

# MANAGER'S MONTHLY



APRIL 2023

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# MESSAGE FROM YOUR MANAGER

We are looking forward to a spring season of growth and progress here in Highland Beach. The long-anticipated construction of our new fire station will commence in mid-April and is expected to last one year to maintain the go-live date of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. While this is going to have an impact on the parking and traffic flow through the town hall complex, please know we are making every effort to accommodate residents and maintain the highest level of service possible. I encourage all residents to review the updated layout on page eight and, as always, to sign up for the Town's email notification list by visiting [www.highlandbeach.us](http://www.highlandbeach.us).

As we all know, there has been a change in the Town Commission due to the 2023 Municipal General Election and the unfortunate passing of our friend and colleague, Mayor Doug Hillman. I would like to begin this transition by wishing a warm welcome to our new Commissioners, Judith Goldberg and Don Peters. Town staff and I look forward to working with them and getting them up to speed on our current goals and initiatives. I believe that both will bring their unique strengths and experience to the table and will provide the level of leadership that residents have come to expect from their elected officials, and that the Commission will move forward as a unified group under the leadership of newly appointed Mayor Natasha Moore. Let me now thank Commissioner Shoemaker for his three years of hard work and dedication to our Town. He was instrumental in the progress we have made in several strategic priorities and proudly shined a light on our local veteran heroes, going so far as to help us become a Hidden Heroes Town. I must also thank Vice Mayor Stern for his continued service to our Town wherever it may be needed – he truly is our sixth man of the year!

The Town has also been active on the legislative front. The State of Florida's Joint Legislative Audit Committee has directed the State Auditor General to conduct an operational audit of the City of Delray Beach as it pertains to the current Interlocal Agreement for Fire Rescue Services with the Town of Highland Beach. The Town will fully cooperate with the investigation, and we hope that this audit leads to clarity regarding this financial dispute.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HIGHLAND BEACH?

## Fire Station Groundbreaking Ceremony

Thank you to all the residents who came out to show their support for our new fire station! We look forward to taking the next step in this journey and providing the highest level of service with integrity and dedication.

## FDOT SR-A1A RRR Project

FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation) representatives will be attending the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Town Commission meeting to provide updates and answer questions regarding the SR-A1A RRR (Resurfacing, Restoration, and Rehabilitation) project.



## Board Vacancies

Board of Adjustment & Appeals – Two (2) vacancies for three-year terms and one (1) vacancy for an unexpired term ending September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board – Three (3) vacancies for unexpired terms ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.



For additional information, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (561) 278-4548 or email [lgaskins@highlandbeach.us](mailto:lgaskins@highlandbeach.us) (Lanelda Gaskins) or [jdehart@highlandbeach.us](mailto:jdehart@highlandbeach.us) (Jaclyn DeHart), Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

## Community Art Program

Residents and Town staff are invited to visit the library and view the excellent showcase of art on display through April 25<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all of the talented artists who participated in our Community Art Show!

## Town Entry Signage Design Contest Results

Congratulations to the winner of the Town Entry Signage Design Contest, Barry Donaldson!

# COMMUNITY

The Town would like to give special recognition and thanks to Elaine Prentice and the residents of Penthouse Towers for their contributions towards preserving and restoring our dunes. After seeing the erosion and damage caused by the recent hurricanes and tropical storms, Elaine and the residents took the initiative to fortify and replenish their dunes by removing exotic plants and replacing them with over 2,000 sea oats! They are an excellent example of community involvement and we are proud to have them in Highland Beach. If you would like to learn more about Dune Management and Restoration, please visit the Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board's webpage at [www.highlandbeach.us/nrpab](http://www.highlandbeach.us/nrpab) and [www.adoptadune.com](http://www.adoptadune.com).



# TOWN CLERK

## 2023 Election Information

On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Highland Beach electorates voted for two Commissioners. Congratulations to Commissioner Donald Peters and Commissioner Judith M. Goldberg!

For more information on the 2023 Municipal General Election, please contact Town Clerk Lanelda Gaskins at [lgaskins@highlandbeach.us](mailto:lgaskins@highlandbeach.us) or (561) 278-4548 during normal business hours (8:30 AM – 4:30 PM).



# POLICE DEPARTMENT

With tax season upon us, we want to remind our residents to be aware of IRS phone scams. If the IRS does contact you about anything, including unpaid taxes, it will be by mail, NOT by phone and they will NEVER ask you to pay with prepaid debit/gift cards. Don't be a victim!



