

A photograph of a long wooden pier extending into the ocean. A wide, dark, corrugated metal walkway runs down the center of the pier, leading the eye towards the horizon. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds, and the sun is visible through a break in the clouds near the top center. On the left side of the pier, a tall black lamppost stands prominently. The ocean is visible on both sides of the pier, with gentle waves breaking against the wooden railings.

# THE CURRENT

Your guide to current news & events from the Town of Oak Island, NC

*February 2021*

IN THIS ISSUE: Welcome letter / Monthly Review (January, 2021) / News & Notices / Coming Events / Department Feature / Photo Review

## Welcome to February

**WELCOME** to the **February 2021** edition of **THE CURRENT**. For many, February is an often glossed over "filler" month. Aside from the sugary romance of Valentine's Day, the opportunistic furniture sales of Presidents' Day, and the spike in football-quality TV purchases; the month often comes across as just one last delay before the warm greenery of spring. Not the case for the Town of Oak Island, however! With an ongoing hurricane recovery, and even longer-labored pandemic response, Town staff continue to work hard every day to ensure the natural and constructed amenities, as well as the services offered remain at their highest level. From beach renourishment, to pandemic response, there's a lot going on, and a lot to cover. So grab your heart-shaped chocolate sampler, have a seat on the old sofa, and mute the new TV, and dive right into **The Current** for February 2021.



MONTH IN REVIEW

Update

## MONTHLY REVIEW: JANUARY

REMINDER: Information on all news items can be found on the Town Website at: [www.OakIslandNC.com/NEWS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/NEWS).

## Scoop, Sift, Shovel, Spread: Repeat

The end of January sees the winding down of the **Sand Sifting & Redistribution Project**. To date, the project has now cleaned (sifted), and redistributed more than 2,000 truckloads, containing over 60,000 cubic yards of sand overwash from Hurricane Isaias. The majority of operations took place at the large sand pile behind Town Hall, in the Cabana parking lot at the corner of SE 46th and Dolphin streets. After initial work on that pile was completed, the lot then served as a staging area for the sifting equipment. Smaller sand piles from the beach accesses and crossover streets, were then brought to that location for sifting. In total, approximately 40,000 cubic yards of sand were sifted, loaded, and redistributed from this location.

*In late January, the Communications Office produced a 2-minute time-lapse video, showing most of the sifting work. To watch the video [CLICK HERE](#).*

Once enough of the smaller piles had been completed, operations moved west, to the other large sand pile in the parking lot of the The Point. From there, the remaining 20,000 cubic yards of sand were sifted, and redistributed through beach access location from Middleton Ave. westward to 33rd Place West.

Following the official close of the **Sifting Project**, the [www.OakIslandNC.com/DUNES](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/DUNES) page many have become accustomed to monitoring will take on a new role within the Town Website. It will now be used to educate and promote dune health and protection, as part of the **Beach Information** pages under the **Residents & Visitors** section of the website.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)





**BEFORE**  
**AFTER**





# COVID-19 Snapshot

**6,434**

Overall Positive  
Resident Cases as of  
Jan. 29

**10.8%**

Percent of County's  
tests that are positive  
(data from NCDHHS)

**11,372**

First vaccine doses  
administered in county  
(data from NCDHHS)

**Critical/Red**

Current status on  
NC COVID-19 County  
Alert System

**Groups 1 & 2**

Groups currently  
eligible for  
COVID-19 vaccines

**46,000**

Brunswick County  
residents aged  
65 and older

Key Points:



## COVID-19 Response Updates

On **Tuesday, January 12, 2021**, just before the Town Council meeting, a notice was released regarding new restrictions to walk-in access at Town facilities. *(To read this notice, [CLICK HERE](#)).* The access restrictions were in response to recent COVID-19 exposures among Town staff; and are an effort to prevent further spread, while providing for the safety of the public and Town employees. As part of this same response effort, several changes were made to the Town Council meeting schedule as well; including the postponement of a January 26 special meeting to discuss beach nourishment funding options, to February 9 at 6:00 PM. *(To read this notice, [CLICK HERE](#).)*

**Brunswick County Health Services (BCHS)** released their most recent **COVID-19 Snapshot** (pictured) on **Friday, January 29**. Alongside that release, was updated information regarding vaccine distribution. Current vaccine distribution is for **GROUP 2: OLDER ADULTS** (anyone 65 years or older regardless of health status or living situation). BCHS will continue to vaccinate members of those eligible under **GROUP 1** (Health care workers & Long-Term Care staff / residents).

