



ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023

Message from the Mayor and Council

The Slaughter Beach Town Council wishes to welcome you to the 2023 Summer Season. This past year has seen an incredible number of changes and planned changes for our community. The fall and winter of 2022/2023 were relatively mild from a weather standpoint, which was well received for several reasons:

1. Our dune erosion was minor, compared to seasons where we had significant storms.
2. Our permanent residents were able to spend time on the beach every month this fall and winter without digging through snow dunes.
3. The lack of heavy storms kept the trash washing up on the beach to a minimum.

We did have some relatively minor storm events that eroded the southern half of the beach, creating an escarpment, which caused us to create and install steps at several access points, which we removed when DNREC came in to reshape the dunes for easier access to the beach.

The Town sewer project continues to move forward with the Town and County having approved the plan and funding has been created. Sussex County is now in the engineering phase. More details will follow once the engineering is complete and schedules begin to firm up closer to 2024. Tune in to the monthly Town Council meeting to hear more and regular updates.

The rotating "drawbridge" at the north end of town spanning Cedar Creek is slated to be replaced as it continues to degrade, and requires a high degree of repair. Originally scheduled for 2023, construction has been delayed by DelDOT. Once a firm schedule is in place, we will notify the community as the construction is expected to take about 12 months, and we will need to re-route traffic to the south entrance, Slaughter Beach Road, during construction. To follow progress, go to <https://deldot.gov/projects> and look for "Replacement of BR 3-164 on SR 36 Cedar Beach Road". For now, expect the bridge to close sometime in early 2024.

Some of the brightest news this year involves beach replenishment. US Senator Tom Carper (the Senior Senator from Delaware) worked extensively with the US Army Corp of Engineers to budget for "the beneficial use of dredged materials" ending up on the Delaware Bay beaches. The federal government has offered a co-share of ninety percent of the cost for a project, leaving the state and/or local communities to only pay ten percent. In addition, \$25 million dollars is to be used for beach replenishment in the Delaware Bay. This should translate to beach replenishment for Slaughter Beach in the near future. While several obstacles need to be hurdled, the biggest problem - the funding issue - appears to be behind us. Thanks to all the people who worked on this over the past number of years, including current and previous members of Town Council, County executives, our state Senator, state Congressman, as well as the support of our Junior US Senator and Congresswoman.

We are incredibly proud to report some considerable progress in many fronts and great news this year:

- The extremely low inventory of real estate and the nationwide price increase trend continues here in Slaughter Beach. Prices are up and we continue to see a fair amount of new construction throughout the community. Welcome to our new neighbors! We hope you will continue the tradition of saying hello to those you pass on the street and beach, keeping Slaughter Beach the friendliest community in America.
- The Town purchased a significant amount of beach grass which volunteers planted in many areas along the dunes this Spring, and DNREC sent a group of volunteers with grass to plant as well. Beach grass retains the sand's position, and was much needed south of the fire hall.
- The Town recently announced a new "Seaside Envoy" program with 14 volunteers who have been assigned 50 street addresses to gather and check information that the Town has for homeowners which is used **ONLY** in emergency situations. Please thank these volunteers who are looking out for you and the rest of the community's best interests. For more information, contact any Council member (see last page).
- The Town has been working with the Memorial Fire Company to promote **Smart911**. This program invites homeowners to voluntarily sign up and complete a questionnaire that would be used **ONLY** in emergencies and shared **ONLY** with first responders. It includes information on number of pets, whether they are indoor only, flights of stairs, handicaps for anyone living in the home and other information that is vital during an emergency. We urge you to sign up at <https://smart911.com> and to make sure the Town has your most up-to-date contact information.
- We continue to see far less trash on the beach and in all of the public areas in our community. Our thanks to the sponsors and volunteers of the "Adopt a Highway" program, and the many residents that participate daily in picking up trash. The *Annual Coastal Cleanup* is scheduled for September 17, 2023 - to keep track of time and possible date changes, follow <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/coastal-cleanup>.

