



# REHOBOTH BEACH HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

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The Rehoboth Beach Homeowner's Association (RBHA) newsletter is an informational and educational tool published three times a year for its members and members of the community including City Officials.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Editors - Sharon Sherwood & Susan Gay

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RBHA is a 501c(3) tax exempt organization. Membership and donations to RBHA are tax deductible in accordance with applicable IRS regulations.



## Letter from the President

2022 has been a busy, productive year for RBHA. Our spring meeting in April was held at the RB Fire Hall. Clearly, it was a wonderful change from the zoom meetings we had been doing. We heard from Chief Keith Banks, RB Police Department, Captain Jeff Giles, RB Beach Patrol and Officer Warren Jones, RB Fire Department. In June we had a meet and greet ice cream social for new members who had joined RBHA during the previous two years. What a fun afternoon in the upstairs conference room of our RB library. In July we normally join Camp Rehoboth in sponsoring our annual Candidate Forum, but there was no election due to having two vacancies and only two candidates running. Stay tuned for 2023. September is the time of the favorite activity for many members, our fall picnic. The weather was beautiful, the food was great, and the time to talk and catch up was well spent. In October at our annual meeting Mayor Stan Mills gave us an update on the activities of the city, and Commissioner Jay Lagree focused on the progress of the Stormwater Utility Task Force and the City's need for a comprehensive stormwater management plan.

We held the City Employee Recognition event in November to thank our hard-working city employees (continued on page 2)



### Pamela Baker

A native of London, KY, Pam Baker found her way to Rehoboth Beach in her 20's and became a homeowner in 1994. She and her partner Diane Dixson have always found Rehoboth Beach an escape from the pace of the D.C. area. Now, retired, Pam built her forty year career within the Alexandria Hospital system in Virginia. With a Bachelor of Science from Berea College she was lured to the Alexandria, VA area just a couple years out of college and found her footing as a staff nurse. She later helped start the Oncology Unit at the Alexandria Hospital, soon took on Policy & Procedure Development and spent the last decade of her career as a Quality Consultant within the ever growing Alexandria Hospital network. She is now an avid gardener on the grounds of her restored pre-civil war home in Falls Church, VA and loves to read mysteries, do sudoku and travel whenever possible. She has served many years on her church Board of Trustees and still volunteers at the Alexandria Hospital through their Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP). Mark Saunders recruited Pam to the RBHA board over six years ago. So with a few years under her belt and a clear understanding of the important role the RBHA membership can play in shaping the direction of our city, she is ready to take on her new role as the President of RBHA.

(President's Letter continued from page 1)

for all they do throughout the year. In addition to having the opportunity to share a cup of coffee and a few goodies, RBHA presented every employee with a Rise Up Coffee gift card and the thank you note pictured below.

We also continued our tradition of offering financial support to those nonprofits who serve our community. We are happy to have made donations to RB Public Library, RB Museum, West Side New Beginnings, Rehoboth Community Resource Center, RB Volunteer Fire Department, Rehoboth in Bloom, Cape's Jr ROTC, DE Humane Association, DE Center for the Inland Bays and the annual Community Unity Dinner.

We also look forward to once again joining our friends at RB Main Street in Wreaths Across America, a program designed to honor our local veterans by placing wreaths on their gravesite.

On September 30, Mark Saunders' tenure as RBHA's President ended. Mark, we owe you many thanks for all you did to grow the organization over the last two years and for the many years you served as a Board Member.

As I end this letter, I would like to wish all our members and friends a very happy and peaceful holiday season. I'm looking forward to seeing you all about town!

President, RBHA



The RBHA annual city employee recognition event was held November 18th at City Hall.

The Rehoboth Beach Homeowners' Association would like to thank you for your valued service to the residents of our wonderful city. Your dedication continues to make us proud of the place we call home.  
  
Thank you so much!



## Welcome the new City Manager

Bethel Park (Pennsylvania) municipal manager and retired US. Army officer Laurence Christian will be the City of Rehoboth Beach's new City manager. After a six-month nationwide search, the Board of Commissioners enthusiastically voted to appoint Mr. Christian. He will replace Sharon Lynn, who resigned in May. A nationwide search was conducted over the past six months and over 70 people applied for the job.