*For full details on the vaccination phases and appointment scheduling, [CLICK HERE](#).*

A reminder, all information related to Town, County, and State response to COVID-19 can be accessed from the **Coronavirus Information Page** of the town Website. To view this page, visit [www.OakIslandNC.com/COVID](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/COVID) or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



## Hammers, Nails, Footboards, & Handrails

Although cut short due to active COVID response efforts, one thing the Town Council was able to finalize before having to recess their January 12 meeting, were the repair contracts for the Davis Canal Pedestrian Walkovers. During the meeting, contracts for repairs to the 20th and 9th street walkovers were awarded to S&C Construction out of Wilmington, NC. Work is scheduled to begin within the first 2 weeks of February, and be completed within 135 calendar days, per contract requirements.

Beyond the walkovers, repairs to beach access locations and park facilities remain an ongoing top priority for the hardworking staff of the Public Works Department. While many repair projects were dependent on completion of the *Sifting & Redistribution Project* mentioned above, work is underway to have all planned repair projects completed prior to the start of Sea Turtle Nesting Season on May 1. This includes public beach accesses and all legally pre-existing direct beach access pathways.

As always, updates on the walkovers, and all other ongoing repair projects can be found on the special **PROJECTS** page of the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/PROJECTS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/PROJECTS), or by clicking the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE







## Christmas Trees: The Gift That Keeps on Giving

While there are several ways to dispose of used live Christmas Trees, including curbside collection or any of the Brunswick County Convenience Centers, one of the most environmentally beneficial methods is to donate them.

Throughout the month of January, the Public Works Department has assisted the **Oak Island Beach Preservation Society** in the collection of used, undecorated, live Christmas Trees. On **Saturday, January 30**, from **1:00 - 3:00 PM**, around **80** volunteers came together to "plant" the nearly **300** donated trees, as part of a new dune preservation effort. The trees were collected near the Oak Island Pier in the public parking lot at 604 Ocean Drive; with distribution beginning at the beach access on McGlamery St.

Even though working outdoors, the effort was still focused on safety; with sign-in equipment sanitized, COVID exposure screening questions, and even spacing all trees 6' apart for social distancing. Although it's probably safe to say the masks and facial coverings were as much for COVID prevention, as they were simple warmth on the chilly afternoon!

The Oak Island Beach Preservation Society, Inc., is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization, dedicated to education and community engagement to enhance the Oak Island beach experience, and leave the beach better for everyone now and in the future. To learn more about the organization and their efforts, visit their website at [www.BeachOKI.org](http://www.BeachOKI.org), or click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE



## NEWS & NOTICES





# NEWS & NOTICES: FEBRUARY

## Council & Board Meetings

*REMINDER:* Information on all Council and Board meetings can be found on the Town Website at: [www.OakIslandNC.com/CALENDAR](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/CALENDAR).

**TOWN COUNCIL** will hold their regular meeting on **Tuesday, February 9, 2021** at **6:00 PM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of **Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive**. **NOTE:** This meeting will be broadcast live on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8), as well as livestreamed on [www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS).

**TOWN COUNCIL** will hold their Council Retreat on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 beginning at 10:00 AM in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive. **NOTE:** This meeting will be broadcast live on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8), as well as livestreamed on [www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS).

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE** will hold a regular called meeting on Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 8:30 AM, which will be conducted virtually via Zoom.

**PLANNING BOARD** will hold its regular meeting on **Friday, February 19, 2021** at **10:30 AM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of **Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive**. **NOTE:** This meeting will be broadcast live on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8), as well as livestreamed on [www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS).

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT** will hold a called meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 10:00 AM, in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

## Closures & Holidays

There are no office closures for observed holidays during the month of February.

REMINDER: the full *Holiday Closure Calendar* can be found on the Town Website at: [www.OakIslandNC.com/HOLIDAY](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/HOLIDAY).



## Sand Work Shifts From Sifting to Dredging

With the Sand Sifting & Redistribution Project coming to an end, further efforts to rebuild (and build up) beach areas are underway. Two new beach re-nourishment projects are slated to start in the month of February. These projects both involve dredging from areas within the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), to provide sand back onto various areas of the beach.

### **PROJECT 1: Lockwood Folly Inlet Widener**

This project will last through the early part of March, 2021, with operations being managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Approximately 165,000 cubic yards will be dredged from the inlet, to be distributed on the beach, starting from the west end of the Island (The Point) to approximately Kings Lynn Drive (subject to change depending on final dredged volume and beach conditions at the time).

