beneficial for all. I look forward to the upcoming year and what it has to offer. I am not going anywhere; I am just serving you all in a new capacity. I am always here, as well as all of our board members, if any of you need us.

Thank you for all you do to keep your communities safe and beautiful! Once again, it is an honor to serve this membership and I appreciate you all.

Shawn "Maverick" Fritsche—OCEA President

From your 1st VP—Travis Guess, City of Prague (will become President July 1st)



Summer is here and I hope everyone has big plans!!!! Of course with the season comes extra duties as far as our job is concerned. We all know what that is. GRASS and WEEDS, WEEDS and GRASS!!! I know we do not want to be reminded of that so I will just make this comment. The abatement of grass and weeds is a service that we provide to our community, but it is just one of many. We are not the "Grass Police." As I have said many times, we are professionals. We are Code Enforcement Officers and regulation of that particular ordinance is just that, one of many duties we perform.

As you know I will be taking the gavel in July as your President. I am looking forward to working with our Board to implement strategies to achieve the goal to continue making the OCEA a great professional organization. Your input is needed, wanted, and as always greatly appreciated. When our members are engaged it gives the board a clear heading for the direction to help the OCEA achieve greatness. I have particular ideas to help the organization provide training and resources.

It is imperative that we work towards promoting the Professionalism we need to elevate the OCEA as well as the individuals that we are. That is to say we ARE professionals. We are Code Enforcement Officers in the Great State of Oklahoma.

From your 2nd VP—Ivan Smith, City of Edmond

Greetings colleagues,
 I would like to take this opportunity to thank ALL Of YOU for allowing me the privilege of serving on the Governing Body of this organization for the last decade. I can only hope that I have in your eyes done the job that was entrusted to me to your satisfaction. The time spent representing O.C.E.A. in my various positions has not only been fulfilling personally, but undoubtedly professional by expanding my knowledge and strengthening my commitment to find solutions to problems that all Code Officers face.

My decision to step away from the Board IS NOT to disengage, but merely afford one of you the same opportunity that was given to me those many years ago. It is with the utmost confidence that I will say the state of our organization is strong and in good hands! I will continue to be an active member, attending conferences and even making guest appearances presenting at Code Classes or conferences at the Boards discretion.

If you have ever considered throwing your name in the hat at election time to serve on the board, I have but one question for you. What's stopping you? That decision turned out to be one of the best I ever made. Trust me, I can't say that about a lot of things. The friendships alone are priceless and will be cherished for a lifetime. I look forward to seeing all of you soon at an upcoming event as I transition into this leg of my journey.

Respectfully,
 Ivan E. Smith



From your Treasurer—Andy Templeton, City of Sand Springs

Many years ago as his university in Tulsa struggled to survive, evangelist Oral Roberts exasperatedly exclaimed: "It takes money to do things." Such is certainly the case for our governmental entities. Like most of you, my city has had its share of financial challenges over the years.

The OCEA treasury is a rock of stability thanks to many years of dedicated work by the board and individual members. Your support of this organization through annual dues, and conference and class attendance, allows us to be a financial beacon for other state code organizations.

That said, the actual reserves we currently have on hand are a bit lower than I'd like. Our conferences and classes cost money. As we have grown, our expenses have followed suit. This year's spring conference alone cost around \$28,000. We will take an anticipated loss on it to keep our fees reasonable and affordable for all communities in Oklahoma.

Our classes do well for themselves from a financial standpoint and are the backbone of our revenues. Yet recently, we planned for an April code class with 35 students and only 25 showed up.

I tell you this to say that the board will be looking at options in the coming months that are likely long overdue. OCEA has traditionally sought payment for conferences or classes after the event. We have ample reserves by design to pay for everything up front, but recovering those costs from our member communities can sometimes be a lengthy process. Most organizations require pre-payment of such fees, and that is an option under serious consideration.

I can assure you we will reshape a payment system than can work for all our member communities and their different forms of payment. It may take money to do things, but OCEA will always be at your service.





From your 3rd VP—Wayne McCasland, City of Comanche

I would like to thank all of you for being a part of this organization. I know that we all struggle to find the time to make it to conferences and classes, but we do. Its one of the best chances to reach out and meet people that can help out through our daily lives. I would hope that during our days we remember that we are not alone. The board as well as other members will always do our best to help. I would ask that we look around our areas and if there is a location without an officer let me know, I or a board member will reach out to them. Together we can work to grow and expand to make our towns and state a much better place to live. Be safe and remember we are all just people.