# WATER TREATMENT PLANT

We are proud to announce that our Public Works Department placed 1<sup>st</sup> in Region VI for the American Waterworks Association's "Best Tasting Drinking Water" award! This accomplishment speaks volumes to the skill and dedication of our Water Treatment Plant staff, who work around the clock to ensure that our Town water maintains the highest level of quality.



# FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT



"We are pleased to announce that the groundbreaking ceremony for Fire Station 116 was a great success. We are proud to commence construction on this new facility that represents a significant improvement in our community. We thank you all for celebrating this milestone achievement with us. As always, we are available to answer any questions or provide additional information if necessary."  
- Glenn Joseph, Fire Chief

# BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Flipping a light switch. Plugging in a coffeemaker. Charging a laptop computer. These are second nature for most of us. Electricity makes our lives easier. However, we need to be cautious and keep safety in mind. Here are some electrical safety tips you can follow to stay safe:

- Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- When you are buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by a qualified private inspector or in accordance with local requirements.
- Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, microwave ovens, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.
- Arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) shut off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Consider having them installed in your home.
- Use ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages, and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.
- Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month according to the manufacturer's recommendations. You do not need a flame to start a fire. Fires can start when heat builds up near things that burn. This can happen when a hot light bulb is near things that burn, such as cloth or paper, or a cord has been placed under a carpet.
- Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don't have to use extension cords.
- Use a light bulb with the right number of watts. There should be a sticker that indicates the right number of watts.

## **PLANNER'S CORNER: WHAT IS ZONING?**

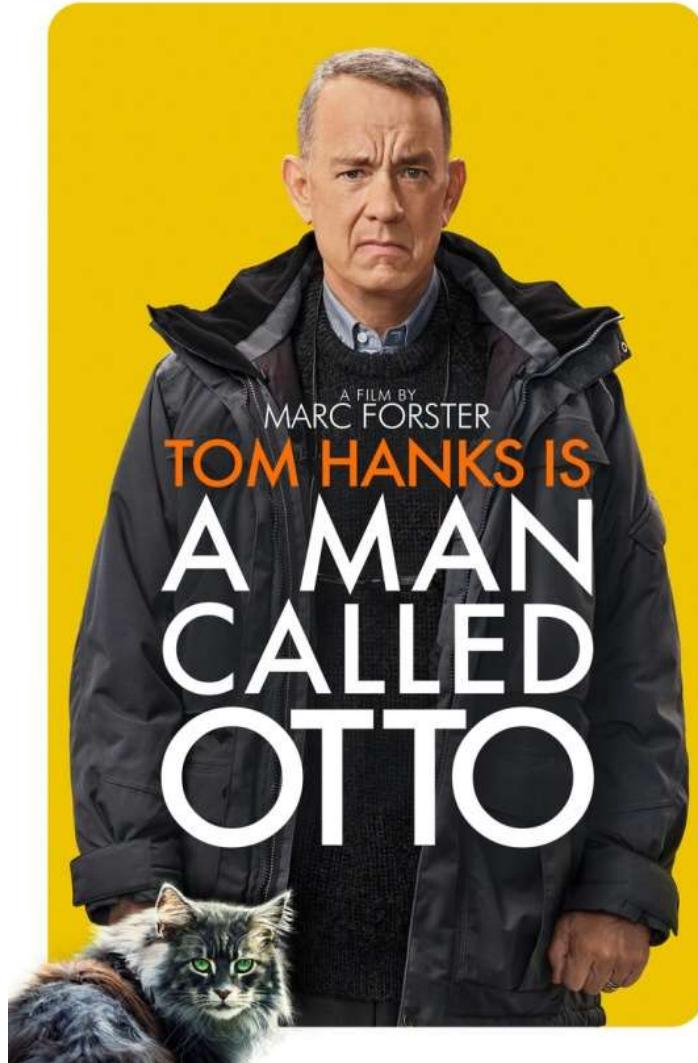
*Zoning is the allowable uses of land and characteristics of structures on the property. All of the land within the town is broken into zoning districts, which allow different types of residential uses such as single-family and multiple-family. The multiple-family zoning districts are further broken down by densities (e.g. Low, medium, and high). The town also has a government services zoning district which allows for government-related offices, etc. Each zoning district has a list of certain requirements for the development of these uses which include minimum lot area, minimum lot width, building setbacks, height, etc.*

For more information and resources regarding electrical safety, please visit the National Fire Protection Association's webpage at [www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education).

