

MANAGER'S MONTHLY



DECEMBER 2022

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MESSAGE FROM YOUR MANAGER

Let me kick off the final Manager's Monthly of 2022 by saying thank you to our Town residents for helping to make 2022 a wonderful year and wishing you all Happy Holidays from myself and Town staff! I would like to personally invite you and your family to join us for a night of community and festivity at our second annual Mingle & Jingle Food Truck Event on December 15th.

As we prepare to enter 2023, implementation of the Town's Fire Rescue Department remains at the forefront of our strategic priorities. We are working with PGAL (Architect) and Kaufman Lynn (Construction Manager) to finalize the location and design of the new Fire Station, which is currently set to be a two-story building in front of Town Hall. Town staff has procured an EMS vehicle and identified an aerial suppression ladder truck that is pending Commission authorization for purchase. Additional strategic initiatives that will be addressed in 2023 include website and communications enhancements as well as establishing a comprehensive Sea Turtle Lighting ordinance.

I would also like to congratulate Mayor Hillman, who will be running unopposed in the 2023 Municipal General Election. His clear and decisive leadership has laid a path for Town staff to execute the goals and vision set forth for our Three Miles of Paradise.

If you have not yet done so, please visit www.highlandbeach.us to sign up for email news and notifications, including our Weekly Newsflash!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HIGHLAND BEACH?

New Commissioner Appointed

At the November 22nd Town Commission Special Meeting, Town Commissioners voted unanimously to select Financial Advisory Board Chairman David Stern for a temporary appointment on the Town Commission. He will serve as a Commissioner until the winner of the March 14th, 2023 election takes office. Congratulations Mr. Stern!



Mingle & Jingle Food Truck Event

We would like to welcome all of our residents to Town Hall for a fun-filled evening of food and dessert trucks, drinks, music, and more on December 15th from 5 – 7:30 PM. Trolley services will once again be available for resident transportation!

Public Meetings for Accessory Marine Facilities

The Public Meetings for Accessory Marine Facility Regulations originally scheduled for November 9th and 10th that were postponed due to Hurricane Nicole have been rescheduled for December 5th and 13th.

In an effort to engage and receive input from Town residents on the above topic, three (3) meetings of equal content will be held on December 5th, 7th, and 13th, 2022, at 6:00 PM in the Town Library. Amendment concepts include a maximum height for accessory marine facilities, maximum width for seawalls and docks, maximum encroachment into the water, modification to side setback requirements, a ladder requirement, etc. Upon request, staff will be glad to present such amendment concepts at individual HOA meetings.

For more information, please contact Ingrid Allen, Town Planner, at 561-278-4540 (ext. 3) or iallen@highlandbeach.us.

Town Entry Signage Design Contest Key Dates

Now until February 10th, 2023 – Submit your design idea for the Town of Highland Beach Entry Signs by dropping off a hard copy at Town Hall or emailing TownSign@highlandbeach.us.

February 10th, 2023 – Last day to submit designs.

February 21st, 2023 – Town Commissioners will review all submitted designs at Town Commission meeting and shall select design finalists to be considered for public voting.

February 22nd, 2023 to March 31st, 2023 – Residents may cast their vote for one of the finalists' designs. The design with the highest number of votes wins!

April 4th, 2023 – Winning design will be announced at Town Commission meeting!

TOWN COMMISSION

You probably know that there are Commission Meetings held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 1:30 PM, but what you might not know is that there are plenty of ways to watch the meetings and stay up to date with what is going on in town! There is the traditional method of attending the meetings in person, but you can also tune in on the Town's website via Highland Beach YouTube at www.youtube.com/@townofhighlandbeach8734/featured. Pre-registration is not required!



TOWN CLERK

2023 Election Information:

The next Municipal General Election (nonpartisan) is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14th, 2023. Early voting is not available for municipal elections.

The offices up for election are:

- Commissioner (three-year term ending March 2026)
- Commissioner (unexpired term ending March 2024)



For more information on the 2023 Municipal General Election, please contact Lanelda Gaskins, Town Clerk, at 561-278-4548 or lgaskins@highlandbeach.us.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Did you know that the permitting process for the Building Department is 100% paperless? You may be asking yourself how this helps you as a homeowner. Let's review the process and see how it benefits you.

- 1) The permit process begins with accessing the Town's website <https://highlandbeach.us/>
- 2) From there, click on Government, scroll down to Building Department, and click on it.
- 3) Scroll down to an orange bar that says Building Department Online Portal Access.
- 4) Once you click on the orange bar, click the green bar on the popup that says Go to URL.
- 5) This step takes you to our permitting portal, and you can either log in or sign up.
- 6) If you have a permit in process, enter your address and click search.
- 7) A list of permit numbers will show up. Click on the permit you want.
- 8) You can now see the status of your permit.

