

January 2022

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# Welcome to 2022

**WELCOME** to the **JANUARY 2022** edition of the **THE CURRENT**. Every December 31, when the clock hand slides over midnight and marks the beginning of a new year, people world-wide tend to make a big deal of it. While no other creature on Earth seems aware of or concerned with this movement, what drives humans to stay up all night and send up fireworks (prohibited in North Carolina, BTW), just to mark the tick-tock of a life-clock? Well here in Oak Island we actually have a pretty good visualization of why, just by looking south.

Standing on the shoreline multiple times in one day, it looks largely the same. It would possibly look the same for multiple visits in a week, or even a month. While a storm could make major changes in short time, what you don't notice on the day-to-day are the *millions* of tiny changes each second. With each grain of sand that is shifted, directing each wave ever so slightly in a new pattern, the environment creates a "new beach" every moment. While this may be the same beach where you first fell in love, taught your kids to swim, or even made that last memory with a loved one, it's never exactly the same as it was in that moment.

That's why the uniquely human concept of marking midnights

is so special. We can stand in the same location where

memories were made, but it will never be the same place as when we made them. The location anchors us to our past, but the new place reminds us that we still have a future, full of new and equally exciting memories to look forward to. So say Happy New Year and drop in, as we ride the wave of new opportunities that await in the JANUARY 2022 edition of **THE CURRENT.**



# REVIEW: JANUARY 2022

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

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## Council Recap

The Town Council's regular meeting on **DECEMBER 14, 2021** began with a Public Hearing on a Town Ordinance text amendment to Section 10.14 regarding guidelines on commercial façade design. Council approved the proposed ordinance amendments, except for the definition of "transparency," which will be addressed through a public hearing at the January 11, 2022 meeting.

**PRESENTATIONS:** Matt McLean, CPA and partner in the firm S. Preston Douglas & Associates, LLP provided the Council

S. Preston Douglas & Associates, LLP provided the Council with an audit report. Next, outgoing elected officials were presented with plaques in appreciation for their service.

**COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:** The Council unanimously re-appointed Jack Moore to a 3-year term on the ABC Board and appointed Paul DuBay to the vacant seat on the Recreation Advisory Board.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:** Town Manager David Kelly reported that 36 building permits had been submitted in November. Kelly also began providing the requested report on Beach Bonfire Permit Applications, which for November totaled 392, with 100 of those having come from in-town residences, 217 from out of town but in state, and 75 from out of state. Public Works Director Scott Thornall reported that the street paving project was nearing completion, and that yard debris removal was proceeding on schedule.

**OLD BUSINESS:** **(1)** Council voted to amend the contract for dune planting associated with the 2021-2022 FEMA post-Hurricane Florence project, to allow for additional planting, with the whole contract amount not to exceed \$300,000. **(2)** Council approved the contract and the Capital Project Ordinance for the design, construction, and project management for rebuilding of the Kevin Bell Skatepark. **(3)** Council approved a motion to rescind action taken March 16, 2021 and April 13, 2021 regarding funding options for beach nourishment. **(4)** The Council approved a Budget Ordinance Amendment to Cover Repair Costs for the Oak Island Pier.

**NEW BUSINESS:** **(1)** The installation and swearing in of the following newly-elected officials: Mayor S. Elizabeth White, Councilmember John W. Bach, Councilmember Bill Craft, & Councilmember Mark U. Martin. **(2)** Council selected Councilmember Bach as Mayor Pro Tempore for 2022 **(3)** Council adopted the 2022 Meeting Schedule, with the exception of rescheduling the Council retreat date with a new date to be determined. **(4)** Council selected Mayor White as representative to the Cape Fear Council of Governments. To view the video, agenda, or minutes from this or any Town Council meeting, just visit the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS), or click the link below.

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# Holiday Happenings

December 2021 started out packed full of festive and exciting events. Many Town residents and visitors alike showed out in force to partake in multiple activities during the mild, yet seasonably crisp first weekend of the month.

