



ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

Message from the Mayor and Council

The Slaughter Beach Town Council wishes to welcome you to the 2025 Summer Season. This past year has seen an incredible number of changes, including planned changes, for our community. The fall and winter of 2024/2025 were relatively mild from a harsh weather standpoint, which was well received for several reasons:

1. Our dune erosion was minor compared to seasons where we had significant storms.
2. We did have a fair amount of snow and snowstorms, one of which held on for much longer than we have seen in the recent past, but hopefully, the longer than usual low temperatures we experienced will have a positive outcome for potentially lower insect population this summer.
3. The lack of heavy storms kept the trash washing up on the beach to a minimum.

To alleviate some escarpment left over from previous storms, Council approved a one-time emergency expenditure for a limited amount of sand replenishment in the worst part of the escarpment area near Virginia Avenue. Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) mobilized heavy equipment in late March and early April and spread sand as best they could. The cost of labor and equipment was born by the State, while Slaughter Beach picked up sand cost.

The Town sewer project continues to move forward with the Town and County having approved the plan and funding has been finalized. Sussex County is now through the engineering phase, and by the time this letter is published, the project should be out for bid and all necessary permits in hand. It is our understanding, once construction begins, it will be approximately a 15-18-month construction project. More details will follow as this proceeds. We will continue to update the Town through our monthly Town Council meetings as the project moves through the various phases.

The rotating "drawbridge" at the north end of town spanning Cedar Creek is still slated to be replaced as it continues to degrade and requires a high degree of repair. As of this writing, the bridge is closed for repairs, which are expected to be completed by end of April. Originally scheduled for 2023, construction on the replacement bridge has been delayed by DelDOT several times. Once a firm schedule is in place, we will notify the community of project milestones as the construction is expected to take about 12 months. Unfortunately, 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". We expect the bridge to close sometime in late 2025 or early 2026.

Some of the brightest news this past year involves beach replenishment. Former US Senator Tom Carper (the past 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 Delaware Bay.

With assistance from our State Senator, Dave Wilson and other state representatives, the outgoing Carney administration's Secretary of DNREC signed a letter of commitment for the 10% match using State funds. This should translate to beach replenishment for Slaughter Beach in the near future. While several obstacles need to be cleared, the largest challenge - the funding issue - appears to be behind us. Thanks to all the people who have worked on this over the past number of years, including current and previous members of the Town Council, the Bay Beach Association, 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 Council has been working with the County on its court mandated reassessment of all properties in Delaware. We have seen a very small percentage of push back in this endeavor. As a reminder, the new assessment is intended to bring all properties up to their current value and then tax rates by the Town and County will be adjusted in order to make this as revenue neutral as possible. This unfortunately does not mean that individual property owners will not see upward or downward adjustments, just that both the County and Town are committed to not raising overall tax revenues with the implementation of this new assessment process.
- DNREC sent a group of volunteers with beach grass to plant at the south end in March. Beach grass retains the sand's position, and is much needed south of the fire hall.
- The Town's "Seaside Envoy" program consists of 14 volunteers who have been assigned approximately 50 street

addresses to gather critical information in support of public safety. The information gathered is used for emergency situations **ONLY**. Please thank these volunteers who are looking out for you and the rest of the community's best interests. Every year, these volunteers assist homeowners in numerous ways - especially in times of extreme cold and other weather-related emergencies. For more information on the Seaside Envoy program, 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 through the completion of a questionnaire. The information in Smart911 is only accessed by first responders in emergency situations. The system captures critical lifesaving information, such as the number of people in the home and associated disabilities, number of pets, whether they are indoor only, flights of stairs, and other information that is vital during an emergency. We urge you to sign up at <https://smart911.com>.
- 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 tentatively scheduled for September 13, 2025 - 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 9 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 12,000 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 in the process of an expansion to our recent park renovation. This expansion will include more seated space as well as some permanent cornhole games. In addition, the Town recently installed a water bottle filling station located outside of the main restrooms near the Town Pavilion.
- This year, the Town plans on completing its 8-year plan of resurfacing the beach roads with a complete workover of both 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 will have been "initially" addressed, with this last 2025 round.
- Our Town's financial position remains positive with growth to our "rainy day fund" while still maintaining and investing in our community. The Annual auditor's report came back positive, and we expect the same at the end of this year (June 2025).
- Several years ago, the Town, with guidance from former Mayor Kathy Lock, helped to create the Bay Beach Association (BBA), a coalition of towns and villages along the Delaware Bay coast inclusive of leadership from Kent and Sussex Counties, to bring more attention to the critical needs of our communities. In her service as the President of BBA, we wish to thank Kathy 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.

The fire company saw their new water response boat placed into service. We continue to be thankful for the close access we have to land and sea support at Slaughter Beach from the Memorial Fire Company.

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/online-services/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.

Page 3

Annual Town-Wide Yard Sale

The annual Memorial Day town-wide yard sale is scheduled for Saturday May 24, 2025, from 9am until 2pm. The event will be advertised in a local newspaper as well as on the town website.

Annual Large Item Pickup

Large item pickup is scheduled for Thursday, May 29, 2025 (the date shown on the Town calendar is incorrect). Place items next to the road where you typically leave your trash and recycle cans. Any items containing refrigerant (refrigerators, freezers, air-conditioning units) must bear an official tag stating that the refrigerant has been removed otherwise it will not be collected. **NO construction** related material will be collected such as lumber, windows, doors, bath fixtures, etc.

Yard Pruning Drop-off

We will be placing large dumpsters on select beach access roads on the last weekend of each month from May to October. These are for 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 23rd - May 25th @ Bridgeham Ave & Cedar Ave
June 28th - June 29th @ Maryland Ave
July 26th - July 27th @ Evans Ave
Aug 23rd - Aug 24th @ Simpson Ave
Sept 27th - Sept 28th @ Delaware Ave North
Oct 25th - Oct 26th @ Sussex Ave & Cohee Dr

Construction/Permits

Please remember that our entire town is in a flood zone. This, in turn means that there are many federal, state, county and town codes and ordinances that may be different from other areas of the country. PLEASE check with the town Code and Zoning Official before initiating any construction or improvement project on your property. Bob Clendaniel zoningofficial@slaughterbeachde.com

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 that the town now has a group of people devoted to recording our history for posterity's sake. The Slaughter Beach Historical Society (SBHS) 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 09sbosc@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 7, 2025, at the fire hall at 10:00am.

Election Information

The two Town Council seats held currently by Mayor, Harry Ward and Councilperson, Jamie Draper 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 6, 2025 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 5, 2025 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 cannot have been convicted of a felony or crime or moral turpitude;
- Be a citizen of the United States as of July 1, 2025;
- Have been either domiciled in Slaughter Beach or a freeholder (property owner) since June 1, 2025.

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, 2025, 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) July 4, 2025. 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 5, 2025

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

<i>Mayor</i>	Harry Ward	(302) 422-0894	<i>Town Manager</i>	Julia Geha	(267) 909-1886
<i>Vice Mayor</i>	Bob Wood	(302) 228-2374	<i>Tax Collector</i>	Jennifer Cornell	(302) 670-1659
<i>Secretary</i>	Ben Monastero	(410) 925-9412	<i>Code Officer</i>	Bob Clendaniel	(302) 270-0687
<i>Treasurer</i>	Joanne Plescia	(856) 313-4910	<i>Town Clerk</i>	Kathy McFadden	(609) 658-0165
<i>Councilperson</i>	Jamie Draper	(914) 703-2223			