Mayor Stan Mills said "Laurence certainly distinguished himself among the candidates we considered, and we're excited about the new ideas he will bring with him. He joins the city at a pivotal time as we are awaiting certification and implementation of our comprehensive development plan, finalizing designs for a new beach patrol/public restroom building as well as streetscaping of Wilmington and Baltimore avenues, and, of course, we'll soon be developing next year's budget and capital improvement plan. We're confident that Laurence's previous professional experiences and commitment to community engagement will allow him to integrate smoothly into his new role as Rehoboth Beach's city manager. He has our full support and confidence."

Laurence is currently the municipal manager in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, a position he has held for the past three years following a 23-year career in the US Army that included multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Over the course of his military career Christian held a variety of leadership roles. He retired from the Army as a lieutenant colonel in 2019 and became one of only 14 selected to participate in the International City/County Management Association's Veterans Local Government Management Fellowship cohort program designed to prepare veterans for local government leadership roles. Through the program, he served as an intern/military fellow with the city manager's office in Columbus, Georgia.

In his role in Bethel Park, Christian created the information technology and human resources departments and established a cross-divisional communications team to address resident engagement and communication. He also established the first-ever council vision statement and corresponding municipal mission statement, values, and guiding principles, which are resident focused, business friendly, and inclusive.

Christian has a bachelor's degree in history from Campbell University and a master's degree in general administration from Central Michigan University. He also attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He holds local government certification from the International City/County Management Association. His annual salary in Rehoboth Beach will be \$160,000. He will be moving to Delaware with his wife, Anne Marie and their three children ages 10, 8, and 6. He expects to begin work in Rehoboth Beach in early January 2023.

"I am both humbled and grateful for this opportunity, and I'm looking forward to working with our board of commissioners, staff, and residents," Christian says. "Rehoboth Beach is a gem, both as a charming summer getaway destination and a year-round, inclusive place to call home. It was amazing to listen to the commissioner's vision for moving the community forward, and I'm excited to engage with residents and collaborate with staff to refine and implement that vision."



## Commissioner's Corner

**By Commissioner Tim Bennett**

Rehoboth Beach benefits from an active and engaged community who have their ideas about what it means for our city to have a “sense of place”. Though just one square mile, our reach is far beyond as The Nation’s Summer Capital. Our strong business community, surrounding area, and visitors also have a vested interest in the city’s character.

This active and engaged citizenry will shape the future of Rehoboth Beach where a 1960’s brochure says, “the pines meet the brine.” I laughed when I read the tourist brochure because it encouraged visitors to “arrive early due to limited parking”. Parking is one of those topics in Rehoboth Beach where everyone has an opinion. Yes, parking. We all have something to say about parking, we are not shy to share it, and I think that is a good thing.

We are a resort town in a coastal destination. Yes, parking is, was, and will be a problem during our high season. I was trying to think of a popular resort destination that did not have parking challenges. That does not mean that we cannot manage it better. But it does require new ideas and new thinking that may change how we move people and vehicles around in the square mile.

In my first year as Commissioner, I advocated for an increase in our parking meter fees for 2022. I also wanted to extend the season by a couple of weeks and make parking a standard \$3 per hour at all meters. I was called an “elitist and out of touch” in the media. (Too bad I did not get the \$5 per hour I advocated for on the beach blocks! I guarantee every spot would have been filled all summer with less traffic hunting in those beach blocks as some people would have gone “inland” for cheaper parking.)

When people visit our city and beaches there is an infrastructure in place that assures Rehoboth Beach is clean, safe, and friendly. Clean beaches, well maintained boardwalk, refuse collection, recycling, beaches protected by some of the nation’s best lifeguards, well trained and courteous police cadets, safe streets, the cleanest ocean in the mid-Atlantic, events at the bandstand, and new bathrooms are just some of the amenities we offer. Do  
(continued on page 5)



### Rehoboth Beach Hometown Christmas Parade

You are invited to the 2022 Rehoboth Beach Hometown Christmas Parade on Monday, December 5th at 6:30 pm. The 2022 Rehoboth Beach Hometown Christmas Parade is sponsored and presented by the Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Company. This year’s parade will feature high school bands and numerous floats and entries from area businesses.

“The Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Company and its members are proud to have sponsored the parade for many years. We hope to make this Christmas parade the best ever. It is another way for us to give back to our community,” said Julie Del Giorno, RBVFC Parade Chairman.

All parade participants and attendees are invited to the Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Station Museum after the Parade for Santa’s Christmas Party with refreshments, and a gift for the children who visit with Santa.

Bring your friends and family out for a night of holiday fun for all.



