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

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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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

One of the benefits of being President of RBHA is that three times a year I get to use this page as a soapbox to express my opinion on almost any subject. This month I would like to talk a bit about everyone's favorite Rehoboth sore spot, Parking.

I would contend, that despite the oft-heard moaning and groaning, we don’t have a parking problem. I believe we have a popularity problem. Let me explain.

As most homeowners know, we have adequate parking for our homes and businesses most months of the year. It is in the heat of the summer, that the draw of the beach fills our city to the point of maximum capacity. That said, I believe during those limited number of days when there is truly no parking available, we are for all intents and purposes, full. On those days, our restaurants are at max capacity, our beach is blanket to blanket, our boardwalk is shoulder to shoulder, and the french fry lines are a block long. No available parking is a neon light to additional day trippers that says, sorry, we are full, please try your visit on another day. I believe regulated parking helps us limit the number of visitors to a reasonable number. As Sussex County continues to add thousands of new homes each year, we are only going to see more and more folks wanting to come and enjoy all our city has to offer. Our popularity could be our downfall, if severe overcrowding proves to diminish the quality of the Rehoboth Beach experience for everyone.

That said, I sincerely hope all new construction projects in our City, commercial and residential, will include a viable parking plan that accommodates the visitors it intends to serve. It is important to maintain balance, and parking availability and regulation is a big part of that balance. Let’s make sure that we do not become victims of our own popularity.

Enjoy your spring season, and see you all on the Avenue,

Mark Saunders, President

Commissioner's Corner

by Commissioner Jay Lagree

Rehoboth Beach is famous for our beautiful beach and iconic boardwalk. Tony Pratt, President, American Beach and Shore Preservation Association, has described our boardwalk and beaches as essential components of our "brand". Our brand is a theme or impression of Rehoboth Beach that keeps bringing people back to visit us year after year with pockets filled with tourist dollars. He would tell us that our brand is more than our boardwalk and beaches, it is also our beautiful neighborhoods with tree lined streets, our many small shops and wonderful restaurants that all go together. Pratt believes that all successful beach towns have a brand that, once lost, is extremely difficult to bring back.

Mayor Mills has wanted, for years, to examine the commercialization of our beach and boardwalk. Our goal is to provide an optimal environment for our shops, stores, restaurants, and lodging establishments on our boardwalk. We all remember the wonderful french fries and ice cream we had as kids. The rides at Funland. The pizza we ate as teenagers, the candy we took home to our families and the wonderful meals we had as adults. Can we still do that? Or are we becoming too crowded? The Boardwalk and Beach Committee wants answers. We have several dozen events on our boardwalk each year from marathon races to Polar Bear Plunge and lots of walks, marches, and parades in between. Are we helping our businesses? I have heard business owners say that they might as well close up during the Fourth of July fireworks displays. I don't believe we want to halt the fireworks show but it would be nice to know if there is consensus from the boardwalk businesses. We want to communicate with our business owners.

Mayor Mills and I visited boardwalks along the Middle Atlantic and observed beach towns with commercial venues out on the boardwalks and advertising everywhere. We agreed that advertising and vendors out on the boardwalk and beach is detrimental to the pristine clean atmosphere of successful beach towns. Currently, we allow no commercial signage or commercial activity out on our boardwalk and we maintain control of commercialization of our beaches. Shall we keep it that way?

The Bandstand Committee just published a wonderful listing of bandstand events scheduled for the 2022 summer season. Should we do the same for the 50 or 60 boardwalk events that take place each year?

What about rules and regulations for the beach and boardwalk? Dates for dogs and bicycles? What about skateboards, electric bikes, surries? Tents on the beach? Where are family changing rooms, foot showers, stand up showers, ADA accessible beach entries, first aid, lost and found? Most of that information is available but should it be gathered into one brochure? Or maybe a separate section of an existing guide or brochure, or a map like the ones that are available for the outlet malls, send us any ideas that might be worthwhile for us to consider. TO: Boardwalk and Beach Committee, Awomack@cityofrehoboth.com.

