



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**June 2018**

The BBLA Board of Directors has been in active transition leading up to this year's annual meeting. (The meeting will be held at 10:00 AM on June 23, 2018 at the South Coastal Library. Speakers will address tidal and rainwater flooding and beach replenishment. See the article below.)

The transition integrated the five new Board members elected last June. They melded seamlessly into an active 15-member Board. This year there is also a healthy transition in leadership. In June, the Nominating Committee is not proposing new directors, as all continue willing to serve, but will propose changes in all five officer positions from those in place one year ago. Two of the longer tenured Board members will change their officer roles, three of the newer Board members will serve as officers, including one as Vice President. As has been planned for over a year, I will shift from the President role, into another officer role. These transitions provide a fine mix of experience and additional perspectives.

Since the last newsletter, committees of 3-4 Board members reviewed BBLA's communications and advocacy roles as well as taking a look at Board governance. All three committees separately concluded that BBLA needed to augment its capability to gather information and report to members. (This work, including research on specific issues, has always been done by volunteers.) As a result the Board approved "a motion to endorse the idea of using a contractor to gather information by monitoring, attending, and reporting on Town Council and Committee Meetings and Workshops as a means of assisting the Communications and Advocacy Committees in their work." The Board is determining the approach to linking the volunteer foundation of BBLA with contracted work. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find a request to participate in a skills-knowledge inventory of members.

The Advocacy Committee outlined a framework for efforts in their area, consistent with one of the purposes in BBLA's Bylaws: "To present the views of the members and of the Association to other organizations, the government, and the public." The outline listed:

- Provide basic information to members.
- Follow issues that may be of interest to members and possibly advise them how to make their individual opinions known to the appropriate decision makers.
- Take a position by letter to a decision-making body.
- Lobbying to influence legislation or regulation.
- Commenting on candidates' positions on issues.

The Governance Committee proposed a Bylaws change to allow Board members to electronically participate in Board meetings. They also proposed a transparency policy, approved by the Board. The Donations Committee is updating BBLA's donation policy and procedures, consistent with one of BBLA's four major purposes. As a result, more information has been posted on the BBLA website, including Board policies and the donations history for 10 years.

The Treasurer updated BBLA's accounts to more closely link expenditures with BBLA's four primary purposes per its Bylaws. The Board recently approved a budget based on the updated accounts.

Hoping this newsletter reaches you before the annual meeting. The Board looks forward to seeing you there. In any event, we hope you all enjoy a wonderful summer.

Tracy Mulligan, President

### **BBLA ANNUAL MEETING**

The BBLA annual membership meeting will be held on Saturday, June 23 at 10:00 AM in the South Coastal Library. Many members have expressed an interest in flooding due to tidal and rain events and also in beach replenishment. We are fortunate to have speakers this year who will discuss both issues, in a way specific to Bethany Beach. Here is basic information from the Town on flooding, posted in 2010 and still useful. <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/DocumentCenter/View/35/Flood-Prevention-Information>.

Speakers at the BBLA annual meeting will be Charles C. Miller, Sr., scientist and Co-founder of Environmental Consulting Service, Inc. and Dr. Bruce Frye, BBLA member and Town Council member. Mr. Miller will discuss storm water and tidal flooding within Bethany Beach. He has 44 years of experience and knowledge of the physical principles affecting the flooding. He has reviewed engineering studies done for the Bethany Beach area, including the most recent by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Dr. Frye will provide information on beach replenishment. He is familiar with the fundamentals of beach replenishment projects in Bethany Beach and with flood zones. He regularly attends the national conference of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA).

### **RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN BBLA BYLAWS**

The Bylaws provision regarding Board meetings, drafted almost 50 years ago, requires that Board members be physically present at Board meetings to vote. With the changes in technology, the Board recommends that members approve an amendment to add one sentence which will allow the Board to adopt a policy to permit virtual attendance and voting at Board meetings. More information is on the BBLA website under the 2018 annual meeting. (See <http://www.bbla.us>.)

### **BBLA BOARD SEEKING MEMBER ASSISTANCE**

The all-volunteer BBLA Board would like to cover more Town government meetings and report important information on the matters under consideration to our members. The Board at times would also like to provide more in-depth research and reports on important issues. In addition, issues and questions continually arise that we would like to explore and possibly address. However, the Board cannot adequately accomplish all those tasks, given our limited number, time and other practical considerations.

Accordingly, we are hoping to be able to reach out to our members for assistance, volunteers to help with various short-term activities throughout the year. Toward that end, we'd like to determine the areas of interest of members willing to help, as well as their areas of experience and any specialized knowledge and skills. Those areas could include such things as research and writing, engineering, architecture, accounting, Internet and wireless technology, construction, public works projects or lobbying.

The simplest way to respond and indicate your interest in volunteering so that we may contact you is to go to the BBLA website [www.bbla.us](http://www.bbla.us) and to the "Contact Us" on the top right corner. The direct page is <http://www.bbla.us/contactus.php>. Your interest and support are very much appreciated.

## **TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION**

The deadline to file as a candidate for election to the Town Council is July 25, 2018, although a contested election would not be held until September. Four Council Members are up for reelection this year: Mayor Jack Gordon, Vice Mayor Lew Killmer, Bruce Frye and Rosemary Hardiman.

## **BEACH REPLENISHMENT**

Finally, after a number of postponements, due to delay in the arrival of two dredges from the Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, the 2018 beach replenishment project has started. Replenishment ("renourishment") work began on June 2 with operation of one dredge. The second dredge was expected to arrive on location later, which will accelerate the project.

The project will progress in three to four block segments so the entire beach won't be unusable at one time, as replenishment and dune repair work are being done. Our understanding is that the Bethany Beach part of the project is expected to be completed sometime in July, depending on the weather, with South Bethany and Fenwick Island following on the schedule.

## **BEACH RULES**

Shading Devices. Standard-size umbrellas no more than 8-feet in diameter and so-called "baby tents" up to 36" x 36" x 36" are the only shading devices permitted on the beach. Based on a number of public hearings and the persuasive results of a survey of Bethany Beach property owners and residents earlier this year, in which over 70 percent favored prohibiting the use of various shading devices, the Town Council passed an ordinance which prohibits the use of canopies, tents, cabanas, oversized umbrellas and devices other than the standard sized umbrellas and baby tents.

We understand that beach goers who were unaware of the ordinance have been very cooperative with Town employees when it is brought to their attention. Recent pictures of the beach indicate that the education efforts are effective. Lately, just umbrellas are visible. From anecdotal reports, public reaction is understandably mixed. Some who previously used canopies are unhappy with the change. Others say there is now more room for more people to enjoy the beach with the umbrellas-only rule. Like Rehoboth Beach's experience, it will take a season or two for everyone to get used to it.

Other Beach Rules. Property owners might want to inform their visitors and renters about other pertinent rules, mostly safety and health related, including:

- no ball playing, kite flying or fishing on the beach during life guard hours
- no digging of large holes in the sand
- no alcohol or glass containers
- no smoking
- no dogs on the beach or boardwalk from May 15 through September 30
- no fires
- no one is allowed on the beach from 1:00 AM to 5:00 AM.
  
- Bicycles are only allowed on the boardwalk from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM (Editor's note: we have heard complaints from people who walk on the boardwalk during those hours about near accidents with bike riders. Those who have concerns about safety hazards posed by allowing bike riding on the boardwalk are advised to bring their concerns to the attention of Town government officials (admin@townofbethanybeach.com)). Roller skates, skateboards, motor bikes or motorcycles are not allowed at any time.
  
- Drones are only permitted to be flown over property owned by the operator or with a property owner's permission. Commercial operators must obtain a permit from the Town's Code Compliance Officer.
  
- A final reminder is to comply with the "KEEP OFF THE DUNES" signs, which we understand will be more strictly enforced when the dunes are rebuilt during the current beach replenishment project.

### **TRAFFIC CONCERNS ADDRESSED**

To address property owner concerns about heavy traffic and cars driving too fast on some streets, the Town has installed speed bumps on Gibson and Central Avenue and radar speed indicators on the 300 blocks of both Oakwood and Wellington.

### **PROPERTY MAINTENANCE VIOLATIONS: A REMINDER**

Almost 60 property maintenance violations were found in just one week recently, mostly overgrown grass. Other violations were reported where debris was left scattered across a property and piles of dirt were eroding into adjacent swale systems. Owners were notified and reminded of their obligation under Town ordinances to properly maintain their properties, to include keeping the grass mowed.

## **WIFI UPGRADE IN BEACH AREA**

Cabling to provide wireless coverage on the beach and boardwalk has been replaced with new fiber optic cable. It has been reported that bandwidth in the bandstand area will be increased to Mediacom's maximum of one gigabyte, which should result in somewhat better service in the area.

## **TIDAL FLOODING STUDY**

The Town continues to explore feasible ideas and take steps to reduce flooding, to the extent possible given the topography of Bethany Beach. Two engineering consultants are conducting a follow-up tidal flooding study, to include determination of the impact of the suggested installation of a bladder dam on the Loop Canal at Route 1. We will keep you informed when we know the results of the study.

Repair and replacement work of the drainage system on Pennsylvania Avenue by the Public Works Department staff has noticeably improved drainage on the street after rain storm events. PWD staff also regularly clean and clear culverts, swales and grates to maintain the drainage system in Town.

## **SOUTH ATLANTIC STREETSCAPE PROJECT**

The badly needed South Atlantic streetscape project has been completed up to the south side of Parkwood Street. The original engineering design concept for the necessary street repairs and improvements was adjusted based on safety and other practical considerations. We understand that property owners concerned about the design adjustments have been informed of the reasons for the changes. Work on the remainder of the project will resume in the Fall.

## **PET PIGS IN TOWN: EDITOR QUESTIONS**

In addition to the numerous breeds of dogs we see in Town, there have been a number of sightings of pet pigs on leashes walking around with their proud owners. Questions arise: what's up with this? Is it the beginning of a trend? Can we expect an annual Bethany Beach Pet Pig Week like the Rehoboth—Dewey Beach events with the Greyhounds? Is it just showing off, one-upmanship over the miniature Cockapoo? People definitely notice a guy walking a pig. Or are they "comfort animals"? (Hug your pig for peace of mind.) Or are they farm animals—a ready source of ham and bacon? If so, aren't they prohibited under the Town Code? (See section 240-26 to 28.) Do they need a license? Shots? Do we need a shot? What about the obvious odor nuisance problems? (Has anyone been around or ever driven past a pig farm?) We'll follow this development—from a distance—and keep you informed. Until then, watch where you step and enjoy the summer.

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