



THE CURRENT

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

July 2021

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Welcome to July

WELCOME to the **JULY** edition of the **THE CURRENT**. "**Let Freedom Ring!**" For many, that "ring" goes little further than the temporary Tinnitus induced by a booming fireworks display. For others however, it's the echoing reminder of the true costs of freedom, and the enduring hope delivered in our nation's motto of "**E Pluribus Unum.**" In truth, "*out of many, one*" is an ideal that no nation has perfected, but thankfully many work towards. It's easy to achieve conformity when everyone looks and acts the same; but to live together as a community, despite the differences in appearance, ideas, and opinion, is where true freedom is found. In Oak Island, we have a distinct advantage in learning this lesson, as we get to see an example of it any time we look South. Millions of creatures, from thousands of species, all swim, float, and fly past our shores every day. Yet they all come together in the same beautiful coastline. Sure it's not always peaceful in the ocean, and it can get pretty rough at times, but you'd be hard-pressed to remember the last time the crabs declared war on the whelks! Life in the sea, despite all it's many different forms, somehow still works ... *together*. If that isn't **E Pluribus Unum** in action, who's to say what is? With that nautical metaphor in mind, we say **Happy Birthday United States** and **Happy Birthday Oak Island**, as we get ready for a dive into the **JULY** edition of **THE CURRENT**.



MONTHLY REVIEW

MONTHLY REVIEW: June 2021

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

Drones Over Dunes

During the June 8 regular meeting of the Town council, Manager David Kelly gave an overview to the Council on the efforts being taken to educate and enforce the Town's sand dune policies.

The report outlined the multi-departmental approach to helping prevent and respond to beachgoers damaging the newly constructed sand dunes and emergency berms. Mr. Kelly noted that dune monitoring involves efforts from the Police Department, Public Works, Development Services, the Beach Ambassadors, the Communications Office, and the recently established UAS Services Division.

During the overview, it was noted that all "Post & Rope" installations, marking the [Shared Access Pathways](#) for areas of East Beach Drive had been completed. In addition, visual examples of several versions of the "Stay Off Dunes" signage were shown to the Council. Regarding enforcement, the Manager noted the Police Department now had four (4) officers dedicated solely to beach patrol, and had begun moving forward with more aggressive citation writing for violators. Fines now actively being written range from \$100, up to \$500 for repeat offenders. Information on dune violations will now also be included in the regular monthly reports to the Council.

One highlight of the report was a brief video from the Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Services Division. The recently formed division has proven of unique benefit, with the Town's drone being used to monitor and directly interact with individuals violating the dune policy. A speaker attached to the drone has allowed the pilot to communicate remotely and inform beachgoers caught on the dunes. In most instances, individuals immediately complied once informed. In the few instances where the request was defied, the drone operator was able to work with Police for more immediate enforcement.

To view the June 8 meeting, and the full report, just visit the **MEETINGS** page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS, or click the link below.

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Thursday, June 24, 2021

Town of Oak Island
2021 Hurricane Conference

Hurricane Conference

On Thursday, June 24, 2021, the annual **Oak Island Hurricane Conference** was held in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of the Town Hall. Coordinated by the Oak Island Fire Department, the Conference provided valuable safety information for Town residents and property owners, regarding the preparation, response, and recovery efforts the Town undertakes during a major storm event.

Conference attendees were able to hear from every Town Department that serves a role in storm response and recovery, including Administration, Police, Fire, Public Works, Public Utilities, Development Services, and the Communications Office. Additionally, presentations were given from partnering agencies, such as Brunswick County Emergency Services, Brunswick County Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), Brunswick County Family Assistance, and the American Red Cross.

The Atlantic Hurricane season officially began on June 1 and runs through November 30. Although impacts to southeastern North Carolina aren't usually felt until the later summer months, activity has already been seen, with four (4) named storms having already been formed by the end of June. 2021 also marks the seventh consecutive year a storm has formed before the official start of Hurricane Season.

Regardless of when storms usually hit, practicing responsible hurricane preparedness ahead of time is vital to securing life and property. The Conference worked to provide information to residents and property owners, to empower them to make informed decision in securing their own preparations.

To view video of the entire Conference, simply visit the **Hurricane Information** page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/HURRICANE, or click the link below.

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COVID-19 Response Updates

On **Wednesday, June 16, 2021** Governor Roy Cooper issued [Executive Order 220](#), which extends the pandemic response measures of the previous Executive Order 215, issued on May 14.