**TREE LIGHTING:** Holiday festivities kicked off on Friday, December 3, with the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Several hundred adults (*and many anxious kids!*) gathered just before sunset for an hour of games, snack vendors, and live music from local favorite **Dave's Not Home**. Finally around 6:00 PM, all the children in attendance joined the Mayor on stage in a countdown to the lighting of the Tree. After the lights were lit, the fun carried on with hayrides, games, food, and a visit from jolly old Saint Nick himself, arriving via trailered boat.

**PARADE:** December 4 kicked off with the **Christmas by the Sea Parade**, which after being held as a "reverse parade" in 2020 due to COVID response measures, returned to a traditional parade format for 2021. Hundreds of entries and thousands of participants trekked the 2.5-mile route down E Oak Island Drive from Town Hall to McGlamery street, providing sights, sounds, and plenty of candy. The parade was

met with an even larger crowd of onlookers, lining every single block of the route.

**SANTA:** Following the parade, Santa himself made a personal appearance in a uniquely OKI fashion. Proving that you don't need magical reindeer to make an entrance, Santa, the Grinch, and a whole host of holiday characters parachuted to the beach area in front of the Cabana at SE 46th St. Organized by Skydive Coastal Carolinas, and supported by the Town, the event drew hundreds of spectators, with some estimates of over 1,000 at the landing zone!

**CRAFT FAIR:** After the Skydiving Santa dropped in, the crowds moved to Middleton Park for the Holiday Craft Fair. The fair featured dozens of vendors, many of whom selling holiday-specific crafts; along with food, sweet treats, and live music.

Photos of all events can be found in the 'Photo Review'

section below, or on the Town's Facebook page. To view the Town's Facebook page, visit [www.Facebook.com/TownOfOakIslandNC](https://www.Facebook.com/TownOfOakIslandNC), or simply click the link below.

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## Big Check, Big Break

On Tuesday, November 16, 2021 it was announced that the Town of Oak Island would receive \$20 Million in matched funds from the State of North Carolina to aid in beach nourishment efforts. During a special called meeting of the Town Council on December 8, NC State Representative Charlie Miller (*pictured*) presented the Council with a ceremonial check, formally signifying the allocated funds. This funding was provided as a special one-time designation, as part of the 2021-2022 NC State Budget, and became effective upon signing by Governor Roy Cooper. The \$20M, which must be matched by funds from the Town, will be used to support long-term preventative measures as part of the Town's Beach Nourishment Master Plan. Funds will not be

used as part of any currently active beach nourishment projects, for which funds have already been designated. Following the Council's December 14 decision to rescind previous actions taken regarding funding options for beach nourishment, the Council now looks forward to identifying new funding sources to match the \$20M allocation from the State.

The designated funding came as the result of months of meetings between Former Mayor Ken Thomas, former Mayor Pro Tempore Jeff Winecoff, and Town Staff with State Senator Bill Rabon and State Representative Charlie Miller. In response to these repeated requests, Sen. Rabon and Rep. Miller included these funds as part of the proposed budget for the State.

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## A Date Which Now Lives on in Infamy

**December 7, 2021** marked the 80th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, sparking the United States' entrant into the second World War.

On the cool, overcast morning, members of local VFW Post #10226 were joined by veterans, residents, visitors, the US Coast Guard, and senior staff with the Oak Island Police Department and Oak Island Fire Department for their annual **Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony** on the end of the Pier. With about 30 in attendance altogether, they took pause to remember a day and moment in time that forever changed the course and history of our nation.

Opening statements, prayers, and a time of reflection were all presented with attendees facing, and saluting due West, towards Hawaii. The ceremony concluded with several of those present casting roses into the sea, again towards the West. Although not attributing directly to it being the 80th anniversary, VFW members did note this strong turnout for that year's ceremony.

The Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony is held each year on the Oak Island Pier, and is open to all. For more information on this or any other remembrance events hosted

by the VFW, you can contact Post 10226 at 910-278-5300, or visit them at 103 SE 50th St.

