

[Join Our Email List](#)

Volume 3 - Special Edition - 2022 Annual Meeting Follow-up - - June 2022



**Celebrating Over 50 Years of Service
To Our Members and Community**



BBLA Questionnaire for Town Council Candidates 2023

To Keep Members Informed of the Town Council Elections - 9/9/23 in Town Hall - **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

- You do not need to be a Town Resident to VOTE
- If you won't be in Town on 9/9 - request an [AFFIDAVIT](#) to obtain a ballot
- Absentee Ballots can be mailed to Town Hall or taken in person

Candidates are as follows:

1. **Keith Brothers (resident)**
2. **Russell Evans (non-resident)**
3. **Theresa Keil (resident)**
4. **Jerry Morris (resident)**
5. **Patrick Sheplee (non-resident)**
6. **Marc Tanowitz (non-resident)**

(At least four (4) of the seven (7) members of the Town Council must be residents of the Town, but

during the [following](#)
[times](#)

all may be residents of the
Town)

The Candidate responses are listed in alphabetical order -
please scroll down to read each of the responses ...



**Below are BBLA's Questions and the Verbatim Answers
Received From the (6) Candidates for the (3) Available 2-
year Seats:**

1. Background and Experience

Please provide a short summary (no more than 150 words) of your background and experience, especially involvement in the Town, relevant to serving on Town Council.

2. Looking Forward

Please provide your comments on What Will be Your Main Area of Emphasis as a Council Member (no more than 150 words).

3. Looking Back

Reviewing the past 2 years of Town ordinances and other actions, including committee work, are there any items you would have preferred to be handled in a different manner? Please be specific.

4. Current Issues

Please rate in priority order and expand on your top issues for Bethany Beach.

KEITH BROTHERS

1. Background and Experience

I am a Colonel, US Army Retired after 35 years of service. My last position held was the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Warrior Transition Command which

develops, implements and supervises the planning strategies that provide for and sustain the care and transition services of the Army's Wounded Warriors. Throughout my career, I served in numerous positions with the two main emphases' being Human Resource Life Cycle policy development ensuring compliance with Army Regulations and US Federal Laws for over a 350,000-member agency and a Senior Budget analysis contributing to the development of a \$9.6 billion dollar Personnel, Operations and Maintenance budgets. Worked closely with Budget Managers in the execution and analysis of short- and long-term budget plans. Whereas my background has not been specific Town involvement I believe my background in Government operations and my desire to serve our community will quickly translate to matters facing Bethany. We have owned property in Bethany since 2012 and are full time residents east of Route 1 for the last 2 ½ years.

2. Looking Forward

My main area of emphasis will be transparency of our Town's government operations. I believe that all levels of government operations should be seen and be able to withstand scrutiny by the members of our community. This includes all levels to include but not limited to personnel actions, Town contacts, to include the development of the quantifiable objectives of a contract, the bidding process and especially the measurable process of selection. I believe members of our community have the right to know how and why certain decisions were made and how they will be implemented in the community. Of equal importance and emphasis would be continued maintenance of property values for all of Bethany, and for public safety and the adherence and enforcement of public safety measures for all pedestrians, bicyclist, and vehicles.

3. Looking Back

I don't believe it is fair to Monday morning quarterback a decision made by prior administrations. Town Codes, Regulations, Ordinances and Laws are living documents. If a citizen or citizens feel past decisions or lack of a decision is incorrect, I feel that I am free and open-minded enough to listen, then research how and why a past decision or lack thereof was made, analyze any new data that would have bearing on the issue, then reaffirm the prior decision or propose to reverse a prior decision or change a decision for the better.

4. Current Issues

Chapter 218-Marijuana

Article I: Licensing of Commercial Establishments 218-1

No business license shall be issued for any operation of marijuana cultivation facilities, marijuana product manufacturing facilities, marijuana testing facilities, retail marijuana stores or marijuana smoking lounges in the Town of Bethany Beach.

I am in full support of this ordinance. I do not believe that marijuana cultivation, product manufacturing and testing facilities are in keeping with current activities within the town, there are no other type of cultivation or manufacturing with the town.

I am not in support of retail marijuana stores; however, I would like to see some

data on the impact of having a store and the comparative analysis of not having a store. Is there a rise in criminal activity, is the product getting into the hands of minors? I would like to see how this decision would be for the protection of persons and property and for the preservation of the public health, welfare, and safety. Again, I am not in favor of having any marijuana related activities in our Town.

