



To: MBA Property Owners

RE: Saturday, May 4, 2019 Community Meeting

Meeting will be called to order at 10:00 am at St. Martha's Episcopal Church in Bethany Beach.

This past off-season was a relatively calm but rainy one for the Delaware Beaches. Our dunes, beach, and community, as a whole, have held up exceptionally well and we have once again successfully expanded the width of the dunes by adding an additional row of dune fencing.

Over the past few months, the Board has once again been very busy working on a variety of topics. In addition, Dune Road was finally repaved after many Community discussions.

Spring Community Meeting – May 4, 2019:

Please plan to attend this meeting for a chance to reconnect with your neighbors, vote on the annual assessment, and discuss what the Board has been doing in the off-season. We will be meeting at 10:00 AM at St. Martha's Episcopal Church in Bethany Beach. We encourage any and all community members able to attend to do so, especially if you are new to Middlesex this year. I hope that the weekend will be the start to a great summer for all!

Property Management:

Ruby Halligan is our new property manager, and she can be reached by email at Ruby.halligan@casinc.biz or by phone at 800-883-0799 or 410-524-1500, extension 203. CAS has offices in Ocean City and Gaithersburg. The location of our local office is 8600 Coastal Highway, Suite 200, Ocean City, MD 21842.

Emergency Contact Information:

If you have not already done so, please provide CAS with an emergency contact phone number for your property. The number provided will not be published and it will only be used when there is a problem at your property.

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Assessment:

Our Budget/Finance committee has worked for the past three months on developing a budget that funds the operations of the community, while containing costs. The proposed assessment, for the upcoming 2019-2020 fiscal year, is \$2,350. This represents less than a 4.5% increase over last year's assessment of \$2,250. The breakdown of the assessment for the 2019-2020 fiscal year is \$1,905 for the Operating Budget; \$235 for the Capital Reserve fund; and, \$210 for the Beach Reserve fund. Steve Larsen will be reviewing the budget at the Community meeting but the following are some of the highlights from the Budget:

- The operational budget has three major components which account for approximately 95% of the budget
 - Personnel costs (beach patrol, community patrol)
 - Community Facilities and maintenance
 - General & Administrative
- Several of the nearby public beaches have increased the salaries for their starting lifeguards to \$15 per hour. This has put upward pressure on the wage scale that we pay to our employees.
- The last MBA reserve study indicated that we were underfunded for our capital reserves. Therefore, the Budget Committee recommended and the Board agreed upon a path to bring our reserves in line with our anticipated future needs. To accomplish this, the assessment for reserves would need to be increased by 5% per year for the next few years. The assessment for Capital Reserves is increased by \$10 from \$225 to \$235 for residential properties.
- We do not have an accurate assessment for what is needed to replenish the beach should we experience another catastrophic storm. The Budget Committee recommended and the Board agreed to increase the Beach Reserve assessment by 5% per year. The assessment for Beach Reserves is also increased by \$10 from \$200 to \$210 per residential property

To offset these increased costs and to keep the increase in the assessment under 4.5%, the Board reduced some of the services that were previously provided to the Community:

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- We will not be having a curbside bulk trash pickup this year. We will have the dumpster available on Addy Road at Dune Road from May 3rd through May 12th with the pickup of the dumpster scheduled for May 13th
- We have reduced the number of trash pickups per week (see more details that follow)
- We reduced the frequency of the brush pickups

Community Facilities:

Our Community Facilities Committee has placed additional rolls of dune fencing along the beachfront, which have worked exceptionally well at widening our dunes. Additionally, we have constructed berms on both the north and south ends of our beach with the hope that they will reduce potential damage to our main dunes. We have observed this working during previous storms. These berms help to redirect water flow away from the main dune, and therefore, the oceanfront houses along Dune Road.

Several Board members also toured the community with Matheu Carter, P.E. from the University of Delaware. He recommended that all the streets be “fog sealed” to extend the useful life of the streets. He noted that two streets needed more immediate attention and the Board has received one quote, at this time. CAS is searching for several more quotes but the estimated cost for two streets to be sealed is \$10,000.

The dune walkways are scheduled to be cleared from May 17th through May 24th. This will result in temporary closures to a walkway as it is being worked on.

I also wish to thank Alex, Nick and Jay Sella, who repainted all of the various stop and parking lines at no cost to the Community.

Community Patrol

Our Community Patrol is in place to ensure that our Community Rules are being followed. These include MBA regulations relating to beach and parking passes, beach rules such as restrictions on smoking and pets on the beach, as well as noise and other nuisance complaints. Additionally, they are responsible for patrolling the community during the summer season, with these same goals in mind. Please remember that they are not public law enforcement officers, and we must still rely on public law enforcement such as the Delaware State Police and neighboring police

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departments for our public safety and security needs. In the event of threat to property or being, please call 911.

Beach Passes / Usage of Beach Committee:

After discussion and review of the one beach pass policy implemented during the summer of 2018, the Board voted to continue with the same one beach pass policy for 2019. The beach passes will once again include the QR codes that was introduced last year.

The Board attempts to make decisions that are right for the entire community. Any change means that there will be some people that are negatively impacted, however the Board determined that the one beach pass policy was the best policy for the community.

Smoking:

Based upon the results of the Community Survey, the Board adopted a stricter no smoking policy for the beach. Smoking is now prohibited on the beach and beach walkways from May 1st through September 30th.

Beach Patrol:

David Taylor has, once again, improved the resources available to our Beach Patrol. We continue to have one of the best patrols on the eastern shore. This is the result of the time that he volunteers to the community and the dedicated team that he has assembled.