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## Little Pink Houses For You & Me

On **Thursday, December 9, 2021**, Nancy Newcom from the Little Pink Houses of Hope (*pictured*) joined Town staff at Oak Island Par 3 Golf, to be presented with a special donation to the breast cancer benefit charity. Par 3 Superintendent, Jonathan Weaver, along with Eric Falkenhagen and Ryan Gordon of the Oak Island Recreation Department, were on-

hand to present Newcom with a total of \$5,755.40. The donation came as a combination of proceeds from the previously held "Swing for Hope Challenge" golf tournament, along with over \$3,000 in private contributions. The tournament funds consisted of auctions, raffles, commemorative signs that each golfer could purchase and have placed on the course, and a \$15 minimum donation made by each golfer as part of their registration fee. The tournament was a joint effort between the Oak Island Par 3 and the Recreation Department.

Little Pink Houses of Hope works to empower those with breast cancer to live each day to the fullest, with direction, purpose, and hope for the cancer journey by providing free, week-long vacation retreats to patients and their families. The foundation was started by breast cancer survivor Jeanine Patten-Coble in 2009, just after receiving her diagnosis. To learn more, you can visit their website at [www.littlepink.org](http://www.littlepink.org), or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](http://www.littlepink.org)



# CONTRIBUTIONS

It's a new year, and a good time to introduce some new features for **THE CURRENT**. Each month, between the *MONTHLY REVIEW* and upcoming *NEWS & NOTICES* sections, you'll find **CONTRIBUTIONS**. This new section will feature content contributed from the Town's various municipal and non-profit partner organizations. Regular contributing organizations currently include the [Beach Preservation Society](#), the [Friends of Parks Foundation](#), the [Sea Turtle Protection Program](#), the [Southport-Oak Island Chambers of Commerce](#), and [Oak Island Water Rescue](#). Expect to see informative content such as reviews of previous events, upcoming volunteer opportunities, and general information on the services they provide our community.

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## BEACH PRESERVATION SOCIETY

*(Contributed by Rosanne Fortner)* The Oak Island Beach Preservation Society's 6-sided educational display at The Point was destroyed in Hurricane Isaias. The kiosk had helped beachgoers learn about what they were seeing on the beach and how to protect those resources. It also contained information needed for the middle school Beach Lover Patch program and an EarthCache called "Get the Point." The kiosk was too valuable not to replace for a group whose mission is "education and community engagement to enhance the beach experience and make the beach better for everyone now and in the future.

Fortunately, the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation (BEMC) offered Community Grants in 2021 that could help

restart the replacement of the education kiosk. With replacement seen as an opportunity to serve beach visitors in better ways, the Beach Preservation Society, Inc., submitted a proposal and received \$1000. The design of new education panels is similar to those used in National and State Park systems, individual free-standing panels mounted at a level accessible to adults, wheelchair occupants and children.

Two BEMC-supported displays for the project have now been placed at The Point parking lot. The Oak Island Public Works Department mounted them near walkways leading onto the strand for maximum visibility. While the total project cost exceeds the initial grant, BPSI has leveraged BEMC funds to gain the support of other local businesses and groups. At least three more displays are planned with support by BB&T (Truist), the Lions Club, and Strands Outfitters. Two of those panels will focus on the island's valuable estuary ecosystem and will be placed near the parking area at the end of Kings Lynn Drive this winter. Additional displays on erosion and interesting beach finds will follow as time and support allow. All the displays are designed by Nature Graphics, a woman-owned NC small business, using Beach Preservation Society messages.

The Oak Island Beach Preservation Society, Inc., is pleased with the community's support for education of beachgoers. The group expects new displays to bring critical information to visitors at this popular location in a form designed for greater accessibility.

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## BEACH AMBASSADORS

*(Contributed by Skip Cox)* Weather permitting, the **3rd Annual Trees for Dunes** event will take place on **Saturday, January 29, 2022**. The drop off site for trees is again at the 604 Ocean Dr. parking lot, which is at the end of Keziah Street. Tree drop off is already underway. We request that the trees be totally free of all ornaments, lights, and especially plastic tinsel.