- Again, this year, the Osprey returned in force before the end of March. So far this spring, we have found over 7 nests within Slaughter Beach and the vicinity. A couple of the best viewing opportunities are at the Boardwalk in the 500 block of Bay Avenue and at the Dupont Nature Center at the end of Lighthouse Road.
- We continue to see high numbers of eco-friendly visitors at the Marvel Boardwalk. In any given year we see approximately 10,000 visitors, which highlights just how valuable Slaughter Beach is to our area and local environment. The number of visitors to Town (in general) has increased every spring with "birders" in our community as well as the increased use of our public spaces and pavilion.
- The Town is planning a park renovation and expansion which will include the resurfacing of our basketball and tennis courts. This project is already funded and updates will continue at Town Council meetings (and on the website where you can access Minutes from past meetings).
- Again, the Town resurfaced and graded several streets including Cohee, Horseshoe Crab, Blue Heron, White Gull and Driftwood Circle. These projects reflect the ongoing infrastructure investment that the Town continues to make. We plan on being able to reduce this particular investment over the next few years, as we have been on this program for several years, so all access roads have been "initially" addressed, with this last 2022 round.
- Our Town's financial position is very positive with growth to our "rainy day fund" while still maintaining and investing in our resources. The Annual auditor's report came back with an excellent rating and we expect the same at the end of this year (June 2023).
- The WIIN (Waterways Investment and Infrastructure Network) project has concluded. Slaughter Beach, with financing from the Pew Charitable Trusts and assistance from Resilient and Sustainable Communities (RASCL) was able to form a coalition of partnerships to study the economic benefits derived from the Mispillion River and Cedar Creek watersheds. Grants awarded to the effort totalled approximately \$275,000 allowing a stakeholder management plan to protect natural resources while identifying benefits and monetary values to the local and state economy. The coalition included the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, University of Delaware's Sea Grant program, RASCL, Delaware Nature Society, University of Maryland's Economic Development, the City of Milford and the Town of Slaughter Beach.
- The Town, with guidance from former Mayor Kathy Lock, helped to create the Bay Beach Association, a coalition of towns and villages along the Delaware Bay coast and including leadership from Kent and Sussex Counties, in an effort to bring more attention to the needs of our communities. As President of the BBA we wish to thank her and all of those that worked so hard to make this group possible - something that we hope will continue to benefit Slaughter Beach for years to come.

The Town Council would like to offer our sincere thanks to the many volunteers and staff that contribute to the welfare of this Town. Our volunteers spend countless hours on pavilion beautification, Coastal Cleanup, highway cleanup and beach grass planting every year. These and so many other efforts make Slaughter Beach a wonderful place to live. Please contact any Council member to participate, and remember that our little piece of paradise is almost 100% supported by volunteers. Again, this year we would like to express our genuine thanks to the dedicated men and women of the Slaughter Beach Memorial Fire Company and Ambulance service. We recognize and acknowledge our good fortune in having such an amazing group of first responders dedicated to keeping our community safe.

Memorial Fire Company

Slaughter Beach Memorial Fire Company extends their thanks to the residents of Slaughter Beach for your continued support this past year. Another generous act on behalf of the fire company is that they are now hosting meetings and contributing materials for the Slaughter Beach Historical Society. This generosity extends to the use of additional space within the firehouse for Historical Society materials.

The fire company is in the process of bringing a new water response boat online. The Town was able to assist the fire company with budgeting for the boat lift which will be docked in the Mispillion/Cedar Creek harbor, near the public boat launch. We continue to be thankful for the close access we have to land and sea support at Slaughter Beach from the Memorial Fire Company.

Statewide Property Tax Re-Assessment

In 2021 Sussex County began a court ordered re-assessment of all properties. This process is being conducted by Tyler Technologies, nationally recognized experts, and they will survey approximately 182,000 properties over a 3-year period. The new values are being set at what is projected to be the fair market value (the amount a property can be sold for) as of July 1, 2023. For more details go to <https://sussexcountyde.gov/assessment>.

Annual Town-Wide Yard Sale

The annual Memorial Day town-wide yard sale is scheduled for Saturday May 27, 2023 from 9am until 2pm. The event will be advertised in a local newspaper as well as on the town website.

Page 3

Delaware Emergency Notification System (DENS)

Please be aware that the DENS is a state-wide system designed to notify residents of an emergency in your area. The Sussex County Emergency Operations Center (in Georgetown) along with the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) encourage residents who use mobile telephones to register their phone numbers in this state-wide database. To register, log onto <https://dema.delaware.gov/onlineservices/index.shtml?de=dens>. We further encourage residents to tune into DelDOT's (Delaware Department of Transportation's) radio notification system at 1380 AM for up-to-date storm and traffic conditions. **PLEASE NOTE**, if you do not allow tracking on your mobile device, you will not receive public safety messages.

Annual Large Item Pickup

Large item pickup is scheduled for Tuesday, May 30, 2023. Place items next to your regular trash. Any items containing refrigerant (refrigerators, freezers, air-conditioning units) must bear an official tag stating that the refrigerant has been removed or it will not be collected. **NO construction** related material will be collected (lumber, windows/doors, bath fixtures, etc).