[Executive Order 215](#) lifted COVID-19 restrictions to reflect new public health recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for fully vaccinated people. The original order also cited state-level improvements, such as the fact that between April 25 - May 8, no counties in the state were rated to have a "critical" rate of COVID-19 community spread.

Executive Order will remain in effect through 5:00 PM on July 30, 2021 unless repealed, replaced, or rescinded. Links to Brunswick County's **Vaccination Clinic**, as well as information on all Town, County, and State response efforts to COVID-19 can be found on the **Coronavirus Response Information** page of the Town Website. To view this page, visit www.OakIslandNC.com/COVID or click the link below.

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Exercise! Now Indoors!

As of Monday, June 28, all yoga classes at Oak Island Recreation Center are now once again being held **indoors**. This change marks a significant shift back towards "normal" as ever since COVID response effort went into effect in early 2020, classes had been held outdoors (including throughout the winter months!).

With more styles and philosophies than ever before, being offered at more times throughout the week, now is the perfect time to discover the class that is the right fit for you!

Weekly schedules for yoga classes in the Recreation Center include:

Mondays (11:00 AM): Gentle Bliss Yoga with Mert

Mondays (5:45 PM): Slow Flow Yoga with Katelyn

Tuesdays (9:30 AM): Active Senior Yoga with Mert

Wednesdays (4:30 PM): Yoga for Balance with Tammy

The cost for most classes is just \$5.00 for Town residents, and \$7.00 for visitors and non-residents. Full details on the programs and their specific costs can be found on the **Programs & Activities** page of the Town Website, by visiting www.OakIslandNC.com/PROGRAMS, or clicking on the link below.

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Recycling. Granted.

The **Oak Island Environmental Advisory Committee**, along with Town staff, is pleased to announce that Oak Island has been named a recipient of the *Carolina Recycling Association / USDA Grant for Recycling Outreach and Education*.

In 2020, Oak Island recycled over **1,619 tons** of material; helping to propel Brunswick County to **FIRST PLACE** in the state of North Carolina for recycling per capita, at **390lbs per person!** The USDA Grant award is part of an even larger effort to reduce contamination of this material, save costs, and improve effectiveness of our curbside recycling program.

As part of the grant, promotional magnets with the most updated recycling guidelines will be mailed directly to residents and homeowners in Oak Island free of charge. Be sure to look for them in your mailboxes soon. The magnets and other materials will help to serve as an Important reminder, to **NOT** bag recycles and leave plastic bags **OUT** in your recycling bins. Plastic bags can be recycled at the entrances of most grocery stores.

Congratulations and thank you, from the Environmental Advisory Committee to all Town residents for your recycling efforts! To learn more about recycling in Oak Island, or about additional items that can be recycled and where to take them, simply visit the **Public Works: Solid Waste Division** page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/RECYCLING, or click the link below.

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NEWS & NOTICES



NEWS & NOTICES: JULY

Council & Board Meetings

REMINDER: All televised public meetings listed below will be broadcast live on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8), as well as livestreamed on the Town Website. Meeting agendas, minutes, and any livestream or on-demand video available can be found on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS.

TOWN COUNCIL (*televised*) will hold a regular meeting on **Tuesday July 13, 2021** at **6:00 PM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

PLANNING BOARD (*televised*) will hold a regular meeting on **Thursday, July 15, 2021** beginning at **10:30 AM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of the Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (*non-televised*) will hold a meeting on Thursday, July 15, 2021 beginning at 8:30 AM in the Police Department Training Room, located on the second floor of the Town Hall, at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

Closures & Holidays

Administrative Offices for the Town of Oak Island will be **CLOSED** on **Monday, July 5, 2021** in observance of **Independence Day**. As always, Police, Fire, and other emergency services will be available by calling 911. Announcements on further schedule modifications to Town departments and services will be made on the Town Website prior to the closure.

REMINDER: the full *Holiday Calendar* can be found on the Town Website at: www.OakIslandNC.com/HOLIDAY.



Summertime Siren-Sounding

As part of a quarterly test, the outdoor warning sirens around the Brunswick Nuclear Plant will be tested between **10:00 AM - 11:00 AM** on **Wednesday, July 14, 2021**. Duke Energy and Brunswick County officials will conduct the siren test, which should last between 5 - 30 seconds.