All volunteers should meet at the McGlamery Street beach access at 10:00 AM on the 29th. They should bring a shovel

and hammer for planting and staking the trees. The trees will be planted from the McGlamery Street access to the Oak Island Pier.

This is the same location as last year's event, as it is currently still the best place for where the trees are needed.

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## Sea Turtle Protection Program

*(Contributed by Suzan Bell)* If you are walking on our beach, please be on the lookout for cold-stunned sea turtles. There have already been reports of cold-stunned turtles in NC.

"Cold-stunning" is a condition where sea turtles become very weak or inactive due to exposure to cold temperatures. The sea turtles can't regulate their body temperatures so they become lethargic, unable to swim, and can wash ashore and even look deceased.

If you see a sea turtle on the beach, please call us at 910-945-8888. If you are on another beach in NC you can call the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission 24 hour Stranding Hotline at 252-241-7367.

If you want to learn more about cold-stunning, please click this link [www.fisheries.noaa.gov](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov).



# NEWS & NOTICES: JANUARY

## 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](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS).

**TOWN COUNCIL** (*televised*) will hold a regular meeting on **Tuesday, January 11, 2022**, at **6:00 PM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

**TOWN COUNCIL** (*recorded*) will hold their Council Retreat on **Wednesday, January 19, 2022** from **9:00 AM - 6:00 PM** at the 801 Ocean Event Center, located at 801 Ocean Drive. **NOTE:** This meeting will not be televised live, but will be recorded and rebroadcast on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8 / 122), as well as available on-demand at [www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS).

**PLANNING BOARD** (*televised*) will hold a regular meeting on **Thursday, January 20, 2022** at **10:30 AM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E

Oak Island Drive.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE** (non-televised) will hold a regular meeting on **Thursday, January 20, 2022** at **8:30 AM** in the main conference room, located on the first floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

## CLOSURES & HOLIDAYS

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY:** Administrative Offices for the Town of Oak Island will be **CLOSED** on **Monday, January 17, 2022** in observance of **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**.

Police, fire, and other emergency services are not affected during any holiday closure, and are always available by **calling 9-1-1**. The **Oak Island Pier** will be open during their current Winter operation hours of **8:00 AM – 5:00 PM**. All currently available parks and public Beach & Water Access locations and facilities will be open as usual.

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

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## Citizens Academy Returns!

Following a hiatus due to COVID response measures, the **Town of Oak Island Citizens Academy** will return to in-person learning for the 2022 session! During the time off, all presentation materials and course schedules have been

revised, allowing the Academy to now offer several new presenters and discussion topics! Beginning on February 1, the Academy will meet each Tuesday and Thursday for four (4) weeks throughout the month. Upon successful completion, participants will be presented with certificates of completion, and provided with a graduation dinner.

The participant application period is open NOW. Applications can be filled out and submitted via the Citizens Academy Information page of the Town Website. The application deadline is January 20, 2022. Class space is limited, and availability is provided on a first come, first served basis. Applicants must be a resident of the Town of Oak Island. The Town of Oak Island Citizen Academy is an interactive program designed to educate and familiarize Town residents with the various departments and services provided by their local government. Through hands-on learning from interaction

and demonstration, the Citizens Academy helps to provide a deeper understanding of the "who, why, & how" government operates at the municipal level. The program also serves to encourage stronger participation in local government, from residents of all interest levels.

To apply for the Citizens Academy, or just learn more information in general, visit the Academy's page of the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/ACADEMY](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/ACADEMY), or click the link below.

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## Beach Nourishment: Phase II Update

Now that the holidays are behind us, the sights of many are set to the upcoming spring and summer. One major project that stands between the Town and the sizzling summer fun is the **Phase II: Beach Nourishment Project**. As noted on the Current Nourishment Projects page of the Town Website, on-beach operations for the project are anticipated to start within the next month.

The Phase II project will pick up around Middleton Ave. where the Phase I project ended in May 2021. The dune structures and shared access pathways created by Phase II along W Beach Drive, should mirror those created during Phase I along E Beach Drive.