### **PROJECT 2: 2020 / 2021 Renourishment Project**

Pipes and equipment for this project should be in place on the beach by mid-February, with sand pumping operations completed by April 1. Sand from this project will be distributed starting at the SE 63rd Street access, heading west to E Beach Drive (between 22nd Pl E and 19th Pl E).

Full details on these and all related upcoming projects will be posted on the Town website. For more information and complete updates, along with interactive maps showing the distribution areas, visit the **Sand Renourishment Projects** page of the Town website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/SAND](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/SAND) or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



## NOTICE: USMC Training in Area

On **Sunday, February 28, 2021**, the II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) will conduct a training exercise at the Ft. Fisher National Guard Training Center. This will be a daytime exercise, involving various aircraft operating between ships off the coast and Ft. Fisher. At Ft Fisher will be approximately 100 Marines and exercise participants simulating the exercise scenario.

Once completed, the aircraft will take some of the participants and all of the Marines in training back to the ships. If refueling is needed during the exercise, this may be done at the Cape Fear Regional Jetport.

For further information or concerns regarding this training, please contact the **II MEF Communications Strategy and Operations Office** at **910-451-7200** or **910-449-9961**.





## Sea Oats & Spring Cleanup: A Public Notice from Public Works

SPRING CLEANING REMINDER: The Town of Oak Island **does not** offer bulk pickup of brown or white goods. Residents may dispose of these items at the **Garbage & Recycling Convenience Site**, located at **4110 Airport Road**. Hours are every **Wednesdays** from **1:00 PM - 4:30 PM**, **Fridays** from **9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**, and the **FIRST Saturday** of each month from **9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**. Household trash, household recycling, brown goods, and white goods can all be disposed of for free at this location.

Also please note, the Town **will not** be selling **Sea Oat** plants to the public this year.

For more information on this or any other services from the Public Works Department, visit [www.OakIslandNC.com/PW](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/PW) or click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE





## COMING EVENTS

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*REMINDER:* Information on all special events, recreation programs, and educational activities can be found on the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/EVENTS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/EVENTS).





## 2021 Oak Island Farmers' & Artisans' Market

**WHEN:** Mondays • 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM • May 24 - September 6

**WHERE:** Middleton Park (Behind Town Hall) • 4610 E Dolphin Drive

**WHO:** Open to all

**COST:** FREE to attend / shop (Vendor Fees: \$15 Daily, \$60 Monthly, \$200 Seasonal)

**ABOUT:** The Market is great opportunity to see, and financially support the very best of Oak Island's local farmer and artisan community. Baked goods, produce, handmade crafts, and artistic masterpieces are just a few of the many treasures waiting to be uncovered at the popular annual tradition, which runs throughout the summer season.

**NOTE:** COVID safety protocols will be in place for all Market dates; including the wearing of face masks by vendors and attendees, hand sanitizer stations, directional traffic and social distancing signage, and requests for only one person at a time at each vendors.

For more information, call the Recreation Center at **910-278-5518**. To apply to be a Market Vendor, visit [www.OakIslandNC.com/MARKET](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MARKET), or click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

## 2021 Spring Kickball League

**WHEN:** Tuesdays & Thursdays • Evenings • April 6 - May 13

**WHERE:** Middleton Park (Behind Town Hall) • 4610 E Dolphin Drive

**WHO:** Adult co-ed participants 18 years and older

**COST:** \$200 Team Registration

**ABOUT:** Adult kickball is a great way to stay active and keep those feet moving! Teams will need a minimum of 8 players to play each game. COVID social distancing protocols will be followed and include: no more than 50 players and spectators, face coverings worn between games, face coverings to be used by officials and score keepers, and no dugouts will be used.

For more information and program rules, call the Recreation Center at 910-278-5518.







DEPARTMENT FEATURE



# DEPARTMENT FEATURE: OAK ISLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

The **Oak Island Fire Department** (OKIFD) is a combination department that includes dedicated volunteers and career personnel. Our responsibilities include fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, response to medical emergencies at the advanced life support level and response to other public health, safety and welfare conditions that threaten the Oak Island community. We are also active in Fire Prevention and Public Education activities. Our ultimate goal is to protect life and property.



**PROFILE:** *Fire Chief:* Having traded the cold concrete of New York for coastal comfort North Carolina in the mid-90's, **Fire Chief Chris Anselmo** has been a Brunswick County resident for nearly 24 years. Anselmo joined the OKI Fire Department in January 1999, and has led the Department as Chief since 2012.