Stay tuned,

Commissioner Jay Lagree

Chairman, Boardwalk and Beach Committee

Rehoboth Beach Sales Trends and Impact

By Randy Mason, Realtor

The local and national real estate markets continue to spark both interest and anxiety as current owners and would-be owners try to figure out what is best for them. We are still experiencing low inventories and high demand which has continued to drive prices up. Multiple offers and sales above list price are still common. In the last newsletter we looked at the rising prices of single-family homes so now let's look at what is happening in the Rehoboth condominium market. Be aware that a condominium may be a home in a multi-unit building or a townhouse—it is a form of ownership and does not describe the structure. There are even detached condos but very few in town.

With the lower inventory available we have a real shift in price points of sales for in-town condos:

| Condo Sales | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | (Jan-April) | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total | 15 | 47 | 57 | 39 |
| | | | | |
| Under \$499k | 13.3% (2) | 19.1% (9) | 40.4% (23) | 48.7% (19) |
| | | | | |
| \$500k-999k | 53.4% (8) | 53.2% (25) | 52.6% (30) | 51.3% (20) |
| | | | | |
| Over \$1M | 33.3% (5) | 27.7% (13) | 7% (4) | 0% (0) |
| | | | | |

Of particular note are the decrease in availability of sales under \$500,000 and increase in number and percentage of sales over \$1,000,000. Currently there are only 6 condos for sale in town ranging from \$575,000 for a 2BR unit in the Ark near the circle to a studio unit in Patrician Towers for \$729,000 (an ocean block building but no ocean view), to a unit in The Henlopen with ocean views for \$1,597,000. All have updates and appear to be in move-in ready condition. As you can see location makes a significant difference in price.

So what does this mean for Rehoboth homeowners and buyers? Obviously, housing has gotten more expensive in town. But it has also increased city revenue, which helps us take care of some much-needed improvements to infrastructure. The transfer tax revenue increased dramatically to over \$2.36M in 2018, a 35% increase over the previous year (\$1.75M) and the first time it has been over \$2M since the run up of prices in 2006. It continues to be a high source of income for the city bringing in \$2.24M in 2019, \$2.42M in 2020 and a whopping \$4.2M in 2021.

Of particular note in the above trends are the decrease in availability of sales under \$500,000 and increase in number and percentage of sales over \$1,000,000.

We have a big question looming now. What will the increase in interest rates, the decline in the stock market and the concern over inflation do to the sales and prices of Rehoboth Beach property in the coming year?

Randy Mason is a veteran Realtor with Jack Lingo Realtors, and is a long time member of RBHA



Spring Membership Meeting

On a beautiful Spring Saturday, we hosted our annual membership get together.

This year we enjoyed a panel of great speakers including Chief of Police Keith Banks, Officer Rob Cisco, Rehoboth Beach Patrol Captain Jeff Giles and Officer Warren Jones of the RB Fire Company. We also had a wonderful update from Cindy Lovett, Chair, Rehoboth in Bloom. Not only did Cindy get us up to speed on everything horticultural, but she and Dick Byrne provided live spring flowers to everyone in attendance!

Officer Cisco provided insight into the local public school partnership with our police department, while Chief Banks talked about what he expects to see this coming summer. He also addressed what it is like to help protect the President of the United States when he visits his summer home. Captain Giles gave us a brief on the happenings of the beach patrol and pointed out the difficulties in finding housing for our lifeguards this year. Information Officer Warren Jones spoke in detail of the Fire Company, and exactly how it operates. Many members were surprised to find out how much they rely on the generosity of homeowners to fund this very important service. See the (attached) article from Officer Jones.

Any one of these guests could have kept our attention for the entire hour, as each had an interesting and important message to share with us. Thanks to all who attended, and thanks to our guests and to the Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Company for hosting our event in their spacious facility. These are the kind of meetings that foster the unique spirit of community we so much enjoy here in Rehoboth Beach.



The City of Rehoboth Beach holds its annual municipal elections the second Saturday in August. The next municipal election will take place from 10 am-6 pm **Saturday, August 13**, when two Board of Commissioner posts will be on the ballot. To vote in City of Rehoboth Beach elections, voters must:

- be at least 18
- a resident (for at least 30 days) or freeholder (property owner) or 10-year leaseholder (for at least six months)
- registered in the city's Book of Registered Voters.