Dogs on Beach:

The Board continues to receive requests to relax the current prohibition concerning dogs on the beach. Based upon previous research, the Board concluded that since Middlesex Beach is not a municipality and does not have the authority to change Delaware State law, dogs are and will continue to be prohibited from being on the beach from May 1st through September 30th.

Happy Hours:

Mary Byrd has continued this tradition throughout the winter. Upcoming Happy Hours are posted on the website and they are an excellent and casual way for you to meet your neighbors. If you have not yet attended one, I encourage you to do so this summer, especially if you are new to the community.

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Yard Waste:

Weekly Yard Waste (brush) collections began on March 14th. Please remember that brush and yard waste must be placed in separate trash cans, or separate PAPER bags, or bundled for easy pickup. If bundled, brush should be cut into approximately 4' lengths; bundles should be no larger than about 2 ft in diameter. Individual logs of up to 4" in diameter may be bundled with other debris. You must use cotton string or other biodegradable material to tie the bundles; no plastic or wire ties are allowed. Under no circumstances may plastic bags be used to hold brush or lawn debris. Bundles tied with synthetic string will not be picked up and the property owners will be charged a separate fee to remove these items

Please note that the Middlesex Beach policy is that if a pile of brush is left on Middlesex Beach property and it does not comply with the above requirements, it will be removed and the property owner will be charged a removal fee. This policy has been listed in the meeting materials for every spring meeting for the past several years.

We will have a Bulk Brush Pickup on May 13th. Any loose brush should be placed near the street for the chipper truck by Monday, May 13th. Please do not place your brush on Middlesex Beach property. MBA chipping will NOT include tree stumps, large trees, or any branches larger than 4 inches in diameter. Simply place your material in easy to manage piles by the street, on your own property, and back from the paved roadway. If you miss the announced brush pickup, all brush must be prepared for the regularly scheduled brush pickup with the restrictions as noted above, for removal.

Any loose brush material placed at the roadside after the Spring Brush Pickup will be removed with the cost of removal billed to the property owner.

Household Bulk Trash Pickup:

Please note that we will once again have a dumpster located on East Addy Road at Dune Road. This is for community members who have bulk trash they wish to dispose of. The dumpster is scheduled to be in place from May 3rd to May 13th. On the 13th it will be picked up, so please do not wait until the last minute to bring your trash to the dumpster. Please remember that yard debris, chemicals, flammable/hazardous materials, and oil/fuels are prohibited from being disposed of in this dumpster.

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We do *not* have curbside bulk trash pickup, so please do not leave your items by the curb and instead make arrangements to bring your bulk trash to the dumpster on East Addy Road @ Dune Road.

Trash:

The contract for trash removal was renewed for 2019, however there will no longer be a pickup on Saturday. Republic indicated that traffic was too heavy and the driving time for their drivers too limited to continue with a Saturday pickup. We also explored the possibility of three weekly pickups during the peak season. The cost of three pickups during July and August would have resulted in a significant increase to our budget. The Board, therefore opted to have only two pickups per week, rather than three.

As a result of reduced trash pickups, property owners must ensure that their property has enough trash receptacles to handle all of the trash generated by their property and an enclosure large enough to handle all trash receptacles. It should be noted that property owners will be held responsible for overflowing trash regardless if the trash is left by them, their families, their guests or their tenants.

A schedule of all upcoming trash pickups can be found on our website at middlesexbeach.org/community/trash. It is also printed on the inside cover of our annual Directory.

Parking:

The Board once again requests that all Ocean Side owners and their tenants, as a courtesy to other MBA Owners, to park on their properties (and not on the street) Fridays through Sundays during July and August.

Each MBA property owner will once again be issued 3 Parking Passes per property: 2 hanging tags and 1 decal.

Website:

A special Thank You to Jay Sella for his continued maintenance of the website.

Commercial:

Judy Bennett has continued to work with the commercial property owners on maintaining and improving their appearance. She continues to act as a liaison between the Board and these property owners.

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Building:

The process, covenants and construction rules appear to have worked very well in allowing property owners to improve their properties while balancing the rights of the neighbors.

These rules apply to new construction, remodeling, renovation and/or major repairs. A building permit is required for any project and only emergency work is permitted from July 1st until the Tuesday after Labor Day. Every property owner needs to refer to the website for all applicable rules and required permits before initiating any project.

The Building Committee is the most active of all the committees and this was another active offseason with multiple property owners improving their properties. Many of these projects require a balancing act between what the property owner wants and what our covenants allow. A special thank you to Margie Cyr, who as Chair of this Committee, must balance the two interests. She devotes time every week to the various ongoing projects in the community.

Lawsuit:

Please note that the Board is in continued litigation with the Norman Law Firm, LLC. DMF Associates, Inc., trading as Bennett Realty, has joined this lawsuit as an additional plaintiff against Middlesex Beach Association, Inc.

I cannot comment any further on this ongoing legal issue, however, it is a matter of public record.

Nominating:

Sharon Adams is once again the Chair of the Nominating Committee. We will have four open seats and the election for these four seats will be at the September Community Meeting. Please contact Sharon Adams if you are interested in running for the Board – nominating@middlesexbeach.org

In addition to being a Board member, there are also numerous opportunities for volunteering on a committee. Please contact Sharon or myself, if you are interested in volunteering some time and talents.

Closing:

Please note that I will not be attending this Community Meeting since I will be in Charlotte for the graduation of one of my sons. I wish to thank

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the Board and the various committees after a very active off season.

As always, please remember to keep a lookout for emails and periodically check our website for updates, specifically our Board Communications section.

Now it's time for us to pull out our beach gear and enjoy another summer season!

Jeff Sella, President

On behalf of the Middlesex Beach Association Board of Directors.