Section two of the permit application, signed by you, must be filled out completely. Section two requires basic information such as the owner's name and address, but the two essential items for communication are your email address and phone number. Your email will ensure that you are included in all correspondence between the Building Department and your contractor. Now there will be no question as to the status of your application and which party you are waiting on. If you have questions about navigating our online portal, contact the Building Department and talk to any of our permit technicians. We will be more than happy to assist you and ensure that you are always in the loop regarding your permit applications.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

With all the shopping that goes on during the holiday season, it is important to minimize your vulnerability to criminal activity. The Highland Beach Police Department would like to remind you to **never** store valuables in your car and **always** lock your doors!



FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

"We have made considerable progress toward laying the foundations of the Highland Beach Fire Rescue Department. The site for the fire station has been decided, and we are completing the station design. We aim to have the preliminary construction documents completed by the end of the year and begin construction early in 2023.

The team began purchasing equipment for the Fire Department. We expect to take delivery of the reserve rescue unit before the end of December. The Town is also expecting the delivery of one of the market's most technologically advanced heart

CODE TIP OF THE MONTH: HIRING LICENSED CONTRACTORS

It's a horrible feeling to find out the person or company you hired to perform work on your property has performed a sub-par job, not finished your project, or skipped town all together with your money. The fact is, that this happens all too often in South Florida. Because of this, it is important that when you are hiring someone to perform work at your home, you hire a Licensed Contractor for the type of project you need. When you hire a Licensed Contractor, you save yourself immense liability from poorly done work, stolen money, safety for your personal property and safety for your health and well-being. A licensed contractor will obtain a permit from the Town so that it will be assured that the work will be performed based on professional plans, use appropriate materials, and will be inspected during the process to assure quality work according to the most current standards. If not performed by a professional and inspected by an expert, specialty work like electrical, plumbing, or structural and mechanical work could cause severe damage to your home, adjoining homes, or even worse- injury to yourself or your family. It's true that you may be paying a little more money up-front when you hire a Licensed Contractor, but this investment will pay dividends in the long run. This is not to say that there is no place for the Handyman who can perform all types of minor work and repairs on your property, but when it comes to specialized/permited work, the only way is to hire a professional. If you have any questions as to what type of work requires permits and a Licensed Contractor, you can contact the Highland Beach Building Department at 561-278-4540 and staff will be glad to assist.

monitors available for pre-hospital care, the top-ranked heart resuscitation machine, and other essential medical equipment. The uniform patch design is complete, and we are working on the rest of the emergency response units.

This much progress would not be possible without the enthusiastic support of the Town Commission, the Town Manager's Office, and the Purchasing Department; thank you for your support. We will have renderings for the December 15th Mingle & Jingle Food Truck Event for public viewing and feedback. We are looking forward to meeting everyone at the event!" -Glenn Joseph, Fire Chief



LIBRARY

Mark your calendars for our Community Art Show in March/April 2023. Residents and town staff are invited to showcase their artistic talents by displaying a painting, photograph, quilt, or other artwork at the library. Email shayes@highlandbeach.us for details.

Library Hours:

Monday – Thursday 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Friday 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Upcoming events include:

- Dec 1st concert: Totem Cave (jazz, Afro-Peruvian funk)
- Dec 6th movie: *News of the World*
- Dec 8th lecture: "I Have No Age" by Zenon Bilas
- Dec 20th movie: *Soul*

Get a full list of our discussion groups and other programs on our website or call us at 561-278-5455.



“A CHRISTMAS GIFT TO REMEMBER” BY COMMISSIONER SHOEMAKER

It's that time of year again.

However one views it, whether with pain, pleasure or as just another task on the “Honey do” list, for me, Christmas will always spark my emotions.

It is a time for giving and receiving gifts. It's also about love, family, and God. But there are memories too.

Our tree is up and decorated in the living room of an oversized home I knew we would have to sell soon. It is just too big for my wife and I and the kids and grandkids are busy following their paths. We want to move to Florida.

I went about setting up our Christmas lights in the front of the classic colonial home in New England even as the weather turned to freezing rain. It was classic New England weather: “dark, dank and drizzly”, as my Mom would say.

I stepped back to enjoy the fruits of my labor in my yard, and as happens occasionally, a helicopter fly's low overhead, presumably from Boston. It was the familiar “whop-whop-whop” sound that got me. It harkened back to a different time...Christmas away from home.