## Wreaths Across America

Rehoboth Street Main Street and Rehoboth Beach Homeowners' Association are co-hosting their second annual Wreaths Across America ceremony on **Saturday, December 17th at noon**. This is similar to what happens every year at Arlington National cemetery in Washington, D.C.

We are inviting the public to attend and help lay wreaths at the gravesites of the over 150 veterans who are interred at our **Epworth Cemetery on Henlopen Ave**, next to Grove Park in Rehoboth. Wreaths are provided by donations from local merchants, community groups and individuals.

We are asking if any former or current Armed Service members would like to represent their branch of service by honoring it during the ceremony. Each service branch; Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and United States Merchant Marines will have a single member bestowed with the honor of presenting their branch's ceremonial wreath during the program.

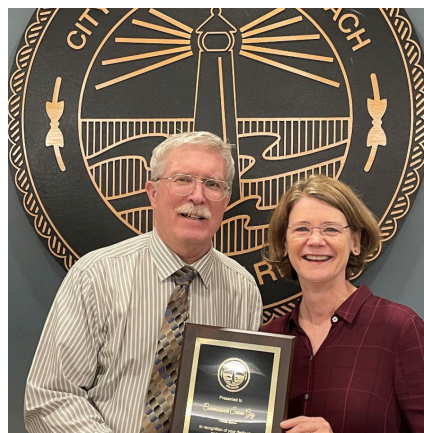
**For more information contact: Rehoboth Wreaths@gmail.com.**

(Commissioner's Corner continued from page 4)

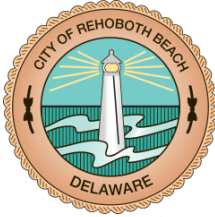
we think \$3 an hour for parking pays for all of this? Should the residents and businesses be taxed more for these services and the upgrading of our infrastructure to support the seasonal population? For 2023 seasonal hourly pay rates are predicted to reach just short of the \$20 per hour mark. Last year our pay rates were in the \$16 range, but our coastal neighbors have already started recruiting for the summer of 2023 at rates exceeding \$19.

This past summer season we had a surplus in parking funds collected and there is no shortage of ideas of how those monies can be used. The Board of Commissioners and Mayor did all agree that a comprehensive traffic and parking study for the entire city is overdue. It should include everything from parking fee structures, speed limits, delivery vehicle parking, emergency vehicle access, bike lanes, cross walks, etc. The interim City Manager is working on a proposal and the city should be ready to share all the details in time for the study to begin in late spring 2023. I believe this study is something we can agree will benefit the quality of life and further define the sense of place for everyone who loves Rehoboth Beach.

It is an honor to serve as a commissioner and I encourage everyone to continue to be involved in our government. Attend city meetings, write, volunteer on a committee, and make your opinion known. Your voice has impact and can influence in a positive way how the future of our city unfolds.



**RBHA would like to welcome Susan Gay to the RBHA Board of Directors. Susan served as a City Commissioner from 2019 through September 2022.**



# Stormwater Utility Task Force Update - November 1, 2022

By Commissioner Jay Lagree

In February 2020, the city manager of Rehoboth Beach entered into a contract with the consultant AECOM to conduct a feasibility study that would hopefully lead to a Utility Ordinance and the establishment of an Enterprise Fund to provide resources for a future Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan of Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

A vital part of that contract was the appointment by the Board of Commissioners of an Advisory Task Force composed of Rehoboth Beach citizens to advise AECOM on the development and creation of the proposed utility ordinance to finance stormwater management. The Task Force consists of 13 diverse resident stakeholders representing neighborhoods, business, and civic organizations within Rehoboth Beach.

We established our objectives: 1. Assess our existing Stormwater Program. 2. Evaluate levels of service operation and maintenance needs, and future capital needs. 3. Evaluate necessary potential funding sources and options for financing. 4. Determine a method of establishing utility rates that are equitable for everyone. 5. Provide for credits, exemptions, and appeals. 6. Recommend the rates we selected.

On 1 November, the Stormwater Utility Task Force finalized its recommendations:

The stormwater department of Rehoboth Beach has operation and maintenance expenses of approximately \$600,000 per year and capital needs projected into the future of \$1,500,000 per year for a total of \$2.1 million.

It will be difficult to fund this stormwater amount totaling \$2,100,000 directly from the General Fund while competing with all the other expenses throughout the City that draw from the fund. We recommend that we establish a separate funding source for stormwater needs.