Once on-beach operations are underway, daily progress updates will be provided on the Current Nourishment Projects page. In the meantime, weekly updates are already beginning on the page, delivering status updates in anticipation of the upcoming project start. To view the page for current status information, or bookmark for future updates, visit [www.OakIslandNC.com/SAND](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/SAND) or click the link below.

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## Siren Tests

On Wednesday, January 12, 2022 the outdoor warning sirens around the Brunswick Nuclear Plant will be tested between 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM. The 38 sirens within 10 miles of the Brunswick Nuclear Plant will sound for 5 - 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.

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 nuclear emergency preparedness and outdoor warning sirens, visit the Duke energy Website at [duke-energy.com/NuclearEP](http://duke-energy.com/NuclearEP), or simply click the link below.

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## NEW Skatepark Rebuild Project Page & Public Input Meeting Notice

In the road to restoration from the impacts of Hurricane Isaias in 2020, few projects have garnered more public interest than the Kevin Bell Skate Park. The park sustained extensive damage during Isaias. As a result, it was deemed "unrepairable" and all park features were demolished.

Once it was determined the Skatepark would need a complete rebuild instead of repair, Town staff immediately began working to identify the needed funding required. That funding would have to come from the following year's (2021-2022) budget, from which the Town Council allocated \$300,000 in replacement funding. Following the budget approval in June

2021, Recreation Department staff immediately began seeking out qualified firms who could meet the design and budget requirements of the project.

In November 2021, the Town Council approved a bid from the design team of **Pillar Designs & Artisan Skateparks**. One month later, the Council awarded them the contract for design, construction, and project management.

**PUBLIC INPUT MEETING:** Now that the project is underway, the next step will be public input meetings to help shape future design drafts. **The first public input meeting** has been scheduled for **Thursday, January 20, 2022** from **6:00 PM - 8:00 PM** in the **Town Council Chambers**, located on the second floor of the Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive. The meeting will also be broadcast on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8 / 122), and livestreamed on the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/MEETINGS). (**NOTE:** broadcasts are for viewing only, and do not offer options for direct interaction. Input must be given in-person or through writing submitted to the Recreation Director.)

**Due to the high public interest in this project, a dedicated page has now been established on the Town Website!** The new "SKATE" page will provide information on public input meeting dates, design progress, and eventually construction status.

To view this new page, simply visit the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/SKATE](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/SKATE), or click the link below.

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# COMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

**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).

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## Wintertime Fitness Programs

**WHEN:** Mondays - Saturdays • 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM

**WHERE:** Oak Island Recreation Center • 3003 E Oak Island Drive

**WHO:** Teens • Adults • Seniors

**COST:** FREE

**ABOUT:** From yoga to Zumba, silver sneakers to boot camp, the winter time is a great time to get in shape and explore the many fitness program options available at the Oak Island Recreation Center. Classes covering multiple disciplines meet every hour of each day at the Recreation Center, and there have been several updates for the new year. If you're looking to keep up your routine or start something new, just visit the PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES page of the Town Website for a

PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES page of the Town Website for a full schedule at [www.OakIslandNC.com/PROGRAMS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/PROGRAMS), or click the link below.

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## Country Music Boys

**WHEN:** Second Friday of each month • 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

**WHERE:** Oak Island Recreation Center • 3003 E Oak Island Drive

**WHO:** All ages

**COST:** FREE

**ABOUT:** Kick back and let loose as Oak Island's very own "Oak Island Boys Country Music" returns to Oak Island Recreation Center for a family friendly musical performance. This event is free for all interested parties, and will certainly contribute to making this evening one to remember! Music will begin at 6:00 PM. For questions simply reach out to OKI Recreation Center Supervisor, Carrie Winkler at [cwinkler@oakislandnc.com](mailto:cwinkler@oakislandnc.com).

