
Newsletter

HOLDEN BEACH PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION May 2007

Our Mission: To represent the property owners of Holden Beach as a unified voice regarding issues that affect their common interests and concerns

MEETING DATES FOR 2007

May 26th – Memorial Day Weekend Meeting
Sept 1st – Labor Day Weekend Meeting
Nov 24th – Thanksgiving Weekend Meeting

All HBPOA meetings start at **10AM** and are now held in the **Holden Beach Chapel Fellowship Hall**, due to construction in the Town Hall meeting room – please join us!

MESSAGE FROM THE HBPOA PRESIDENT

The summer is almost here, the fish are biting, the swimmers and surfers are returning, the renters are on the way, and the owners are ready to enjoy this island too! It seems to have been a long winter with some of the same major concerns on the minds of all.

The sewer connection deadline at the end of this month has many owners scrambling. Penalties will add up quickly for those falling short of the deadline.

The tax rates for the town and the county are still leaving owners uncertain of the actual payment amounts that will be required at the end of the year. Many owners that have appealed the re-evaluation have still not heard the results of it. It is fair to say that almost everyone on Holden Beach will be paying more tax dollars than before.

Don Evans provided the attendees of our last meeting valuable information regarding our future insurance coverage and premiums. Since that meeting more changes have appeared on the horizon. The potential changes are concerned with ?wind driven water?. It is suggested that you contact your insurance agent and get an update on the change coming in July and January. Often this



is the cause of damage and the house appears undamaged looking from the outside.

Holden Beach Harbor did not get dredged again this year. Portions were but the job is still not complete. The Town says work will continue after this summer and after surveys and studies are completed to find the condition of the canals.

This election year, Holden Beach will be electing a mayor and five commissioners this November. Be sure to communicate your thoughts to those in office. Elected officials want to hear from those they serve.

No funds from Washington are available for waterway dredging and beach renourishment projects according to Congressman Mike McIntyre. This is a continuing battle which is getting tougher to fight each year. Please contact your U.S. Senators and congressmen to ask for help. Remember, we all use the beach!

Brunswick County continues to be recognized as one of the fastest growing counties in America. North Carolina is one of the fastest growing states and most desirable states for retirees. With good leadership and planning we can continue to enjoy what we have here.

Sincerely,

Alan Holden, HBPOA President

MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Dear Holden Beach Property Owners,

I hope everyone has made it thru the winter and is looking forward to a prosperous summer season. We have had plenty on the plate this winter, and will continue to have a busy summer as we try to complete several different projects.

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Fencing around the pump stations has been completed. We are now planning on some vegetation around the stations, as well.

Dredging of Holden Beach Harbor has wrapped up for this season. The contractor completed most of the canals except for a small portion of High Point Street and a portion of Greensboro Street. We have scheduled a surveyor to come out and look at the project depths so that the contractor is only being paid to complete the areas that were correctly dredged according to contract specifications.

The Jordan Boulevard Project planning continues. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has signed off on the project, and we are now awaiting CAMA approval.

Finally, the revaluation has had quite an impact on property tax values on Holden Beach. We have had the Tax Administrator, Tom Bagby, attend a few different Board Meetings in an effort to ensure that we have a good understanding of the process utilized to determine tax values. If you have any questions about this process, we have some summaries available for you to review if you are interested.

I hope everyone has a great and safe summer season.

Steve Wheeler
Town of Holden Beach

NEWS FROM OUR LAST MEETING

Over 150 people attended our meeting on Easter weekend – which may have been a record!

Don Evans presented an update on the state of the coastal insurance industry, from both a local and national perspective. A bill to revamp the federal flood program was re-introduced, calling for increased limits and coverages, and premium increases to be capped at 15% annually.

On Holden Beach, insurance rates in VE zones will increase 9 - 9.5%, while others will increase 6 - 7%

on May 1st. Federal flood rates are set by the federal government.

Allstate has stopped coastal coverage in many states. Florida rates have increased 400% and Mississippi rates have gone up 130%.

While the NC Beach Plan is currently in good shape regarding coverage of premiums, the industry is exposed to losses when it comes to a major hurricane hit. New Hanover County has the greatest exposure, while Brunswick County is third.

The financial report for the association reported a balance of \$28,378. The membership report showed 960 members, with 109 who have not paid their dues.

Alan Holden delivered the president's report. Concerts on the Coast will resume again this year with 15 concerts from Memorial Day through Labor Day. At the state level, a "Save our Summers" initiative is underway regarding changes to the school year calendar, allowing schools to set their own schedules.