The 38 sirens within 10 miles of the Brunswick Nuclear Plant will sound for five to 30 seconds. To ensure they are functioning properly, it may be necessary to test some sirens more than once. Testing is performed in cooperation with emergency officials in Brunswick and New Hanover counties, who are responsible for sounding the sirens. This information is reflected in the 2021 Brunswick Nuclear Emergency Preparedness booklets sent to residents living within the 10-mile Brunswick Nuclear Plant emergency planning zone.

Because this is a test, local broadcasting stations will not interrupt regular programming to broadcast Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages. If there were ever a real emergency at the plant requiring the sirens to be sounded, local radio and television stations would broadcast information and instructions to the public.

For more information about the outdoor warning sirens, visit the Duke Energy website at www.duke-energy.com/NuclearEP or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Flood Insurance Workshop

Does the sometimes complicated world of flood insurance leave you wondering if you've made the right decisions? On **Wednesday, July 28 at 5:30 PM**, the Town of Oak Island will host a special **Information Webinar** with Zach Faulkner, Sales Team Director and Senior Flood Mitigation Specialist with Smart Vent Products, Inc.

The goal of the webinar is to "break down the truth about your coverage" by providing helpful tips, and steps you can take to lower your premium. Topics addressed will include:

- New Laws That Affect Policies
- Real Life Homeowner Examples
- Savings Stories

Along with a special question and answer period. Attendees can submit their elevation certificates after the course for a complimentary review, to oakisland@yourfloodrisk.com.

Since 1999, Smart Vent has been working to provide those living in or near flood plains with the products, support and resources needed to help protect their homes during storms. Backed by a team of Certified Floodplain Managers and Engineers, Smart Vent is well-versed in building codes, flood risk, and even flood insurance. For more information on Smart Vent Technologies, visit their website at www.smartvent.com.

For more information or to register, just click the link at the top of the Flood Maps & Insurance Information page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/FloodInfo, or click the link below.

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Dune Repair Workshop

On **Tuesday, August 3**, at **9:00 AM**, the Oak Island Beach Preservation Society and the Town of Oak Island will present a special ***Dune Repair Workshop***. The workshop will feature special guest Spencer Rogers, Shoreline Erosion Specialist with NC Sea Grant.

The event will be held at the **801 Ocean Event Center**, and will feature a multimedia presentation, followed by a live planting demonstration outdoors (weather permitting). Using a copy of The Dune Book, (the workshop text, provided), Rogers will share examples of coastal processes that build dunes and how changes we make can enhance or degrade them.

Primarily intended for beachfront property owners, but open to anyone, the workshop hopes to provide tools for assessment and sustainability of dunes. Property owners may find the information learned helpful in supporting structures that will buffer coming storms and protect their homes. Attendees will also learn about resources available from the Town of Oak Island, and how they can work with the resources they already have.

Seating will be limited, and registration is required, but free. To register for the workshop, simply visit the Beach Preservation Society website at <https://beachoki.org/register>, or click the link below.

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Reconstruction of Gazebo & Ramp at 10th St West ADA Beach Access

Beginning on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, construction crews for Stature Engineering, P.C. will begin work on the repair of the 10th St West ADA Beach Access structure at 10th Place West. A construction barrier will be placed immediately around the Gazebo and ramp areas but will allow the beach access to remain open during the demolition phase of the project. The beach access will be blocked off starting on or around July 12, for the duration of the construction. The access is currently anticipated to be closed for 8 weeks.

Severely damaged during Hurricane Isaias in August 2020, the Gazebo has been a greatly missed feature along the Oak Island coastline ever since its closure. The Gazebo is a very beneficial structure, not only for providing a shaded relief to enjoy the natural beauty of the area, but also for the access its ADA-compliant ramp provides to those with mobility impairments. After several months of design, review, and completing the permitting processes required by coastal management authorities, the project is ready to begin. Pending favorable weather and no unforeseen industry irregularities, the project hopes to have the new structure completed with plenty of time left to enjoy during the summer season.

The Gazebo is located in one of the Town's eighteen (18) Beach Access Locations which are designated as having handicap accessible amenities. While many of these locations currently offer closer designated parking, the new Gazebo structure adds to the list of improvements being made to several other access locations. Among others, these improvements also include the installation of six (6) rollout "Mobi-mats" that can provide easier on-beach access. Information on all Beach Access Locations with handicap accessible amenities provided can be found on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/ADA.

