



NOVEMBER 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As BBLA approaches its 50th Anniversary in 2019, the Board of Directors is implementing a number of new and improved policies and procedures to carry out the purposes of the Association set forth in our Bylaws. The primary focus has been on keeping our members informed about important issues and developments and presenting the views of the membership to the Town Council and Town Manager.

For example, to keep BBLA members more fully informed, the Board has arranged periodic meetings with Town Manager Cliff Gravier for updates on the status of various Town projects and issues. Some of that information is incorporated in the following articles. In a separate recent meeting, Chief of Police Michael Redmon provided the Board with a comprehensive briefing on the Police Department and public safety related issues and statistics. That information will be summarized in a subsequent newsletter.

The Board has expressed its appreciation for such briefings because they enable us to keep all BBLA members better informed. The meetings also provide an opportunity for the Board to discuss member concerns and questions with Town officials.

The Board has also been working to improve administrative efficiency. For example, the Board will institute a significant change in our membership renewal process in January 2019 to provide for online renewals. Early in January, our 1600 e-mail addressees will be notified of the details of the change, to include a BBLA website link where they will be able to, among other things, renew their membership, pay the annual dues by credit card and update their contact information. The new procedure has the potential to save the Association thousands of dollars in printing and mailing costs and many hours of volunteer time in processing regular mail renewals. Consequently, the Board is hoping that a significant number of members will use the more convenient new system.

The all-volunteer Board of Directors is focused on the now almost 50-year BBLA tradition of service to our membership and the Bethany Beach community. We will continue to work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Association in carrying out those purposes.

Finally, on behalf of the Board, I want to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season. We have a lot to be thankful for in Bethany Beach.

Patrick McGuire
President

NEWS AND UPDATES

2018—2019 Town Council and Committee Chairs

On September 17, 2018, Faith Denault, Bruce Frye, Rosemary Hardiman and Lew Killmer were sworn in to serve two-year terms as Council members.

At a reorganization meeting on the same day, the seven members of the Council, in accordance with the Town Charter, elected Mr. Killmer as Mayor and Ms. Hardiman as Vice Mayor. Jerry Morris was reelected as Secretary-Treasurer. The Council also approved the appointment of the following committee chairpersons: Audit, Chuck Peterson; Charter and Ordinance Review, Rosemary Hardiman; Non-Residential Design Review, Lew Killmer; Cultural and Historical Affairs, Carol Olmstead; and Fourth of July Parade, Bruce Frye. The Planning and Zoning Commission is established under the Delaware State Code (see 22 Del. C. § 701), which provides that the members of the Commission, who are appointed by the Town Council, shall annually elect a chairperson and secretary from among its members. At the present time, Mike Boswell is the elected Chair. In its actions on September 17, the Council also unanimously approved the appointment of Jim Sirkis to fill a vacancy on the Commission.

All the named individuals and other committee and commission members are volunteers and BBLA appreciates their service to our community. The BBLA Board of Directors especially wants to thank Jack Gordon for his outstanding service to the citizens and Town of Bethany Beach as a member of the Town Council for the past ten years, including his last four as Mayor. Jack decided not to seek another term on the Council and we wish him and wife Joan all the best in the future.

Current BBLA Officers and Board of Directors

With the election at the annual meeting on June 23, 2018, the current BBLA officers and directors are as follows:

Officers*

President:	Patrick McGuire
Vice President:	Kathy Sierra
Treasurer:	Susan Fried
Recording Secretary:	Mary Louise Embrey
Membership Secretary:	Tracy Mulligan

Board of Directors

Judy Bullis	Diane Fogash	Kathy Shorter
Marty Decre	Jerry Hardiman	Jack Walsh
Larry Fishel	Claire Loftus	Margaret Young

*All officers also serve as voting members of the Board of Directors

Consideration of High-Speed Internet Service Options Narrows

Because of concerns about the adequacy of current Internet service, particularly during the high-demand summer months, the Town has explored other service options, including partnering with a new provider.

At a meeting with the BBLA Board of Directors on October 3, 2018, and a Town Council Workshop on October 15, Town Manager Cliff Graviet noted that some companies are unwilling to provide service to Bethany Beach because, given the cost of building infrastructure and the small year-round population, it would not be profitable. In reviewing other possible providers, factors to consider are: improvement, if any, over current service; costs to the Town and customers; infrastructure needed; and provider capability and performance record. One viable option discussed was the establishment of a Town utility to meet this essential community need. The Council directed the Town Manager to continue to explore this option.

Renewed Interest In Concept to Reduce Tidal Flooding

At the Town Council meeting on October 19, 2018, the Town Manager reported that the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environment Control (DNREC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have expressed interest in a concept that could reduce moderate tidal flooding in Bethany Beach.

The concept involves the construction of a “bladder dam” at the junction of the Loop Canal and the Assawoman Canal, as well as gates that would shut the pipes that run under Fred Hudson Road and connect the Salt Pond to the tidal ditch that runs north to the Indian River Bay. The bladder dam and gates would prevent “nuisance” tidal flooding in Town, not larger tidal surges during major coastal storms.

While the renewed interest is encouraging news, it is an initial step. Hopefully, the Town’s engineering study provides sufficient data and justification for DNREC and USACE approval of an implementing project. If it does, a lengthy process can be anticipated before actual implementation.

Rain-event flooding is a separate problem. For example, as the remnants of Hurricane Michael passed our area recently, the Town received about five inches of rain in a few hours. At the same time, the Loop Canal and Salt Pond rose about two feet, which made it impossible for the heavy rain to drain out. This resulted in an unusual amount of flooding for a weather event that was not affected by tidal flooding.

Background information on the flooding issue can be found on the BBLA website <http://www.bbla.us/>. For those who are interested in determining the areas of flooding in Town during tidal and rain events, there is a useful tool on the Town website at <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/492/Loop-Canal-Tides> for that purpose.

By accessing the cameras on the boardwalk at <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/365/Beach-Cams> you can see the condition of the beach during coastal storms.

A Reminder to Prepare for Emergencies

On September 13, 2018, Bethany Beach Police Captain Darin Cathell provided valuable emergency preparedness information and advice to local citizens in a program at the South Coastal Library. Captain Cathell covered a number of possible emergencies in detail. It is not possible to summarize all the information in this newsletter. Here is a partial summary that may be timely and helpful.

In severe coastal storms, including nor'easters typically encountered between October and March, residents have to anticipate flooding, wind damage, and temporary loss of electricity, gas, running water and cell phone service. With sufficient advance warning, residents may be advised or directed to evacuate. In some storms of unpredicted severity, such as winter snow storms, residents may be confined to home until well after the storm passes. Residents should plan and prepare for both contingencies as follows.

Stay Informed. Pay attention to the Emergency Broadcast System and the Town's emergency system warnings, and monitor local radio and TV reports. If you are not currently on the Town's "Code Red" phone notification system, or for more information, go to <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/357/CodeRED> or call the Bethany Beach Police Department at: 302-539-1000.

Plan Ahead. The Town's website: <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/499/Hurricane-Information> is one source of planning information. The Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) website at http://dema.delaware.gov/services/disaster_prep.shtml, covering various situations is another recommended source.

The website lists emergency supplies to have on hand to sustain you and your family and pets for at least three days in case you're confined at home. The websites also recommend pre-emergency preparation of a "Go Bag" for family members (and pets), with a list of things to take if you're advised or directed to evacuate.

Other specific information is provided for seniors and those with disabilities. Individuals requiring special assistance during an emergency or when an evacuation is ordered can obtain help by calling the Bethany Beach Police Department at (302) 539-1000, or the Sussex County Emergency Operations Center at (302) 855-7801.

For those with pets, http://dema.delaware.gov/disprep/pet_tips.shtml, is a source which can be very helpful. For pet shelter information, see <http://www.petfinder.com/shelter/DE15.htm> (the Sussex County SPCA Chapter), or call the Sussex County SPCA at (302) 856-6361.

Follow emergency personnel instructions. One point emphasized when advised or directed to evacuate was to secure your home as recommended, take your Go Bag(s) and leave early. In a storm warning situation, if you wait too long, evacuation routes may be closed by weather conditions or stalled with traffic. If you ignore the warning and stay, emergency responders may not be able to save you and you can endanger their lives if they attempt a rescue. Lastly, check the Town or DEMA website for emergency recovery and safe return procedures.

New Water Infrastructure Act Expected To Facilitate Future Beach Replenishment

On October 26, 2018, U.S. Senator Tom Carper visited Bethany Beach for a press event covering America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, which the President had signed on October 23. Senator Carper was the co-author of the bipartisan legislation which passed the Senate by a vote of 99 to 1 and the House of Representatives by voice vote!

As described in summaries, the provisions of this major new law will, among other things:

- Authorize or reauthorize federal funding for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects and programs, including shoreline and infrastructure protection;
- reduce flooding risks for coastal communities;
- require that projects damaged or destroyed by natural disasters shall be rebuilt to either pre-storm levels or its design level of protection, whichever is greater; and
- give state and local governments a greater role in prioritizing Army Corps projects.

By one account, the new law provides legislative authorization for the Corps' 50-year beach replenishment project; and more efficient and cost-effective coordination between its Baltimore and Philadelphia Districts regarding replenishment projects along the Maryland and Delaware shorelines.

This is a promising new law and a positive development for Bethany Beach and other coastal communities. It remains to be seen how the provisions are interpreted, funded and implemented when it comes to maintaining the protection of the beach and dunes.

Street Improvement and Safety Measures

Based on traffic and engineering studies and public input, a number of projects and plans to improve the condition and safety of some of the heavily travelled streets in Town have been approved by the Town Council.

The South Atlantic Ave. streetscape project is near completion, with some safety-related issues to be evaluated, as well as related work on a pedestrian pathway on Cedarwood St. and drainage improvements on Ashwood St. Future plans under consideration include adding a pathway on Collins St. as a safety measure for pedestrians; and improvements on North Atlantic and South Pennsylvania Avenues. There will be no final Council decisions on these matters until engineering studies and public hearing(s) are conducted and all input is considered.

To address concerns with vehicle traffic and speed during summer, the Town installed speed bumps on Gibson Ave. and Central Blvd., and radar speed indicators on Wellington Pkwy. and Oakwood St. Those measures remain options for the future. There is a question to be explored further as to whether the Town will be able to reduce the speed limit on some streets from 25 mph. We will keep you informed about future developments.

Progress Can Continue in Development of the Town Park

After a lengthy delay resulting from the Sussex Conservancy District review and approval process, the District finally approved a sediment and stormwater management plan for that aspect of development of the Town Park. Bid documents and construction estimates can now be developed for Council review and eventual funding decisions.

On-Premises Consumption of Alcohol in Liquor Stores Prohibited

On July 20, 2018, the Town Council unanimously approved an amendment to section 425-70B of the Town Code to clarify that liquor stores are prohibited from permitting on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages.

The amended ordinance will operate to prohibit so-called “tastings” of alcohol in liquor stores. The prohibition is consistent with the historical prohibition of bars, taverns and other such establishments in Town.

Ambulance Service Fees Stabilized for Next Five Years

At the Town Council meeting on October 19, 2018, it was reported that Bethany Beach, South Bethany, Fenwick Island and the Sea Colony Recreation Association had reached an agreement with the Bethany Beach Volunteer Fire Company regarding funding for ambulance service provided by the Fire Company. The agreement provides for continued ambulance service to the four communities for the next five years with no increase in the fees paid by property owners.

Previously, fee assessments were not stable or predictable. Over the past eight years, there has been a 75 percent increase in fees. The new agreement provides for continued support for ambulance service and locks in the cost for five years. Parties to the agreement commended Bethany Beach Town Manager Cliff Gravier for his work in bringing the agreement to fruition.

Another Busy Summer for Lifeguards

At the end of September, the Captain of the Beach Patrol, Joe Donnelly, reported that the record of service of the life guards over the 2018 summer season included:

- 319 water rescues (258 involving rip currents);
- 15 emergencies requiring an ambulance; and
- 104 lost children found.

BBLA is grateful to the Beach Patrol for all the lives saved and their dedicated service to our community every summer season.

Town in Excellent Financial Condition

At the Council meeting on July 20, 2018, the Town's Audit Committee reported on the results of the annual external audit of the Town's financial condition for the fiscal year that ended on March 31, 2018, by the outside auditing firm, TGM Group. Bethany Beach again received the highest level evaluation and the audit determined that the Town remains in excellent financial condition. The Town was complimented for its internal controls, policies and personnel. Finance Director Janet Connery and Town Manager, Cliff Gravier, deserve a large part of the credit for the continued excellence in financial management.

Relevant financial statements are available on the Town's website and at Town Hall. Review of the Management Discussion and Analysis portion of the audit will provide more detailed information at <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/Archive.aspx?AMID=38&Type=Recent>.

Photo Contest for the 2019/2020 Town Calendar

The Town is accepting submissions for the photo contest for the 2019/2020 Town calendar. Although there is no official theme, "photos should capture the essence of a visit to Bethany Beach." The contest is open to both amateur and professional photographers.

All participants will be entered to win a 2019 VIP parking pass good for parking at any space in Town (except handicapped, without a handicap permit) during the 2019 summer season. Those whose photos are selected for placement in the calendar will receive photo credit and a free calendar.

Entries are due no later than 11:59 p.m. on December 15, 2018. Digital photos are preferred, and they must be high resolution, 300 dpi or greater. Email photos to the Town's Events Director and Media Coordinator, Julie Malewski at jmalewski@townofbethanybeach.com by the deadline.

Ms. Malewski asked that photos not be sent in the body of the email and that they be cropped to fit a 10" x 7" space before being sent. Otherwise they will be cropped to fit the available space. By entering, participants give Bethany Beach the right to use the photos for the calendar or other media communications, with photo credit.

Would You Like to Participate In the Seaside Craft Show?

The Bethany Beach Cultural and Historical Affairs Committee is seeking "fine crafters in diverse mediums" interested in participating in the Seaside Craft Show scheduled for June 1, 2019. The deadline for submitting applications for consideration is February 1, 2019.

Applicants may download the necessary application by visiting www.townofbethanybeach.com and clicking on the Seaside Craft Show tab under Activities. Note that no online entries will be accepted.

Trash Collection for October 1, 2018—April 30, 2019

Regular residential trash will be picked up on Monday in the entire Town.

Residential dumpster collections will be picked up every Monday and Friday (and Wednesday, if needed).

Recycle items will be picked up every Wednesday in the entire Town.

Yard waste will be picked up every Tuesday through December 31, 2018, and every other Tuesday from January 1 to April 30, 2019. Material must be in heavy-duty paper yard waste bags or labeled containers. See the Town website for other requirements and restrictions.

<http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/370/Yard-Waste-Schedule>

Special Collections of Acceptable Bulk Items can be arranged through the Public Works Department (PWD). See the Town website for a list of acceptable bulk items and other information.

<http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/428/Trash-Collection-Schedule>

Also see <http://www.townofbethanybeach.com/DocumentCenter/View/2095> for month-by-month trash pickup calendar.

The Town Manager has reported that ten full-time Public Works Department (PWD) employees, augmented by 15 seasonal employees, make over 280,000 trash pickups a year from residences and businesses. That is in addition to their other duties, including: beach and boardwalk maintenance; maintenance of swales and culverts for storm water management; maintenance of over 18 miles of streets and sidewalks; and assisting Melinda Linde and Jessica Williamson, who are also Public Works employees, in their horticultural beautification work, as needed. Thanks to PWD Director Brett Warner and the entire staff for all they do year-round for Bethany Beach.

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