The Chief maintains as strong of a commitment to ensuring the professionalism and training of department staff, as he does to providing for the safety of the residents and visitors they serve. **Fire Station #2**, which houses the administrative staff for the Department, also serves as a fully equipped training facility. This allows both firefighters and EMT's to hone their skills in familiar surroundings, with their equipment.

Equally at home driving his black cherry Harley Davidson motorcycle as he is a bright red E-One ladder truck, Chris Anselmo loves to fully enjoy the area he works equally hard to serve.

**PROFILE:** *Captain:* If you've ever witnessed an unfortunate incident requiring fire response throughout Oak Island, there's a chance you've seen Captain Robert Shrack in action. Although having been with OKI-FD since 2013, the fire service has literally defined his adult life.

Starting as a junior firefighter in 2005, Shrack proudly felt the calling early on to serve his native community of Concord NC. Attending fire certification classes around his high school schedule, he earned EMT-Basic certification by the age of 18. Achieving success along the way, and holding the positions of Chief at one fire department, and EMS Field Training Officer at another; it was family changes that initiated the move to Oak Island.

*"My mother had moved away to Virginia with the closing of [her work] in Concord, so I started looking for jobs online" Shrack explained, "I had never been to Oak Island before I came for my interview. Just thought I'd take a chance and start over."*

That new start proved beneficial for both Robert and Oak Island. Captain Shrack equally loves the challenges of the profession, as well as the interaction with the community. Being able to help in any way, whether through direct fire response, or even teaching college courses, provides Shrack with the focus needed to maintain motivation in such a demanding profession.





In addition to the Chief, administrative staff for the Department also include Assistant Chief, Alan Browning, Fire Marshal, Joe Snapp, and Administrative Assistant, Shelley Abernethy. The department provides 24/7 services through two engines, which respond to all fire, and even medical calls at a Paramedic Level of patient care. Split into 3 shifts, each shift maintains 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Firefighter / Paramedics, and 2 Firefighter / EMT's; for a total of 32 full and part-time employees within the Department.

Adding to the regular staff are the Department's **VOLUNTEERS**, which are always both needed and welcome. OKI-FD continually seeks out volunteers to complement the services provided. Training is even available to volunteers without previous experience! The most important requirement is a desire to serve one's community; helping neighbors in their time of need. *Anyone **interested in volunteering** can call 910-278-1000, or simply [CLICK HERE](#).*

As a "Delivery Agency," the Department holds certification by the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) to teach Firefighter State Certification Classes in-house. Several paid staff, including Chief Anselmo are qualified and/or certified instructors. If new volunteers want to become state certified firefighters, OKI-FD has that ability in-house to do most of that training.

The OKI-FD response district includes all of the Town's corporate limits on the Island and the mainland, which includes portions of NC 211 and Long Beach Road. As of July 1, 2020, the department provides a Fire Protection Classification of 3/10, meaning structures within a five mile driving distance from an Oak Island Fire Station are rated a 3. Those beyond the 5 mile range are a 10. This rating was assigned after a 2020 "Response Rating Survey" by the North Carolina Department of Insurance. This rating was achieved based on many factors such as water supply, communications, and training. The department is also certified as a Heavy Rescue Provider by NCAR&EMS, in addition to being an Advanced Life Support EMS Provider certified by NCOEMS at paramedic level care.

Whether in the unfortunate need for fire response, or a medical emergency, the dedicated professionals of the Oak Island Fire Department stand ready to assist in your time of need. To learn more about the Department, and the services they offer beyond fire response, visit them on the Town Website at: [www.OakIslandNC.com/FD](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/FD), or just click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

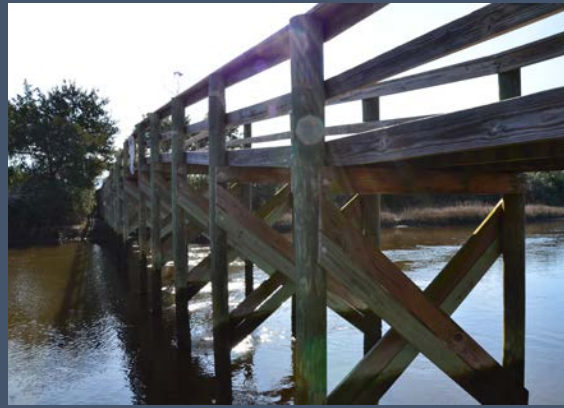
MONTH IN PHOTOS





# PHOTO REVIEW: JANUARY 2021





*PHOTOS COURTESY:* Oak Island Communications Office (Mike Emory) / Oak Island Recreation Department (Rebecca Squires) / Patriot Drone Services, LLC (Shawn Barry)



THANK YOU FOR READING!





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