RUSSELL EVANS

1. Background and Experience

My family has called Bethany Beach home since 1702 (When my Great, Great, Great Grandfather bought land here). I have spent time every summer In Bethany for the past 65 years. I grew up here, worked here (BBBP lifeguard), met my wife here, and have raised our 3 children here. I care deeply about this town and its future.

I founded a printing company in NJ in 1978, have been in business for 45 years, employed and managed 500+ employees at 5 locations. I understand fiscal responsibility and I have a strong skill set for managing people.

My Civic & Non-profit participation include the Rotary Club (Paul Harris Fellow), Chairman, American Red Cross Chapter NJ, Board member, Westfield Chamber of Commerce, Jaycees, and Kiwanis Club, Past President of EANJ, Member, Elks Club, and VFW.

As a Non-Resident Property Owner, I will be a strong voice for keeping Bethany a "Quiet Resort". I care deeply about the town and wish to be of help to the town council and to those who feel the same about Bethany as I do. I plan on retiring here soon.

2. Looking Forward

Keeping Bethany Beach a Quite Resort – small safe family town feel

Townwide Safety – pedestrian crossing & utilize police efficiently.

Flooding – to make sure plans are in effect to prevent property damage.

Outside Town Shuttles – assess and limit permits.

Spending – make sure we are always fiscally responsible.

3. Looking Back

I feel that the town never should have explored to add an elevated walkway through the recently purchased wetlands property on 26. Wasted town resources doing this.

Flooding road closure plan – due to the recent uptick in flash flooding, all flooded roads should be closed to prevent property damage, especially along Pennsylvania Ave

Safety - Add more flashing light crossings & signage warning of pedestrian crossings.

Better townwide communication to citizens – email blasts or postcard mailings.

4. Current Issues

Keeping Bethany Beach as a “Quite Resort” I have heard the town is exploring adding parking. Bringing in more people will add to the already overburdened access to the town.

Outside Shuttles – need to review the permit process and limit permits, have a plan as to where and when these are allowed in town.

I want to explore having districts in town for the town council, so all areas are represented fairly and have a voice on the town council for their specific needs and concerns.

THERESA KEIL

1. Background and Experience

My husband Dave and I have owned our property since 2016 and have lived here full-time since September 2020. Professionally, I bring relevant experience in budgeting, construction and contract management, and communication from a successful twenty-year career in commercial real estate management. As to volunteer service in the Town, I am an original and active member of the Bethany Beach Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Committee. As part of this important committee, I have participated in some of our most notable recent achievements, including the WAVE safety campaign and coordination with BBPD and DeIDOT to host bicycle safety checkpoints. I have also volunteered at the Poseidon Festival, Fourth of July Parade, and am supporting educational and informational outreach to HOAs regarding pedestrian and bicycle safety. Within our larger area community, I am a volunteer at the Delaware Center for Inland Bays and the Art League of Ocean City.

2. Looking Forward

My main area of emphasis has been improving pedestrian and bicycle safety. Dave and I purchased property and moved here because of the beauty and friendly character of the Town and our enjoyment in being able to walk everywhere. As a Bethany Beach Town Council member, safety would continue to be a focus of my attention as it relates to the challenges, goals and objectives outlined in the Town’s 2023 Comprehensive Plan. There is also a need to work with neighboring communities on these and other common issues, including those I have outlined in number 4 below. My overall goal in addressing all issues would be to ensure that Bethany Beach continues to be a safe and family friendly community for all to enjoy.

3. Looking Back

During my work on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee, one area we focused on was the need for flashing beacons on Route 1 and the importance of educating walkers and bikers on how to use them safely. Looking back, it seems that the Town could have requested more beacons north of Central Avenue and south of Wellington Parkway, especially at Ashwood. Our experience with existing beacons has shown that they provide safety benefits, especially as people have become more familiar with them. The Town should

now consider installing additional beacons where needed and continue efforts with DelDOT to lower speed limits.

4. Current Issues

In addition to continuing to improve all aspects of public safety, I believe that some of the other priorities for Council attention include:

Stormwater and Tidal Flooding - As most property owners know, this continues to be a serious on-going problem, especially north of Garfield Parkway and Route 26, adversely affecting homeowners and businesses in those areas. The most viable solution to tidal flooding under consideration is the construction of a mechanically activated steel dam at the mouth of the Loop Canal and a floodgate in the Fresh Pond area. I believe efforts should continue to obtain necessary approvals for the project and determine the appropriate next steps. As flooding is not isolated to any one part of our Town, other work should include continuing to maintain and improve drainage systems and the use of pervious surfaces where possible.