Voters who miss two consecutive annual elections are placed on an inactive list. These voters are notified by postcard, and information about their voting status is requested.

VOTER REGISTRATION: Voters who have not yet registered in the City of Rehoboth Beach must register in person at City Hall, located at 229 Rehoboth Avenue. **The deadline to register to vote in the 2022 municipal election is 4:30 pm July 14.**

ABSENTEE BALLOTS REQUEST FORM: Voters who wish to vote by absentee ballot in the 2022 election must submit a completed [absentee ballot request form](#), which are due back to the city by noon August 9th at the latest. The form is available [online](#). To request that a form be mailed to you, call Donna Moore or Steven Perry at 302-227-6181, ext. 159.

Request forms must be completed and signed in order to be processed.

Return completed absentee ballot requests to:
City of Rehoboth Beach
229 Rehoboth Avenue
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Absentee ballots are available 45 days prior to Election Day - on June 29, 2022. Ballots will be sent to everyone who has an absentee ballot request form on file with the city. The deadline for the city to mail absentee ballots is August 9, the last Tuesday before the election.

Absentee ballots must be returned and received by mail or in person before polls close on Election Day.

Election questions? Call Donna Moore or Steven Perry at 302-227-6181, ext. 159.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGISTERING TO VOTE IN REHOBOTH BEACH

DID YOU KNOW YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A RESIDENT OF DELAWARE TO VOTE IN REHOBOTH BEACH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS?

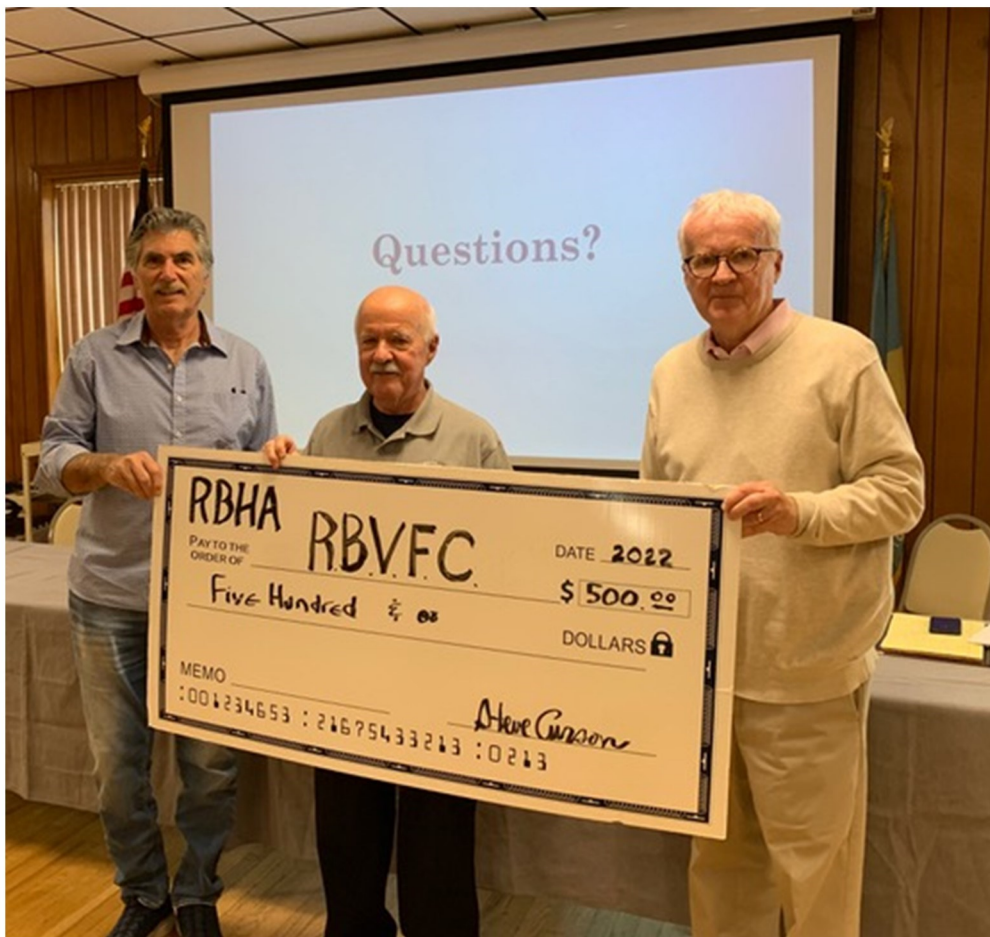
We have a great privilege here in Rehoboth Beach. If you do not live here full-time, but you own property and are over 18 years old, you can vote in City elections. But you must register to vote. Registration for state for federal elections does not qualify you to vote in then Rehoboth Beach municipal elections.