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## Mardi Gras By The Sea Festival

**WHEN:** Saturday, February 26, 2022 • Noon - 4:00 PM

**WHERE:** Middleton Park (SE 46th Street & E Dolphin Drive)

**COST:** Free to attend (vendor fees vary)

**ABOUT:** One of the most anticipated and celebrated events in the Town of Oak Island returns for 2022 with even more fun and entertaining activities to offer! The 2022 Mardi Gras By The Sea Festival will feature a traditional parade, a full farmers and craft artisan market, special Kid Zone, and live music from The Back Porch Rockers. **NOTE:** The PARADE

starts at 1:00 PM on SE 64th St., and will travel down E Oak Island Dr., to end at SE 46th St.

To submit an application as a parade entry, or to become a market vendor, visit: [www.OakIslandNC.com/EVENTS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/EVENTS) and click on the links provided in the description.

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## 2022 Summer Concert Series

You've heard of "*Christmas in July*" well we're flipping the script, and giving you a taste of summer in January! The Recreation Department recently released the FULL Live Band Lineup for the **2022 Oak Island Summer Concert Series**.

**WHEN:** May 27 - September 3, 2022 • 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

**WHERE:** Middleton Park (SE 46th Street & E Dolphin Drive)

**COST:** FREE

**ABOUT:** The sun (*will be*) out, the fun (*will come*) back, and the "Bands by the Beach" (*will*) once again be ready to rock, groove, swing, and swoon their way through the soundtrack of your perfect summer! For 15 weeks, from May to September, we turn the amps up to "11" and come together for the annual Town of Oak Island Summer Concert Series.

For more information and to view the full Live Band Lineup, visit: [www.OakIslandNC.com/CONCERT](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/CONCERT), or click the link below.

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**PLEASE NOTE:** There are **MANY** fun, educational, and exciting events and programs planned for the month ahead (way too many to list here)! For a complete list of upcoming activities, contact the Recreation Department at **910-278-5518**, or visit the **EVENTS** page of the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/EVENTS](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/EVENTS), or just click the link below.

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# DIVISION FEATURE: STORMWATER ADMINISTRATOR

When you live on an island where the highest elevation above sea level depends entirely on who the tallest person near you is, there is one constant you will always be having to manage ... **water**. Particularly stormwater, as even moderate storms and showers can make for soggy street ends and full storm drains. That's why a good slice of the resources managed in the Public Works Department are devoted to the **Stormwater Division**.

The Stormwater Division of the Public Works Department serves to address stormwater runoff concerns throughout the Town's incorporated areas. As land continues to be developed, with less natural areas to absorb rainwater and filter out pollutants, it is important to understand, plan for, and respond to issues that can arise from this development. While opinions can vary on how much development is too much, one thing all sides agree on is that any development should be properly managed and accommodated for, when considering how it will impact the local environment. This goes for more than just residential homes. The paved surfaces of parking lots in hotels, businesses, and even Town facilities are all factors that must be calculated in when developing a comprehensive (*and successful*) Stormwater Management Program.

The Town of Oak Island maintains a Stormwater Management Program, which is overseen by a Stormwater Administrator, working under the Public Works Director. Improving water quality, reducing flooding to protect people and property, reducing demand on public stormwater drainage systems, and supporting healthy ecosystems are the primary goals of the Program. The Administrator works closely with Development Services, Public Utilities, and several other Town departments to review and respond to potential impacts from both new construction and existing infrastructure.

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**PROFILE:** *Stormwater Administrator:* Rick Patterson has worked in conservation and land planning for over 27 years; most of which through the Soil Conservation Service (now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service) an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). His knowledge and skillset have paved the way for work in a number of exciting locales. This wide variety includes the islands of Oahu and Kauai in Hawaii, the forests of Northern California and Oregon, and the mountains of West Virginia.

Despite having lived in many beautiful and high profile locations, it was Oak Island that caught his eye as the perfect destination for post-retirement life. He and his family have greatly enjoyed living here for the past couple of years. "*We love the area's climate, location, food, beaches, and tidal marsh*

*areas" says Patterson, on what keeps them here. "We believe Oak Island is a great coastal Town."*

You don't have to talk to Rick very long however, to understand his work ethic was never going to let the retired lifestyle last. As someone who admittedly prefers being outdoors and can't stop learning about nature and natural processes, sitting at home just wasn't going to cut it. That's why in late 2021 when the Stormwater Administrator position became available, it was an obvious opportunity for Patterson to use his knowledge and experience to benefit his new hometown.