We recommend that a measurement of impervious surface from every real estate parcel is the most accurate method of measuring stormwater impact. We have satellite views of our city that are capable of measuring impervious surface areas and correlating them with real estate parcel boundaries.

We believe that a billing unit of 500 sq. ft. of impervious surface is the easiest and most readily understood method of calculating a stormwater fee per parcel. The average city residential property has approximately 3,000 sq. ft. of impervious surface when roof, driveway, and sidewalks are measured. A typical property with 3000 sq. ft. of impervious surface would count 6 of the 500 sq. ft. billing units. A commercial hotel or condominium would count a much larger number of billing units due to parking lots and rooftop.

The City of Rehoboth Beach has not quite 14.6 million sq. ft. of impervious surface according to satellite calculations. In order to pay for our expected stormwater operating and capital expenses in the years ahead, we will require approximately \$2.1 million per year, necessitating a stormwater yearly fee of \$67 for every 500 sq. ft. billing unit.

An average property with 3000 sq.ft. of impervious surface should have a yearly bill of \$402.

This type of fee is equitable, transparent, and has withstood numerous court challenges. All impervious surfaces in the city limits have been counted.

## Reminder - Private Property Water Lines Are Being Inspected Throughout The City

New federal regulations under the Environmental Protection Agency Lead & Copper Rule require the city to take an inventory of all water service lines, including those on your private property. A letter explaining the process was mailed to all property owners in late May. A copy of that letter, more details about the process, a water quality report, and FAQs are on the city website here:

<https://www.cityofreboth.com/current-city-projects/lead-and-copper-rule-improvements>

Inspections began in July this year. The process will require brief access to a crawl space or basement in your home. This access avoids any need to dig up people's yards in order to determine service line materials. Inspections began in the area from Lake Ave to Philadelphia, and Bayard Ave to Scarborough Ave first, followed by other streets in South Rehoboth. A map of the inventory work is also on the city website and will be updated as work progresses. You can check the map periodically to see when the inspectors will be in your area. The entire process will take about one year.

Eventually information obtained through the inventory, which must be completed by October 2024, will be posted online as required by the rule revision.

City administrators have stressed that this inventory is being conducted due to new rule mandates and to ensure better protection, especially for children and pregnant women, across the country. It is NOT being conducted out of any concern related to lead in the city's water system. In fact, lead and copper levels are tested every three years, as required, and the level for both elements is far below the required action level. Details are on the city website at the link above.

November 2022 update: Employees are currently working in Area 2, bounded by Bayard Avenue, Brooklyn Avenue, the Boardwalk, East Lake drive and Penn St. Progress has been slow due to water service line work on Norfolk Street. The work in Area 2 will continue until year end. Work in Area 3, Country Club Estates, will begin early in 2023.

If you were not present when inspections took place in your area or you just prefer to do so, you may schedule an inspection by calling 302-227-6181, ext. 159



### 2022 RBHA Donations

**Cape Henlopen ROTC**

**Community Unity Dinner**

**Delaware Center for the Inland Bays**

**RB Delaware Humane Association (DHA)**

**Rehoboth Beach Fire Company Tower Campaign**

**Rehoboth Beach Fire Department**

**Rehoboth Beach Library**

**Rehoboth Beach Museum**



**Rehoboth Beach Patrol - 100th Anniversary**

**Rehoboth Community Resource Center**

**Rehoboth in Bloom**

**West Side New Beginnings**

## Create A Yard That Benefits People and the Environment

By Elise Burns



Every day communities across the country including Rehoboth are losing more of their green spaces to impervious surfaces and development. To counteract this deleterious impact on the environment, Doug Tallamy, Professor, University of Delaware argues that “conservation efforts must begin at home whether that be a small city lot or a large corporate campus.” Communities around the country are realizing that successful conservation involves less lawn and more native trees and plants. One of the most effective ways to create wildlife habitat is to replace turf grass with native plants, ground covers and shrubs. By using more plants, planting more native plants and planting to conserve energy, our landscapes can become a valuable substitute for our long gone green spaces.

A homeowner can create a landscape that is visually appealing as well as attractive to wildlife, birds, insects and pollinators by making small improvements over time such as removing portions of lawn and replacing it with native plants and ground covers. As Professor Tallamy states, “Across the country, millions of acres now covered in lawn could be restored to viable habitat with minimal expense and without costly changes to infrastructure.” In addition, with Rehoboth’s proximity to the ocean and inland waterways we need to find ways to reduce the amount of pesticides and fertilizers that are used in our private and public landscapes. Those chemicals are flowing into our inland lakes and ocean. You can reduce the need for disease and insect control by planting a variety of native trees and shrubs. Diverse plantings provide opportunities for beneficial insects to thrive and keep pest populations low. Native plants and shrubs don’t need pesticides and fertilizers to grow since they have no serious disease problems and possess adaptable characteristics to landscape situations such as resistance to drought and tolerance to poor soils.