Yard Pruning Drop-off

We will be placing one large dumpster on selected beach access roads on the last weekend of each month from May to October to collect yard waste ONLY - leaves, branches, dead plants. If we find that trash or other debris is placed at or near the dumpster, we will not continue to offer this service in the future. The schedule and placement of the roll-off dumpsters are as follows - and please keep in mind, delivery of the dumpster can be Friday night or Saturday morning:

May 26th - May 30th @ Bridgeham Ave
June 23rd - June 26th @ Maryland Ave
July 28th - July 31st @ Evans Ave
Aug 25th - Aug 28th @ Simpson Ave
Sept 29th - Oct 2nd @ Delaware Ave North
Oct 27th - Oct 30th @ Sussex Ave

Delaware Nature Society (DNS)

Delaware Nature Society provides educational programs at the Marvel Salt Marsh Preserve to educate school children about the diverse environment and wildlife habitats in our town.

Slaughter Beach Historical Society (SBHS)

We are happy to announce that the town now has a Slaughter Beach Historical Society (SBHS) which is a non-profit corporation with the goal of preserving our local history for future generations. SBHS has compiled historical events dating back to the 1600's and is currently recording local history as reported by residents whose families go back multiple generations. This history will be shared with all through the development of the SBHS website. If interested, contact SBHistory.committee@gmail.com.

Slaughter Beach Sail Club (SBSC)

The Slaughter Beach Sail Club continues to sponsor a July 4th regatta at Delaware Avenue, North. For details, please email the Commodore Ore of the SBSC, Harry Ward at 09sbcs@gmail.com.

Pets

As our town continues to be more and more attractive to visitors, we find many bring their pets to the beach and while the great majority of pet owners keep their animals on leash and pick up after them, some do not. There has been an increase in the latter over the last year so we ask that everyone respect our public spaces.

Page 4

Council Meetings

We welcome and encourage all town residents to attend our Town Council meetings, held the 2nd Monday of every month at 7:00pm in the fire hall at 359 Bay Avenue. Council meetings are held both in person and via Zoom and the Agenda is posted one week prior on the board at the fire hall, in addition to being on our website. Homeowners and residents that provide updated information can be added to our weekly newsletter which includes a link before each meeting. The annual meeting will be held in person on Saturday, June 3, 2023 at the fire hall at 10:00am.

Election Information

The two Town Council seats held currently by Vice Mayor, Harry Ward and Councilperson, Larry Meinert will expire this July. Each seat is for a term of two years and if you are interested in running for office, you need to file a Notice of Intent with the accompanying affidavit at the town office by Friday, June 2, 2023 at 5:00pm. Details for filing and accompanying paperwork can be found on the website or by contacting the Town Clerk, Kathy McFadden at townclerk@slaughterbeachde.com. If more than one person files for each open seat, the election will be held on July 1, 2023 at the fire hall with polls open from 8:00am to 12:00noon.

Qualifications for office

- You must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age
- You can not have been convicted of a felony or crime or moral turpitude;
- Be a citizen of the United States as of July 1, 2023
- Have been either domiciled in Slaughter Beach or a freeholder (property owner) since June 1, 2023.

Qualifications to vote

- Any person shall be qualified to vote who, on the date of the election;
 - Is a United States citizen;
 - Is eighteen (18) years of age or older;
 - Has for not less than thirty (30) consecutive days preceding the date of the election, been either,
 - A freeholder in the town (defined as a natural person who holds title to or a life estate in real property located within the Town boundaries
- OR**
- Has physically resided in the Town and has his/her permanent home and principal establishment in the Town of Slaughter Beach.

Please note that if property ownership is held by an LLC, corporation or other similar artificial entity, the property is not held by a "natural person" and individuals with an ownership interest in the LLC or similar, would NOT qualify to vote. However, if owners are domiciled in the Town, they may qualify to vote.

The most recent Sussex County Property Tax records available as of May 1, 2023, shall be considered proof of ownership for all individuals requesting recognition as property owners (FREEHOLDERS). For questions, please contact the town office prior to the election at (302) 424-7659.

Absentee Ballots

Any individual wishing to vote by absentee ballot must request a ballot by completing and returning an affidavit of qualifications with the Town no later than 12:00pm (noon) June 23, 2023. Absentee ballots may be requested through the town website by writing, calling or emailing the town office (see below). Individuals that request absentee ballots will not be permitted to vote by machine on the day of the election, July 2, 2023.

Letters: Town of Slaughter Beach, 357 Bay Avenue, Milford, DE 19963-4911; Phone (302) 424-7659 and leave a message; Email: townofslaughterbeach@comcast.net

Town Officials

Mayor	Bob Wood	(302) 228-2374	Town Manager	Julia Geha	(267) 909-1886
Vice Mayor	Harry Ward	(302) 422-0894	Tax Collector	Jennifer Cornell	(302) 670-1659
Secretary	Ben Monastero	(410) 925-9412	Code Officer	Bob Clendaniel	(302) 270-0687
Treasurer	Joanne Plescia	(856) 313-4910	Town Clerk	Kathy McFadden	(609) 658-0165
Councilperson	Larry Meinert	(413) 320-5669			