The Gazebo project will be added to the PROJECTS page of the Town Website, where residents and visitors alike can keep track of its progress. To view the PROJECTS page, simply visit www.OakIslandNC.com/PROJECTS, or click the link below.

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COMING EVENTS



COMING EVENTS

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

Summer Concert Series Keep Sounding

As we near the halfway mark of **Summer Concert Series 2021**, the weekly music events have been a spectacular draw for residents and visitors alike. Only two concerts so far have been impeded by weather, *The Chairman of the Board* on June 4, and the *Tim Clark Band* on June 25. In addition to the TWO bands which played for Beach Day on July 1, the rest of the month is filled with great musical talent.

Scheduled bands for the month of July include:

- ***Chocolate Chip & Company*** (July 9)
- ***Amani Smith*** (July 16)
- ***Too Much Sylvia*** (July 23)
- ***Jim Quick & Coastline Band*** (July 30)

All remaining concerts will be held every Friday evening, from **6:30 PM - 8:30 PM**, at the Middleton Park Amphitheater behind Town Hall, at the corner of SE 46th Street and E Dolphin Drive. Concerts are family friendly and free to attend!

To learn more about the Summer Concert Series, simply visit www.OakIslandNC.com/CONCERT, or click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE



**CONCERTS EACH WEEK
@ MIDDLETON PARK!
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM***



**For details, scan
the code below:**

**10
JUN**

(GENRE: Beach) (SPONSOR: Palm Realty)

**25
JUN**

Tim Clark Band

(GENRE: Variety / Dance)

**1
JUL**

Gary Lowder & Smokin' Hot (*6 PM - 9 PM)

Also: McGuire Band (*6 PM - 9 PM @ OKI Pier)

**9
JUL**

Chocolate Chip & Company

(GENRE: Dance)

**16
JUL**

Amani Smith

(GENRE: Reggae)

**23
JUL**

Too Much Sylvia

(GENRE: Beach / Variety) (SPONSOR: Palm Realty)

**30
JUL**

Jim Quick & Coastline Band

(GENRE: Beach) (SPONSOR: Palm Realty)

**6
AUG**

The Sand Band

(GENRE: Beach)

**13
AUG**

Carolina Line Bluegrass Band

(GENRE: Bluegrass)

***BEACH DAY*
Fireworks @ OKI Pier!**



Oak Island Farmers' & Artisans' Market

Much like the Summer Concert Series mentioned above, the ***Oak Island Farmers' & Artisans Market*** continues to be a strong weekly attraction! The Market is a great opportunity to see and financially support the very best of Oak Island's local crafts and growing 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.

The Market is held in Middleton Park, every Monday from 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM until September 6. Attending and shopping at the market is free and open to everyone, with vendor fees of just \$15 Daily.

For more information on the Market itself or to become a vendor, visit www.OakIslandNC.com/MARKET or click the link below.

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Fort Fisher Aquarium Visits Oak Island

Embrace coastal conservation, and a love of nature with Oak Island Nature Programs! Through partnerships with a variety of local and state conservation agencies, the Recreation Department offers these exciting educational programs throughout the year.

This month, the **Fort Fisher Aquarium Visits Oak Island** will present **SEA TURTLE 911**, on **July 15**, from **2:00 PM - 3:30 PM** at the Recreation Center, located at 3003 E. Oak Island Dr.

Oak Island sure loves the sea turtles that visit each summer! Learn about the types of species that begin their lifecycle on Oak Island, challenges they face, and how you can make a difference. The program is FREE to attend, and is provided through a partnership between the Aquarium and the Oak Island Beach Preservation Society. for more information contact the Recreation Department at 910-278-5518, visit www.OakIslandNC.com/PROGRAMS, or click the link below.

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DEPARTMENT FEATURE



DIVISION FEATURE: FINANCE DEPARTMENT

With a wide array of responsibilities ranging from daily utility collections, to funding major reconstruction following a natural disaster, the Finance Department is a key part of the daily functioning of Town government. Responsible for the financial planning, policy development and administration of the Town's financial activities and personnel, the small but dedicated staff interact not only with the public, but also every other department within the Town.