From your Past President—Felix Nance, City of Hominy

It has been an honor to serve the Members and to serve on the most professional Board I have ever served on. I wish every one good health and keep sending those notices. Grass season only lasts nine months!

Best,
Felix

From your Secretary—Janita Hatley, City of Norman

It's the busy time of year again! OCEA is sending out Member Renewal Notices now, so be preparing to return the renewal forms along with the \$50 membership fee for Active Code Officers. Remember your \$50 membership fee is a dual membership for OCEA & AACE.

Thank you to everyone that came to our Spring conference and to the many that offered to serve on our various Committees. It is refreshing to see the enthusiasm and excitement from all of you with becoming more involved in OCEA. As Ivan said in his article, the wonderful and lifelong friendships made by being involved in OCEA and on the Board is just out-of-this-world! We will have openings this next year for Sgt-at-Arms, 3rd VP and 1st VP, so be thinking about what you might be interested in and plan to submit a Candidate form and get involved! If you were not at the Spring conference, but have a desire to serve on any of our Committees—Safety/Education/Conference—please let me know and I will share this info with the Chair of the particular Committee.

Remember to look into all of the online training available on the next page. Also remember the AACE Conference is coming to OKC in Oct. 2024 so plan to adjust your budgets to include the \$550 registration fee for AACE members if you do the early bird registration next year. It will be fantastic to show the nation how many OCEA members we can have in attendance and be a shining example of how great Code Officers are in Oklahoma!



I would like to say a big THANK YOU to OCEA for presenting me with the Code Officer of the Year Award. Board members don't typically receive these types of awards, but I am appreciative of the kind words sent in from others on my behalf. I am also honored to be in the group of the 7 other OCEA members that were also nominated. I love my job as a Code Officer, truly! Each day is something new & interesting. I also LOVE serving on the OCEA Board and working for all of you! We are truly a family and I am so thankful for each and every one of you! Keep up the great work in your Communities and never hesitate to contact me with any questions! Sincerely, Janita

From your Sgt-at-Arms—Brian Henry, City of Perry (will become 1st VP—July 1st)

As the legislative session is winding down lots of bills of interest have been signed into law but one in particular stood out. SB 2361 was signed into law by Governor Stitt and this bill will come into effect in November. I had to have this one explained to me but overall, I believe this bill could be of benefit especially to smaller municipalities. The language indicates if a municipality has a lien interest in a property, you can demand in writing that the property be auctioned off in the name of the municipality. What this would ultimately accomplish is if the property did not sell, then the property would become owned by the municipality. For some of those smaller towns it would allow you to protect your interests without having to bid on the property.



Training Opportunities & Resources

- Code Official Safety Specialist—Online Course thru Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation—set at your own pace. Visit this link for more info. <https://www.codeofficersafety.org/training>
- OML Annual Conference—Sept. 19-21, 2023 at the OKC Convention Center—for more info visit <https://www.omlconference.org/>
- OMAG offers Scholarships to our Basic Code Classes and our Spring Conference that covers the registration fees. They also offer all sorts of Online Training. Visit their website for more info at <https://www.omag.org/>
- Amy Harmon from Seminole shared this info— Hey Just to let OCEA Members know, AACE is taking applications for the Don Vegge Memorial Scholarship. The Scholarship covers, AACE Annual Conference registration expenses, exam expenses, exam reference material expenses and study guide expenses. Please apply on the AACE website. It is listed under the About Us Tab or https://www.aace1.org/page/Don_Vegge
- AACE Virtual Training opportunities—https://www.aace1.org/events/event_list.asp
6/8/23—Skiptracing - Start to Finish. Duration: 1.5 hours. 0.15 CEU's for ICC credit as a Preferred Provider. Class starts at 2pm CT; Zoom link will be emailed to registrants the week of the class.
8/9/23—2021 International Property Maint. Code - Crash Course. Duration: 1.5 hours. 0.15 CEU's for ICC credit as a Preferred Provider. Class starts at 2pm CT; Zoom link will be emailed to registrants the week of the class.
8/10/23—2021 International Zoning Code - Crash Course. Duration: 1.5 hours. 0.15 CEU's for ICC credit as a Preferred Provider. Class starts at 2PM CT; Zoom link will be emailed to registrants the week of the class.
- 34th Annual AACE Conference—Oct. 4-6, 2023 in Orlando, FL. \$550 per AACE Member BEFORE 5/30/2023; \$595 after 5/30/2023. Click here for more info—<https://www.aace1.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1724826>