Maintaining the Sound Financial Condition of the Town - The Town has sound and longstanding fiscal policies that have enabled it to maintain strong reserves, carry a low debt burden and complete projects without increasing taxes. One way the Town has been able to do this is by obtaining federal and state grants for major projects. These and other efforts are a sign of good Town governance and management. With my professional background and relevant experience in budgeting and financial reporting, I am committed to continuing this focus which benefits all property owners.

Communications - The Town's recent renewal of a periodic newsletter updating property owners on issues and developments has been well received and should continue. It supplements and expands on the Town's efforts to keep property owners informed about issues, committee and Council meetings, and events through the Town's website and email alerts. I would expand on these communications efforts by encouraging property owners, residents, and businesses to sign up for updates and provide their ideas and suggestions for improvements to the Council. I would also encourage more attendance and participation in Council and committee meetings, and if they can't attend in person to view meetings on YouTube. We are all neighbors and want what's best for the Town. Working together, we can achieve that goal.

With my professional experience and service as a volunteer in our Town and wider area, I believe I can make a positive contribution as a member of the Town Council serving Bethany Beach and all its citizens. Finally, thanks to the BBLA Board of Directors for this opportunity to introduce myself and my views to BBLA members.

GERALD (JERRY) MORRIS

1. Background and Experience

A Bethany property owner since 1984, Judi and I became full-time residents in 2010. I became involved in Town government as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee. Since then, I have served on the Planning & Zoning Commission, Board of Assessment, Non-Residential Design Review and Fourth of July Parade Committees. I have been privileged to serve as a

member of Town Council for 8 years, the last 6 as Secretary-Treasurer. To further my effectiveness as a public servant, I have completed the Excellence in Local Government Leadership and Planning Certificate Programs offered by the University of Delaware. Current Community Activities: St. Ann's Church; VFW; Board member, Farmers Market; President, The Canal Homeowners Association.

Past Community Activities: Board member, BBLA; Meals on Wheels; Beach & Bay Cottage Tour.

Professional Experience: DuPont Co, Engineering Fellow – 45 years of service.

2. Looking Forward

As Secretary-Treasurer, my main objective is to continue to keep Bethany Beach financially sound. We must ensure that summer revenues, primarily parking and real estate rental taxes, continue to cover summer activities. We must also continue to seek grants to enable the Town to undertake major projects. The Town's focus on federal, state and other grant funds resulted in awards of over \$2 million in FY 2023. These awards helped fund such projects as electric vehicle charging stations, the approved pedestrian pathway on Collins, Kent and Wellington, street repaving, Lake Bethany land strip design, police body cameras and more. To date in FY 2024 the Town has received a \$225,000 grant toward the Loop Canal dredging project. These projects would not be possible or would have had to be put off without these grants. The Town continues to pursue grants so that some of the priority projects I have listed below in question 4 can be realized.

3. Looking Back

As a member of Town committees and as a Council member, I believe there has been tremendous effort by all involved to keep Bethany a safe family-oriented town. All revisions to existing and new regulations are meant to maintain that objective, the latest being the proposed prohibition on issuing licenses for marijuana related businesses. Input from property owners is extremely valuable in the decision process. So looking back over the past two years, I would have preferred that more information on the issues was more widely published. The Town has for a number of years provided real time and video access to its meetings and posted information online. However, this type of communication requires citizens to actively look for information, which doesn't always happen. The Town recently renewed publication of a newsletter which, together with its Listserv feature, provides more directed communications between the Town and its citizens. I see this as a way to limit rumors and misunderstanding of facts, and encourage more citizen interest and involvement.

4. Current Issues

Given space limitations, I will focus on two priority issues:

A. Flooding and Sea Level Rise. Since most of the Town is at or below sea level and surrounded on 3 sides by water, flooding continues to be a challenge. Sea level rise will only exacerbate the problem. One near-term solution for over 90% of the "nuisance" flooding north of Rt 1 and Garfield Parkway that has been studied and modeled for a number of years is a dam at the mouth of the Loop Canal. It is important that we focus on the next steps and obtaining

needed permits and funding to complete this important project. In addition, the Town has taken a number of steps to mitigate flooding, including: Purchasing or otherwise excluding over 10% of the land in Town from residential development; participating in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System. Because the Town's floodplain management activities exceed minimum program requirements, FEMA has approved a 10% rate reduction for eligible properties. However, more needs to be done. My focus will be on addressing the goals and objectives regarding sea level rise, resiliency and sustainability outlined in the Town's 2023 Comprehensive Plan, including ongoing communication with Federal and State officials so that they continue to provide funding for the 50-year beach replenishment program with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

B. Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Improvements. Over the past few years, the Town has addressed this priority as part of its efforts to improve the safe flow throughout the Town of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. The Town incorporated separate pedestrian and bicycle paths in the South Atlantic/Cedarwood corridor and approved a separate pathway on the Collins/Kent/Wellington corridor. Rapid Flashing Beacons have been installed on certain high-volume crossings on Rt. 1 as well as median lights. However, more remains to be done to improve the flow along heavily traveled streets like Pennsylvania Avenue and to continue to work with DelDOT to lower the speed limit on Rt. 26 and other streets. These and other transportation priorities are addressed in the Town's 2023 Comprehensive Plan which I fully support.

Thanks to the BBLA for providing this opportunity for candidates to provide our views to the BBLA voters.

PATRICK SHEPLEE

1. Background and Experience

My wife Karen and I bought our house in Lake Bethany in 2000. We have been married for 53 years and have 3 children and 5 grandchildren. Our primary residence is in Columbia, MD and we spend significant time in Bethany Beach.

I am a Certified Public Accountant and spent my working career in finance and accounting. In Bethany Beach, I serve on the Budget and Finance committee and the Fourth of July Parade committee and am the chair of the Telecommunications committee. I have been a member of Council since 2017 and the only non-resident member. In addition, I have been a member of the Board of Directors and Treasurer of the Lake Bethany Community Association since 2008 and volunteer to help with the Beach and Bay Cottage Tour, Operation Seas the Day, and our Fourth of July Parade.

2. Looking Forward

My primary goal is to continue the sound fiscal and moderate policies that enable our Town to accomplish our objectives without large increases in taxes and fees or extensive borrowing. Our town is in excellent financial condition, and I believe it is imperative that we keep it that way.

Two areas of continuing emphasis have been the primary concerns of our citizens over many years – flooding and bicycle and pedestrian safety. I will

expand on these 2 issues in item 4 below.

Roughly 2/3 of Bethany Beach is at or below sea level. We live at the ocean and are bordered on two sides by tidal canals. That said, I believe it is incumbent upon the Council to continue to explore all avenues of potential mitigation.

Bicycle and pedestrian safety is another issue that is critical to all of us. I support realistic measures that improve pedestrian and cycle safety.

3. Looking Back

This is a very difficult question, since I have been a member of Council for the past 2 years (6 years total) and have supported the ordinances that we have created and modified, as well as other actions that the Council has initiated.

Although I support what we have done concerning the new pedestrian pathway on Collins St and Wellington Pkwy, in hindsight I would have liked the process to have been more streamlined and less contentious mainly for the residents affected. Some of this was unavoidable (delays due to Covid and the change of engineering firms). But I think we could have done a better job of working collaboratively with concerned parties to arrive at an acceptable solution.

4. Current Issues

Moving forward specific issues facing our town include:

1. Flooding

Flooding is a very sensitive subject that affects all of us. Nuisance flooding is caused by normal amounts of rain and tidal events. The potential steel dam at the mouth of the loop canal is a promising development that has the potential to significantly reduce this type of flooding and I will push to determine the feasibility and financing of this project.

2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

Bicycle and pedestrian safety needs to be constantly reviewed to see where we can make improvements. The establishment of a dedicated committee shows the importance of this issue. I support realistic measures that improve pedestrian and cycle safety.

3. Completion of the Collins and Wellington Pathway

I support the already approved pedestrian path that will be built along Collins St and Wellington Pkwy with pervious pavement.

The first two items above are the top 2 items in every survey we have done with our citizens. They must remain as priorities for the town. If reelected, I will continue to consider and represent the interests of all the citizens of Bethany Beach and do everything I can to preserve and improve our community and quality of life.

MARC TANOWITZ

1. Background and Experience

My name is Marc Tanowitz, and I am a 25-year veteran of the professional services industry. I founded, built, and sold a firm specializing in software and technology services contracting for Fortune 100 clients. I am a member of the

Board of Directors of a women's empowerment organization, Together We Bake, that trains women in life and career skills that enable them to sustain employment and earn a living wage. My family and I also give back to causes that are particularly close to us and have raised over \$500,000 for organizations, including Children's National Hospital and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

I have been a part-time resident of Bethany Beach since 2019 and intend to become a full-time resident upon retirement. I am an active member of the Bethany Beach community year-round and have attended the vast majority of Town Council meetings in person or via live stream.