The Finance Department consist of four (4) divisions: ***Finance & Accounting, Utility & Tax Billings & Collection, Accounts Payable***, and ***Customer Service***. All divisions work within the department to accomplish two (2) major goals; ensuring funding for the daily operation of Town activities, and the more long-term task of planning and developing of the Town's yearly budgets.



PROFILE: *Finance Director:* David Hatten is a CPA, licensed to practice in North Carolina. Originally from West Virginia, in 2014 Hatten traded in the hills of his home state for the rolling waves of coastal NC. Having previously lived in the Wilmington area, he knew this region would be a good place to bring his years of financial experience; ranging from work as an internal auditor, public accountant, finance analyst and Controller.

David Hatten enjoys tackling the unique challenges of managing the finances in a coastal town such as Oak Island. Serious and often complex issues like Beach Nourishment, and building and maintaining infrastructure in a harsh marine environment, can quickly create enormous and expensive projects. Even after emergency events such as hurricanes or other severe storms, Hatten oversees a dedicated team who spend countless hours accumulating records, to summarize and report to FEMA. Accurate reporting is critical to enabling the Town to receive much needed grant and reimbursement funding, to recover tax payer's money spent by the Town.

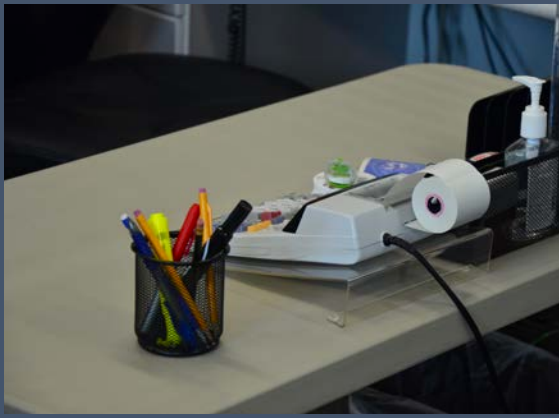
It's not all ledgers and liabilities however, as David Hatten maintains a very practical appreciation for the region he chooses to live and work: "I feel working and living at the beach is the best of both worlds ... and the weather is not bad either!"

EMPLOYEE PROFILE: Customer Service Representative: Samantha LeFauve is one of the first faces most residents and visitors see when coming into the Town Hall to conduct any business. From setting up utility services, to explaining the details in a property tax information card, there's few things LeFauve and the rest of the Customer Service Desk staff can't assist with. Recalling how her career immediately dove into customer service at an early age, she noted *"I enjoy working with people, and wanted to do something to be involved with the community."*

A Town resident for the past seven years, since joining the Oak Island team two years ago, Samantha has quickly picked up on the unique balance of providing small town service, with a population that isn't always small town stationary. *"A unique challenge of working in this area is the wide variety of people"* she remarked *"they come from all over to visit and live at the beach."* With so many property owners who may not stay in Town year-round, the customer service staff have become quite capable in delivering long-distance service with a "down the street" courteousness.

Equally happy capturing the area's wonders from behind her trusty Canon DSLR camera, Samantha LeFauve works just as hard behind the Customer Service Desk to provide a wonderful experience to residents and visitors alike. *"There's something special about working in a vacation town. I really enjoy seeing customers that are on vacation or coming in to set up their services for their new residence or vacation home."*





Under the oversight of the Finance Director, the Department employs eight (8) staff members, which includes two (2) supervisor positions and the front desk receptionist. Major areas of responsibility include financial administration and planning, accounting, payroll, utility billing and collection, budget preparation and adherence and treasury management. Other duties of the department include processing accounts payable transactions for all Town programs, producing monthly and annual financial statements, administering the Town's cash management and investment programs, coordinating the purchase of capital assets, processing other revenue sources, invoicing miscellaneous receivables and maintaining records of the Town's capital assets.

Despite the many responsibilities and requirements of the Department, staff still work to ensure a pleasant and safe work environment for all those they interact with on a daily basis. They know that providing timely, accurate, and meaningful data helps other departments in being responsible with taxpayer funds; and extending a courteous, professional customer service helps reassure the taxpayers their funds are efficiently stewarded.

For detailed information on any programs or services provided by the Finance Department, feel free to call the Customer Service Desk at **910-278-5011**, or send a message through the contact form on their page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/FINANCE.

MONTH IN PHOTOS



PHOTO REVIEW: JUNE 2021





CREDITS: Shawn Barry, Suzan Bell, Rebecca Squires

THANK YOU FOR READING!



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