Training *Learning*

From your incoming 2nd VP (July 1st) —Shane Barnard, City of Midwest City



My Name is Shane Barnard; I have been in Code Enforcement with the City of Midwest City since March of 2011. I cannot express what an honor it is to serve OCEA as 2nd Vice President. Education is a vital part of our careers and as your 2nd VP I am devoted to ensure the education that OCEA provides will be at the top of our field. When a new code officer completes our Basic Code and International Property Maintenance Code classes, they will be equipped with the knowledge needed and be more confident in their ability to fulfill the duties designated to them by their municipality. I am looking forward to chairing the Education Committee to keep our training curriculum up to date at the best level it can be. If anyone is interested on being a part of that committee, please let me know. OCEA is an excellent source for networking and getting involved will make you a better CEO. I would like to tailor our curriculum to give anyone who attends the classes the tools needed to prepare for testing to achieve International Code Council certification in Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector. I am currently certified in Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector, Zoning Inspector and Residential Building Inspector through ICC. If anyone wants to achieve these please reach out and I will help you in any way I can.

From your incoming Sgt-at-Arms (July 1st) —Jessica Green, City of Chickasha



Hey guys!! My name is Jessica Green. I am currently the Code Enforcement officer for the City of Chickasha. I have been doing code enforcement for almost three years. When I started my career with the City of Chickasha my supervisor asked me what my goals were, I told her I wanted to be on the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association board. She gave me the support to get there. The support system that I have here in this department is amazing, being able to even attempt to be on the board, and all the support I get out in the field, they are always pushing me to achieve all my goals. I am currently working to get my IPMC and Zoning certification through ICC. It has been a dream of mine to be apart of OCEA for a long time. I wanted to start out as the Sergeant-at-arms and work my way to the top and eventually be the president of OCEA. I am excited to teach people about Code Enforcement and what we do and to help others handle situations out in the field. The OCEA board members over the past few years have become like family to me and it's truly an honor to be able to serve next to them. Code Enforcement is changing, we are challenged by departments, councils and citizens to provide a clean place to live and work in our communities. Sometimes we are beat down by negative comments but the positive work I do keeps me motivated. This is why I wanted to be apart of the board, I wanted to be that voice for code officers that don't know where to turn, or what to do in a situation and to let them know I am here to support them. That being said I am super excited to start this journey with OCEA and other code officers.

OCEA Community Improvement Grant Updates:

Stroud received a Community Improvement Grant from OCEA for installing a metal frame for their recycling and they have completed the project and submitted photos. Way to go Stroud!



Laverne received a Community Improvement Grant from OCEA for installing a paved sidewalk leading up to their new ADA handicap swing and it is now finished. Nice work Laverne!!





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Founded in 1994, the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association is dedicated to the study and advancement of Code Enforcement activities at the local, county and state levels. Its membership represents both large cities and small towns that have an interest in enhancing neighborhood and community health, safety, welfare and aesthetics.

Like us on Facebook



AACE—American Association of Code Enforcement

- ◆ AACE is doing several national check-ins to ensure we are providing our members the best possible service. We learn so much from these check-ins and have enjoyed networking during these video calls.

The dates are listed below and will be held on Tuesday's at 3pm CST:

July 18, 2023

October 17, 2023

- ◆ If you are not receiving periodic emails from AACE, please contact Janita so we can make sure your AACE pass thru membership is valid. Visit www.aace1.org for more info.

Don't forget that OMAG offers scholarships for all of OCEA's Basic Code Certification Classes and to our Spring Conference. Please contact Jason Delonais (Law Enforcement Specialist) &/or Randy Jacox (Risk Management Specialist) to learn more at <https://www.omag.org/ocea-conference-scholarship>

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Tidbits from Janita:

Please send me photos, funny or interesting stories from some case that you've worked, or a Before/After from a case that you've worked and I will add them to the newsletter. Our members would really enjoy seeing things from fellow OCEA members across the State.

You can email your newsletter submissions to me at Janita.hatley@normanok.gov and you can call me at (405)623-8009 or in my office at (405) 366-5318.

Thankful for our Partners/Friends



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT