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# HOLDEN BEACH PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

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holdenbeachpoa.com

Fall 2023 Newsletter

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## Message from the HBPOA President

Welcome to our Fall 2023 Newsletter providing you with a summary of current topics going on at Holden Beach. For additional information, please visit our website at [holdenbeachpoa.com](http://holdenbeachpoa.com).

We will continue to provide our members with a strong voice in the affairs on the island. As always, we welcome your feedback.

Best regards,  
Tom Myers, President

## Elections

Holden Beach voters will elect four Commissioners and a Mayor this November.

### **Important Dates:**

- Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>: Absentee ballots available
- Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>: Voter registration deadline
- Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup> thru Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>: One-stop early voting. Same day registration also available if you missed the Oct 13<sup>th</sup> deadline
- Friday, October 20: Meet the Candidates Night
- Tuesday, October 31: Last day to request absentee ballot
- Tuesday, November 7, at 5:00 pm: Hand delivered absentee ballots due at the Board of Elections office
- Tuesday, November 7: Municipal Election (polls open from 6:30 am – 7:30 pm)

## Are You Eligible to Vote Here?

We often hear this question from our members. The North Carolina State Board of Elections offers the following guidance: "A person may have an actual abode (residence) in one place, and their permanent established home (domicile) in another. A domicile is the place to which the person intends to return. The law requires all persons to have only one domicile for voting purposes."

Our interpretation is that you can vote here if you consider your domicile to be Holden Beach and you don't vote anywhere else.

## Candidates

The following 12 candidates will be on the ballot this November running for five available positions.

The asterisks\* indicate incumbents:

**Mayor:** Alan Holden\* and Mike Felmly

**4-Year Full-term Commissioners (3 spots):** Gerald Arnold\*, Jim Bauer, Page Dyer\*, Brian Murdock\*, Tom Myers, Maria Surprise, Tracey Thomas

**2-Year Unexpired-term Commissioner (1 spot):** Richard McInturf, Rick Paarfus, Sylvia Pate

## Meet the Candidates Night: October 20<sup>th</sup>

Meet the Candidates Night will be held on Friday, **October 20<sup>th</sup>** starting at **5:30 PM** at the Chapel. Since three HBPOA Board members are running for office, the League of Women Voters is administering the event this year to avoid any perception of favoritism.

You can submit questions for the candidates to the League of Women Voters at this email address: [HoldenBeachForum@lwvlcf.org](mailto:HoldenBeachForum@lwvlcf.org)

As always, the goal of the event is to help our Holden Beach voters better understand the candidates' positions on important issues so they can make an informed vote on election day.

## Virtual Meetings

We recognize that many of our members are not able to attend our meetings in-person, so we have been broadcasting them via Zoom. We also recognize there have been difficulties hearing our discussions during these broadcasts.

To address this issue, we have purchased a new "Owl" camera and microphone system to improve sound and video quality. We used this equipment for the first time at our Labor Day meeting. Hopefully, this resulted in a better experience for our remote participants. Please provide feedback on your remote experience.

## **Inlet Hazard Area Update**

The HBPOA joined forces with our POA counterparts on Ocean Isle and Oak Island regarding our common concerns with the proposed Inlet Hazard Area (IHA) changes. We delivered an orchestrated set of objections to the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) when they met on February 23rd at Ocean Isle Beach. Since the CRC then voted to move forward with the changes, we assumed we were not successful.

However, it now appears the CRC has taken our messages into consideration, since they have decided to both postpone adoption of any changes, and also to re-evaluate erosion rates using the historical end-point method in contrast to the proposed linear regression method that has caused our concerns.

We may not have won the war, but we have definitely won the latest battle. Stay tuned as things unfold.

## **Wind Farm Update**

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) recently announced the finalized Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) in the Central Atlantic do not include any sites in North Carolina. However, this exclusion does not mean all offshore wind energy development has stalled.

Development in the Carolina Long Bay WEA is still on the table. The WEA is broken into two sections – Wilmington East and Wilmington West. Wind turbines in Wilmington East would likely not be visible from our beach, but those in Wilmington West could potentially be seen from our shore. In 2018 the HBPOA passed a resolution opposing locations where turbines would be visible from our shores.

At the current time, development is currently only being considered in Wilmington East, which is about 22 miles from the shores of Bald Head Island, but Wilmington West has not been excluded.

## **Bike Lanes Are (Still) Coming**

At our membership meeting in May, the Mayor stated that a contract with DOT has been signed and the work to re-pave Ocean Blvd and add two bike lanes will start this fall.

A five-foot bike lane will be added to each side of the road. The existing roadway will be expanded by seven feet on the south side and three feet on the north side. Drainage issues will be addressed by the DOT as part of the project.

The DOT will move mailboxes, but property owners will need to relocate any landscaping or other items in the ROA that they want to salvage.

## **Town Budget**

In June, the Commissioners approved the Town's budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Key budget items include:

### **Revenue (Estimated):**

- New tax rate of 14 cents/100 which is a 16% tax increase over revenue neutral
- BPART occupancy tax revenue \$4M
- Property tax revenue \$3.3M
- Paid parking revenue \$500K
- Other revenues \$1 M

### **Expenses (Estimated):**

- Total debt service payments \$3.6 M
- Pier related expenses \$2.1 M
- Block Q Phase 1 expenses \$300k
- Salaries increase 7.5% (4% merit and 3.5% COLA)

### **Summary:**

- Debt service exceeds property tax revenues
- Expenses exceed revenues by \$2.3M
- The deficit is due to debt service and major capital projects and is covered by transferring:
  - \$432K from the General Fund balance
  - \$493 K from the BPART Fund balance
  - \$347K from the Beach Inlet Capital Reserve Fund
  - \$1M Water & Sewer borrowing

**Welcome to our new HBPOA Director Stephen Kimbrough. Thank you for your service.**

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## **Opinion Survey**

The HBPOA will be conducting our biennial survey again this year, kicking off after the election. Please watch your email and mailbox for information about how to participate. We will follow the same process of using Survey Monkey as the platform and leaving room for comments.

Please submit any proposed questions or topics to us at [HBPOA@hotmail.com](mailto:HBPOA@hotmail.com)

## **Block Q**

The Town is moving forward with plans for Block Q, the property the Town purchased bounded by Southshore, Quinton, Brunswick, and Jordan. These plans include ADA-compliant bathrooms, boat parking, car parking, and an area for dogs. The project will be completed in phases with ADA Bathrooms and parking in the first phase.

The Town has applied for a Public Beach and Waterfront Access Grant to help pay for the first phase project. The deed restrictions on the grant are for 25 years on the bathroom building, which also obligates the three parcels of land that are involved with this phase of the project.

## **Pier Status**

The Town is moving forward with plans to renovate the pier building, repair the pier structure and add a ramp and ADA walkway for access. The current plans include a restaurant/concession area, tackle shop, concessions/T-shirts, restrooms and outdoor seating.

The 2023/24 budget has a line item for a \$1.13M expense related to pier renovations and repair. It isn't clear how much of this money will be spent on the walkway/emergency access and the pier building versus the pier structure.

The pier structure is planned to be repaired first, followed by restoration of the building.

## **Brunswick Water Treatment Upgrade**

Brunswick County is installing an advanced low-pressure reverse osmosis water treatment system at the Northwest Water Treatment Plant. Low-pressure reverse osmosis is considered the most advanced and effective method to treat and remove both regulated and unregulated materials from drinking water, including GenX, 1,4-dioxane and other per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

Brunswick County is financing the project and has joined other utilities in the region to sue DuPont and Chemours. Our water bills have increased significantly because of this project.

## **Remembering Ron Hill**

Ron Hill was an HBPOA Board member for many years. He passed away on September 4, 2023, which was his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. A Celebration of Life and scattering of ashes will be held at Holden Beach next summer.

We are grateful for Ron's years of service to this organization and offer our condolences to his family.

## **Sea Oat Seed Collection**

For the past several years, the Town has permitted its landscaping contractor to harvest sea oat seeds from privately owned oceanfront dunes.

If you are an oceanfront property owner, please send an email to the Town informing them if you do or do not want to grant permission for the contractor to enter onto your private property for the purpose of stripping the seeds off the sea oat plants on your land.

## **Our Member Appreciation Breakfast is Back!**

The Holden Beach Chapel Pancake Breakfast will be held on **Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 – 11:00 AM**. Each current HBPOA member household will receive two free tickets. You can pay your dues and purchase additional tickets at the door. Breakfast will include pancakes, sausage, bacon, coffee, and orange juice.

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## Please Verify Your Membership Information

You can check your status, pay your dues, and update your mailing and email addresses online:

- 1) Log in to WildApricot.com using the email account associated with your membership and the password HBPOA2018 (or one you created). New members should create an account.
- 2) Click 'View Profile' to update your information
- 3) To pay your dues: Under 'Membership details' select the 'Renew' button

If you received this newsletter but no longer own property on the island, please send us an email at [HPBOA@hotmail.com](mailto:HPBOA@hotmail.com) so we can remove you from our mailing list and save postage and printing costs.

## Want More Information?

Additional information on these and other topics is available on our website at **HoldenBeachPOA.com** and on our Facebook page (Holden Beach Property Owners Association). You can add your comments, share our posts, and choose to follow us to receive emails when we post something new.

Members can also easily stay on top of what is happening at the beach by providing us with your email addresses. We send out two to three emails per month including a summary of what happened at the Commissioners' Meeting. It is an easy way to stay up-to-date on current events on the island. Just update your email subscription preferences in Wild Apricot.

Supply, NC 28462

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HBPOA