There are many important issues facing Rehoboth Beach in the coming years regarding the environment, beach restoration, taxes, real estate development and city infrastructure improvements, to name but a few. As a voter, YOU can impact those decisions based on the candidates for whom YOU chose to vote. This year there are two Board of Commissioner seats up for the election.

YOUR VOTE COUNTS!! As of May 1, 2022 there were 1,631 registered voters in the City of Rehoboth Beach. Remember, some Rehoboth Beach elections have been decided by as few as 3 votes. YOUR VOTE COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE OUTCOME OF THESE ELECTIONS! Please register to vote. Thank you!

Our Mission Statement

The Rehoboth Beach Homeowners' Association is a Delaware non-profit organization operated to promote the common good and general welfare of the homeowners and residents of the City of Rehoboth Beach for their mutual enjoyment and benefit, to preserve the quality of life, to foster the spirit of community and to provide a forum for the full and free discussion of all matters of interest.



A Message From RBVFC Vice President, Warren Jones

Thank you for allowing me to speak at your April 16th meeting. To recap my presentation, the Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Company has been in service since 1906. We are a volunteer fire company. We operate three fire stations and respond to over 4,000 calls a year. A number of those calls are right here in the City of Rehoboth Beach. We have 15 full time employees who operate 2 ambulances 24/7. Those employees are Firefighter/EMT's. They are trained to both levels. All of our fire and rescue operations are carried out by our non-paid volunteer firefighters. We receive approximately 50% of our funding from Government, State, County and Municipalities. The rest we have to raise on our own. We do that in many ways including our fire fund drive and our ambulance subscription drive. Our return on our fire fund drive is approximately 25%. We are in the process of running a capital campaign to replace our 27-year-old tower ladder truck. This truck is extremely important to us and is used on almost every building fire we respond to. If you would like to contribute to this campaign go to our website at rehobothbeachfire.com. Our mission it to provide the very best fire, rescue and EMS services to you. We take this mission very seriously. There have been 14 fire deaths in the State of Delaware so far in 2022. This has surpassed the number for the entire 2021 year. Please make sure your smoke detectors and alarm systems as working properly. If you ever have any questions, feel free to contact me. (wjones@rehobothbeachfire.com) Take care and be safe!

Warren Jones

Vice President
RBVFC

City News for RBHA Newsletter

By: Commissioner Susan Gay

The City has created a new alert system, called Rehoboth Beach Beacon which replaces its former CodeRED system. You can get alerts via text or email when something in the community is not working as expected or there is an emergency. Residents may subscribe by texting REHOBCH to 888777. More information and other ways to subscribe are available at cityofrehoboth.com/rehoboth-beach-beacon-alerts. Notifications generally will be sent via text and/or email, depending on information provided by subscribers. Voice/phone alerts will be used only in the most critical situations. *If you were previously signed up for CodeRED, you must subscribe to Rehoboth Beach Beacon alerts in order to receive text/email/phone notifications from the city.*

The Stormwater Utility Task Force, consisting of 13 citizens and chaired by Commissioner Jay Lagree, has begun meeting to consider the creation of a new stormwater utility with fees to be paid by all property owners. Funding options include development impact fees, grants, debt, public-private partnerships, and fee-based programs. The work of the Task Force will continue through the spring and summer. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 1:00 PM in the Commissioners Room at City Hall. Meetings are open to the public and available for viewing as well, but there is no virtual participation. Recommendations to the Mayor & Commissioners are expected in September.