Before you begin your lawn removal project, you need to assess your lawn. Do you need lawn for use by children or pets? Are there areas where the turf doesn’t grow well, for example, under large canopy trees? Is there a tree that has turf surrounding it where you could create a mulched bed? Plan your lawn removal project over time. Almost every lawn has some possible place where turf can be removed and replaced with a mulched bed, ideally with a new tree or a few plants, grasses and shrubs. Remove lawn in manageable increments that are reasonable for your time and energy. If you plant new trees and plants, you will want to factor in caring for them properly. Plant locally native trees and plants. Tree leaf canopy slows the rainwater as it falls, and tree roots soak up gallons of water. Native plants build deep root systems that absorb and filter stormwater, build the soil structure, and prevent erosion far more than turf. They are adapted to our climate and require little water, fertilizer or maintenance once they are established. Over time, you may not need your gas-powered lawn equipment that contributes to noise and air pollution which reduces the quality of life for all of us.

The following two resources written by university of Delaware Cooperative Extension staff provide tips on creating landscapes that support a diverse population of beneficial wildlife which benefits our environment.

<https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/fact-sheets/turf-grass-madness-reasons-to-reduce-the-lawn-in-your-landscape/>

<https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/fact-sheets/groundcover-alternatives-to-turf-grass/>



# Don't Miss This Opportunity to Discover Rehoboth's History!

**EXPERIENCE  
REHOBOTH BEACH**

With this self-guided walking tour!

**Rehoboth Then & Now**  
*Walking Tour*

Tour takers will explore downtown Rehoboth Beach and learn about the 19th century religious summer camp, how fires and storms shaped the community, the transformative impact of the railroad, and the illustrious citizens who made Rehoboth Beach what it is today. \$10. A portion of the proceeds benefit Rehoboth Beach Main Street

Download the free app now, and start discovering Rehoboth!

Or, search Built Story in your app store

Walking directions, engaging audio by Liane Hansen & David Warick & curated photography at each stop.

Questions? Reach out to: [rhmstours@gmail.com](mailto:rhmstours@gmail.com)

built story

The design committee of Rehoboth Beach Main Street was interested in filling its “History” component by creating a walking tour featuring the founders of Rehoboth Beach and its very early history. Since the RB Museum already has wonderful guided tours, we thought it might be fun to offer a “self-guided” tour available on your phone. After a lot of research Matt Gaffney discovered a new company called Build Story. This free app allows the tour to be downloaded and listened to, or read as text, at your convenience. Enjoy it while waiting for your dinner reservation, or when you find yourself in town with an extra hour. The wonderful Liane Hansen and David Warick narrated it for us. The cost of the tour is \$10 with half going to the app creators and the other half to RB Main Street. By the way, you don’t have to walk the tour to enjoy it. Just listen to the narration and look at the photos for an armchair tour!

**Rehoboth Beach  
Homeowners' Association  
P.O. Box 41  
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971**



## 2023 Board Meetings

All board meetings are open to the public. The meetings are held in the Rehoboth Beach Main Street office conference room, at Grove Park, but are also available via Zoom, if requested at least one week in advance.

Saturday, January 7 at 9 a.m.

Saturday, February 11 at 9 a.m.

Saturday, March 11 at 9 a.m.

Saturday, April 15 at 9 a.m.

Saturday, May 20, at 9 a.m.

Friday, June 9 at 9 a.m. (via Zoom)

Saturday, July 22 following the Candidate Forum

Friday, August 11 at 9 a.m. (via Zoom)

Saturday, Sept. 23, following the Fall Picnic

Saturday, October 21, following the Annual Mtg.

Saturday, November 11 at 9 a.m.

## 2023 RBHA Special Events

**Membership Event**, Date TBD

**Candidate Forum**

Saturday, July 22 at 10 a.m.

Rehoboth Beach Fire Hall

**Annual Picnic in Grove Park**

Saturday, September 23 at 11:30 a.m.

**Annual Fall Meeting**

Saturday, October 21 at 10 a.m.

Rehoboth Beach Fire Hall