Dredging of Holden Beach Harbor was also discussed. The Town's dredging and sewer charges have been included on the tax bills that have been sent to mortgage companies, which have resulted in increased escrow amount and larger monthly payments. Tax rates for next year have not yet been decided.

Property sales have increased, with 300 properties currently on the market. The January rental market was strong, with beachfront properties looking very good. The trend has been for reservations to occur later in the year.

Congressman McIntyre reported no funds for beach nourishment in this year's budget, but \$4M for dredging of the ICW in Brunswick County.

The association voted to conduct the Labor Day Barbeque again this year, on Saturday afternoon. It also voted to donate \$500 to Concerts on the Coast.

Gary Staley reported on behalf of the town commissioners. Their goal is for a true revenue

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neutral tax rate. The town is also hoping to have permits for beach renourishment in November.

A motion was passed to have the association send a letter to the town to ask the county for information about how the tax reappraisals were determined.

Charlie Boyle reported on the status of the sewer system. Flow was 50,000 gallons/day in February, with 1,620 properties (out of 2,200) hooked up. The monthly cost estimate was \$79.50.

PROPERTY TAXES

Acting on the request from the Holden Beach Property Owners Association, town board members asked the Brunswick County tax administrator to explain the revaluation methods used for property tax assessments. The recent county tax revaluation boosted Holden Beach property values by 300 percent and more.

The administrator noted that two appraisers will often render two different revaluations of the same property because appraising also relies on personal judgement. Land is appraised using comparison sales. The appraisals are based on full market value in late 2006.

A SECOND HELPING

Again this year you are invited to take a "Second Helping", one that won't break your diet but will help the needy in the area. Beginning June 16th and continuing every Saturday morning until noon through Labor Day you may drop off your leftover unopened perishable, non-perishable food items and produce at the Holden Beach Chapel parking lot as you leave for home.

If you rent your house, encourage your renters to leave their second helpings at the Chapel. All the rental agencies on the island have given fliers to their clients to remind them. They are also putting refrigerator magnets in the rental units with the information.

For those of you whose homes are used by family and friends, place your own little reminder on the frig or on your bulletin board..

One of our members, Bill Spier, organized and ran this project last year. Many needy families were fed because of his efforts and the food donated by our vacationers. With additional publicity we expect to provide food for many more families this year.

For more information check out these web sites:

www.hbtownhall.com
www.secondhelping.us

SEWER HOOKUP REMINDER

The deadline is now to hookup to the sewer system. Property owners not connected to the sewer system by the deadline of the month will be charged the sewer rate on their monthly water as if they were hooked up. In addition, they will be charged an escalating monthly fee starting at \$25 and increasing every month at additional \$25 increments (i.e., \$75 after the third month, \$300 after 12 months, etc.)

BEACH CLUB UPDATE

On April 24th, the members of the Holden Beach Board of Adjustments upheld denial of a certificate of occupancy for the house at 386 OBW on the grounds that RiverSea intended to use it as a beach club for residents of its development in Supply – which has lots for 500 homes.

Commissioners had directed the building inspector and zoning director to not issue the certificate. Town ordinances prohibit clubhouses in residential areas.

The lawyer for RiverSea stated that the development had no intention of having a beach club, and that members of the RiverSea community would be able to use the structure by renting it. Renting homes for one day or night in the residential zone was not prohibited.

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On May 7th, members of the Holden Beach Planning and Zoning Board agreed on a draft ordinance pertaining to the residential district. The draft will be sent to the Holden Beach Board of Commissioners and the town's lawyer.

A portion of the draft relates to transient occupancy: "Transient occupancy not consisting of at least one overnight stay shall be considered to be inconsistent with domestic residential usage and is not allowed. This would include persistent usage for group gatherings for the purpose of short-term social or recreational activities. This would include use as a clubhouse, lodge, (etc.), except when contiguous and owned by an on-island residential subdivision."

TOWN HALL UPDATE

On April 23rd Commissioners agreed to move forward on a plan that lops 1,800 square feet from the proposed new town hall. The reduction would save roughly \$400,000.

Previous plans called for the single-story town hall to become a two-story building of about 18,000-square-feet, at an estimated cost of \$4 million. The general fund budget request for 2007-08 includes a \$4.5M loan for 40 years at 4.25% - with nine months' interest on \$3.5M to be used toward paying for a new town hall.