# LIBRARY

Many patrons have been asking if they will be able to get library materials during the upcoming fire station construction. The answer is Yes! When construction starts, we will offer Curbside Concierge Service to alleviate parking shortages. If you can't find parking when picking up items you have on hold, simply pull up in front of the library, call to let us know you are here, and we will check out your items and bring them right to your car.

On your next visit to the library, stop by the children's room to see our new "paint by numbers" with stickers project. Check the posted color code and add a few stickers to the poster. As more stickers are added, the mystery image will be revealed!



## *Library Hours:*

<i>Monday – Thursday</i>	<i>10:00 AM to 8:00 PM</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>10:00 AM - 4:30 PM</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>9:00 AM - 1:00 PM</i>

Upcoming events (all begin at 5:30 PM unless noted otherwise):

### Concerts

April 27<sup>th</sup> - Turquoise Choir (Turkish music)

### Movies

April 18<sup>th</sup> - A Man Called Otto

### Book Discussion Group

April 19<sup>th</sup> - The Infinite Plan by Isabel Allende

### Ongoing

Mondays - Dancercize, \$5 per class

Saturdays at 10:30 AM - Current Events Discussion

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

# NATURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

Did you know that sea grapes act as a natural vegetative barrier blocking artificial light from sea turtle nesting beaches and minimize upland glow? In fact, this plant has been deemed important enough to protect under Florida Statute. Trimming or removal of sea grapes can increase illumination levels on the beach and deter nesting sea turtles or disorient sea turtle hatchlings.

If you are considering trimming, adding, or removing sea grapes or any other dune vegetation on your property, you may require a permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). FDEP staff are available to assist property owners in determining if a permit is required or not. Additionally, property owners can send proposed dune maintenance project information (e.g. address, description of work, photographs and plans) to FDEP staff in the form of a consultation request. You can email such request to [cccl@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:cccl@dep.state.fl.us). FDEP field inspectors can schedule site visits to meet on property, discuss projects over the phone, and issue field permits as needed by calling 850-245-2094.

For more information contact the Town Planner, Ingrid Allen, at 561-278-4540 (ext. 3).



## CODE TIP OF THE MONTH: TURTLE NESTING SEASON

As many of you know, March 1<sup>st</sup> marked the beginning of Turtle Nesting season. This is the time of year when the mature sea turtles make their way to the beach and lays their eggs into a nest under the sand for an incubation period of several months. The eggs will eventually hatch, and the young baby turtles find their way back to the sea. This process is tough with many challenges from nature, but many from mankind as well.

Some of the greatest impacts humans can have on these nests and hatchlings are trampling the buried nests and artificial light from homes and buildings which the newborn turtles are attracted to, thinking it is the moonlight leading them back to sea. These difficulties, along with habitat loss, poaching, and climate change have caused most sea turtles to be placed on the endangered species list. To mitigate these issues, the State of Florida and the Town of Highland Beach have implemented laws and ordinances to protect the sea turtles and help regrow their population.

One prevention step is to limit the amount and type of artificial light exposed to the beach at night. All condominiums, single family homes, and commercial properties in the Town of Highland Beach are required to have "Turtle Safe" lighting installed at all points visible from the beach. This will minimize confusion for the young hatchlings so they can safely make their way out to the sea. Please be aware it is illegal to harass, harm, or kill any turtle or its eggs or nest. If you are aware of a turtle nest which has not been identified, barriers that have been compromised, or if you have found a sick or injured turtle, you should call the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at 1-888-404-FWCC or Joanne Ryan, Town of Highland Beach Sea Turtle Permit Holder at 561-441-4375.

These laws, in addition to other environmental protection efforts, have proven very effective in rejuvenating the turtle population that visits our beaches every year. If you have questions about "Turtle Safe" lighting, nest protection, or any other concern about our beaches, please call the Town of Highland Beach Code Compliance Department at 561-278-4540.



# In Special Memory of Mayor Doug Hillman



Mayor Hillman was a great community leader, mentor, role model, father, brother, husband, and very dear friend. We express our sincerest condolences to his family, and we pray that God may rest his soul in peace.

While we lost part of our Highland Beach family, we will always have our fond memories. We do not have the words to express how much and how truly saddened we are at this time, but we are all glad to have had the opportunity to have him in our lives, regardless of how long. He worked tirelessly as our Mayor for three years to ensure our "Three Miles of Paradise" remained strategically focused on its bright future, its natural beauty, and its captivating, yet understated, elegance and its wonderful residents. He will truly be missed.



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