2. Looking Forward

As a member of the Town Council, my focus will be on representing the interests of our residents, with a particular focus on the sustainability of our community. With this in mind, I expect to focus on effective stormwater management, increasing pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and continuing to support and grow our local economy. For each of these areas, I will view each opportunity through the lens of our residents and how we can continue to enrich the lives of our population through community, connection, and prosperity. As a council member with absolutely no commercial interest or benefit from the decisions brought before the council, I will provide a certain check and balance through the application of thoughtful discourse to ensure our actions equitably and holistically benefit our population.

3. Looking Back

I believe Bethany Beach is very well governed, and the Town Council plays an important role in this. Our ordinances and actions have generally been thoughtful and offer improvements to our community. One instance does come to mind: The ordinances to amend Sections 425-2 and 425-27, which address lot coverage limitations, do not fully accomplish their goal. These ordinances intend to benefit our community by reducing stormwater runoff. However, as written, they can place an undue burden on homeowners wishing to improve their property, which has the opposite impact they seek to create. In these cases, the ordinance creates a scenario where homeowners are forced to defer or forgo drainage improvements given the potentially high cost to come into full compliance with the ordinance or, alternately, the high cost to petition the building inspector for an approval waiver (which may not be granted). Further, the ordinance fails to address required ingress and egress coverage, such as driveways, posing a further limitation and restriction on the ability to improve existing conditions. Finally, the ordinance remains silent on how coverage limitations should be implemented in scenarios where there is less available land than the coverage limitations contemplate. The implication is that the greater the percentage of land covered by a building, the easier it is to comply with the limitations; however, this contradicts the ordinance's intent. Collectively, the ordinance is overly restrictive on existing homes and overly lenient on new development of larger homes. I feel that with I feel that these ordinances should be revisited with greater representation and examples from residents in our community, which can allow us to improve these, ordinances without sacrificing their beneficial intentions.

4. Current Issues

My top three priorities are (1) effective stormwater management, (2) increasing pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and (3) continuing to support and grow our local economy.

1. Effective stormwater management: It seems that any action recommended by the Army Core of Engineers or taken by the Town of Bethany Beach is met with both resistance and appreciation, and this is certainly true for our efforts to manage stormwater. As a member of the Town Council, I will relentlessly pursue thought leadership and education to both create recommendations as well as best understand the tradeoffs and implications of each potential project to ensure that we understand the expected benefits, total cost of the improvement (including ongoing maintenance), and long-term risks and implications. In the near term, my focus will be on prioritizing projects such that we ensure our first responders can perform their duties and protect our most vulnerable population when storms and flooding come to our area.

2. Increasing pedestrian and bicyclist safety: The very high seasonal population presents a tremendous risk and potential strain on our first responders. Avoiding pedestrian and bicyclist injuries effectively increases the capacity of our first responders. Bethany Beach has demonstrated continuous improvement in this area, but there remains work to be done. We have a significant opportunity to increase crosswalk signage, install passive detection at crosswalks, and optimize parking to ensure pedestrian and bicyclist visibility. Improving safety prevents Bethany Beach from becoming a “bedroom community” and promotes active and healthy lifestyles, which has the potential to extend our “shoulder season” and improve the sense of community, which is perhaps my favorite aspect of Bethany Beach.

3. Continuing to support and grow our local economy: Bethany Beach remains unique in its rich local feel – an attribute that I would like to see remain as a differentiating factor in our community. As a governing body, it is incumbent upon us to do whatever we can to create an environment where businesses can thrive. To do this, I will look at optimizing time restrictions for parking in commercial areas, optimizing parking rates in commercial areas, optimizing public gatherings to draw demand to our commercial areas, and investing resources, where practical, to increase demand for our locally owned businesses.

Lastly, while not rising to the level of “an issue,” it is clear that our community loves its pets with many dog-friendly stores and pet-focused boutiques. However, we are missing a dedicated area where our pets can socialize and exercise. Healthy pets are better behaved. I would like to look into the feasibility of adding a dog park within some of our greenspace provided that it would not interfere with the quiet enjoyment of existing residences or dedicated public facilities/equipment.



The BBLA Board of Directors thanks the Candidates for participating in the BBLA Questionnaire - Informed Voters is Our Goal!



Candidates will be gathering in Town Hall at **7:00 PM** on **8/25** for the ***Coastal Point*** Candidate Night (will also be live-streamed)

Bethany Beach Landowners Association | PO Box 401, Bethany Beach, DE 19930

[Unsubscribe rk_dobes@yahoo.com](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by mary.louise.embrey@gmail.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!