It was called Hawk Hill, a firebase halfway between 23rd Infantry Division Headquarters at Chu Lai and the old city of Da Nang, South Vietnam. A bump of a hill, it was home to a battalion of infantry, several batteries of artillery and other units, including dozens of helicopters. One of their many important missions was the constant re-supply to field units engaging the enemy in I Corps from the South China Sea to Laos.



The Hueys flew in and out all day and night in a never-ending procession...making the signature “whop-whop” sound. No one ever forgets it as you will strain to hear when the Medivac is coming or the Hueys are coming to rescue you from harm's way.

More foreboding is when they crank up the Hueys knowing they are taking you back out to a “hot” landing zone or LZ to chase the enemy. Over the prior seven months, I was on 27 of those combat assaults by helicopter into enemy held territory.

Now, promoted to Company Commander at Hawk Hill for the 2/1st Battalion in the 196th Light Infantry Brigade in the fall of 1970, my mission was to ensure the safety of all personnel by guarding the firebase, circled with concertina and defensive bunkers loaded with weapons.

It was a rugged Army base with fearsome artillery, huge 155mm howitzers, firing at all times of the day and night. There were dozens of bunkers dug deep and covered in sandbags 3 and 4 levels deep to protect against the routine call of “incoming!” when alarms wailed as enemy rockets came smashing haphazardly into the firebase.

In a few of the bunkers, the soldiers would erect a symbolic Christmas tree which may only be a foot or two high with crude decorations and even a strand of lights along with a belt of machine gun bullets. This was considered luxury compared to those in the "bush" sleeping in foxholes or on the ground, more likely mud, while leeches silently crawled on them. It was the monsoon season. During one storm 23 inches of rain fell in 24 hours.



Late in December, word came down from Brigade that we were selected for quite an honor. Since we had finished several months of bitter combat, suffering casualties but killing hundreds of the enemy, we learned that we will be transported north to Da Nang to see the incredibly popular "Bob Hope Show".

What looked like a very dismal Christmas now had us really pumped up. Bob Hope is another true hero.

Over a hundred of us loaded up for the hour plus trip up Highway One to Da Nang. My worries came back about how to protect against a potential enemy attack, but I would soon learn all would be quiet.

In an open theater filled with thousands of troops, for several hours we watched and yelled and laughed as Bob Hope did his magic with his troupe of courageous performers.

The atmosphere was electric. For a brief moment in time, all was well. Everything seemed right with the world.

We wanted to forget the reality of it.

Right then, the world was at peace and life was full of fun again.

When we got back to Hawk Hill, the Battalion commander ordered a turkey dinner for us. They really tried hard to make it exceptional under the circumstances – and it was.

Later, back in my bunker and on my crudely constructed bunk bed that kept me off the mud floor, I immediately grabbed pen and paper to write my wife and parents. It really doesn't seem so long ago that we had no cell phones, Internet, landlines, telephone booths, or Zoom on laptops, let alone laptops – just pen and paper.



Soon I could hear the “click-smack” of the dozen or so rat traps I set out under my bunk, as I did every night. I detested having them crawl on me. Often, I would get two rats in the same trap at the same time. They were relentless.

Drifting off to sleep, I listened to a few Christmas songs on my battery powered, cassette recorder. We referred to home as the “World” as if this wasn’t part of the world. I did miss home and all that I was missing back there.

Then it happened, “Bang!”

You could feel the concussion of the explosion as it dropped dirt and dust on me from the roof of the bunker. I can still hear the sound of the projectile screaming on its way to its target. It was likely a platoon under attack, and they needed artillery support. Death was imminent.

It was back to reality. I would try to sleep anyway with a bandana over my face.

My celebration was over, but the Christmas memory lingers.

Standing in the cold admiring my home in Natick, I smiled knowing I would sleep in a beautiful, warm bed tonight.

I reminded myself of the incredible gift I received when I left Da Nang on my flight home after a solid year of combat; that is, I had survived.

Now that is something to celebrate at every Christmas.

I will also remember those who were not so gifted.





The Town of Highland Beach Presents Mingle & Jingle Holiday Event

December 15th
5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Highland Beach Town Hall

This year's activities include:



Children's Craft Stations
Food & Dessert Trucks
(Four (4) Food Trucks & One (1) Dessert Truck)

Refreshments
Music (DJ)

There will be complimentary trolley pick up and drop off services along A1A. Trolley service will begin along A1A at 4:30 p.m. for pick ups and will end at 8:00 p.m. for drop offs. The trolleys are ADA compliant.





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