The Rehoboth Beach Board of Commissioners recently adopted a policy that allows for year-round outdoor dining on public spaces in town. The city's policy balances the need for safe, minimum pedestrian access routes along city sidewalks with restaurants' and diners' desire to have outdoor dining available. Rehoboth Beach's new public spaces outdoor dining policy establishes a minimum pedestrian access route (PAR) of 7 feet on most downtown Rehoboth Beach sidewalks and 8 feet in the second block and 10 feet in the first block of Rehoboth Avenue. The policy allows for two-top and four-top tables placed only along the façade of restaurants that meet the city's minimum PAR standards and other requirements.

Evan Miller was promoted to Assistant City Manager on April 1 and has also assumed the role of Interim City Manager while the City searches for a new permanent manager. Miller is a familiar face at City Hall and at Commission meetings, having worked for the City for the past 5 years. Most recently, he has served as projects coordinator, leading the development of the city's annual budget, serving as grants administrator, managing several large capital improvement projects, and supervising the parking department. Miller holds a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Delaware and was named Delaware Association of Public Administration Young Professional of the Year in 2019. He and his wife live in the City. We are fortunate to have Evan Miller at the helm during this transition period.

The Commissioners are revising the tree ordinance, Chapter 253 of the City code. We still have a ways to go to solve the problems of tree protection during construction, specific mitigation requirements after trees are removed with a permit, and fines for violations (such as illegal clear-cutting). Minimum tree density is still 3 trees for a standard 5000 sq ft lot, with proportionately fewer or more depending on the size of the lot. However, we are likely changing the required size and height to 2" caliper and 8-10 feet to allow for greater selection at local nurseries and easier planting. Stay tuned for updates.

Rehoboth Beach Homeowners' Association recently presented a \$500 donation to the Friends of the Rehoboth Beach Public Library to support their 30 Chances to Win daily raffle to be held in September. Shown are (l-r) Steve Curson, RBHA Treasurer; Mark Saunders, RBHA President; Lorraine Zellers, Raffle Committee; and Alison Miller, Library Director.





Welcome Patrisha Davis to the RBHA Board

A true Washingtonian, Patrisha Davis has made “The Nation’s Summer Capital” her home away from home. For the past 15 years she has been a member of the Rehoboth Beach community. She has served as the Chair of the Community Relations Committee at The Henlopen Condominium since its inception in 2019 and is also a member of the Boardwalk & Beach Committee for the City of Rehoboth Beach. As a new RBHA Board member she will be leading our voter registration efforts with the goal of increasing public participation.

Patrisha’s enthusiasm is infectious and is seeded by a 25-year career in Human Resources. She spent the last 18 years of her career as the Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer at Coventry Health Care and supervised 230 HR staff and 13,000 employees nationwide during her term. For 14 years she and her husband Jay Coupe, shared a lovely home in the beautiful Merrywood-on-the-Potomac community in Mclean, VA. Prior to Jay’s passing, he was a member of the Navy Diplomatic Core serving Chairman Admiral William Crowe. Fluent in six languages, the world was Jay’s office and Patrisha’s guide through it.

Now retired, Patrisha has no plans for slowing down. This native Washingtonian, an ecology science graduate of the University of Maryland, is one of six siblings with many talents and experiences to share. As the summer season begins and friends and family come to build new memories, Patrisha hopes also to help us ensure that Rehoboth Beach continues to maintain its unique character and charm.

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



2022 Board Meetings

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

Saturday • January 08 • 9 a.m.

Saturday • February 19 • 9 a.m.

Saturday • March 19 • 9 a.m.

Saturday • April 16 • following Membership Mtg.

Saturday • May 14 • 9 a.m.

Saturday • June 18 • 9 a.m.

Friday • July 15 • 3 p.m.

Friday • August 19 • 3 p.m.

Saturday • October 15 • following Annual Mtg.

Saturday • November 19 • 9 a.m.

2022 RBHA Special Events

The following special events will be held at CAMP Rehoboth, 37 Baltimore Avenue, unless otherwise noted.

Membership Meeting • Saturday • April 16 • 10 a.m. • Rehoboth Beach Fire Hall

Candidate Forum • Saturday • July 16 • 10 a.m.

Picnic in Grove Park • Sunday • September 18 • 11:30 a.m. to 2.30 pm.

Annual Meeting • Saturday • October 15 • 10 a.m.