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***It's personal.*** As the Town's Stormwater Administrator, Rick Patterson must find the balance between public needs, desired development, and overall sustainability.

Environmental impacts are an equal concern for residents, business owners, and regulating agencies, but each for different reasons. As a Town resident and now an employee, it's both important and personal to Patterson to address those concerns in a way that benefits everyone, but keeps the health of the ecosystem a top priority.

*"I hope my experience and abilities to work with individuals and groups will help to improve and strengthen our Stormwater Management Program."*

The one tool Rick uses the most when working with those individuals and groups is the Natural Resources Conservation Service's ***Soil Survey***. The first Soil Survey of Brunswick County was completed in 1937, and most recently updated in 2004. This tool aids in helping Rick determine how certain areas will react to certain development, and then plan accordingly. The Soil Survey is available Stormwater Division page of the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/STORMWATER](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/STORMWATER).

The primary and most vital responsibility of the Division is stormwater mitigation. Mitigation is the use of a variety of

stormwater mitigation. Mitigation is the use of a variety of resources and best practices to help minimize the harmful effects of stormwater runoff to the local environment. These efforts help to protect wetlands and aquatic ecosystems, improve the quality of receiving waterbodies, conserve water resources, protect public health, and provide flood control.



Stormwater Management is more than simply digging ditches and directing waterflow. There's some serious math involved. For example, one inch of rain from a 1,200 square foot area can generate up to 600 gallons of runoff. That means a 6,000 square foot lot built with 80% impervious surface (up to 4,800 square feet), will create approximately 2,400 gallons of storm water runoff for each inch of rain. Multiply that by the thousands of homes within the Town limits, divided against

the available land space for drainage, and it quickly becomes apparent how things can go awry if not managed carefully. In addition to being an expert mathematician, the Stormwater Administrator also has to perform a balancing act that would impress the most famous of tightrope walkers. Growth and development are the lifeblood of any successful Town, especially one that thrives on the revenue generated from visitors. However, that growth can seriously be halted when pollution, outright lack of care, or other environmental damages makes the area undesirable, or even unlivable. To that effect, modern development of resources and environmental stewardship must go hand in hand, particularly when it comes to managing growth. By ensuring that homeowners and businesses work together to both improve water quality and reduce the amount of stormwater runoff, the entire community as a whole will benefit even as the area

develops.

Mathematician, balancing act, and now *community organizer*.

There's a lot of hats the Stormwater Administrator must wear.

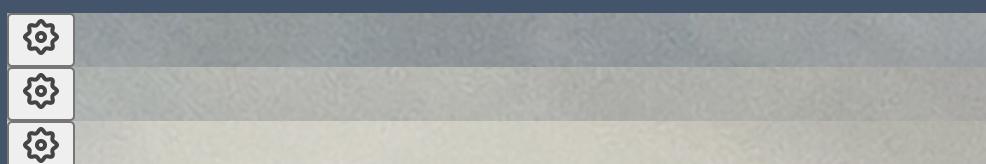
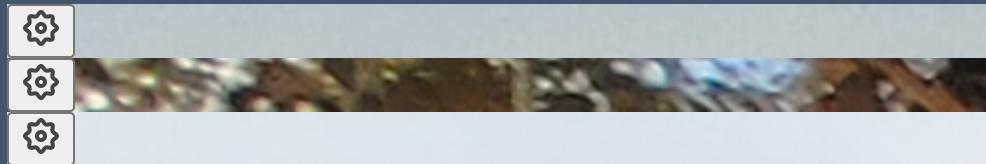
With runoff being the number one source of water pollution in North Carolina, it provides the transit for silt, oil, pesticides, animal waste, and other hazardous chemicals to flow directly into local waters. This often has devastating effects that are immediately visible from construction, industry, or other "high-profile" sources of pollution, but even on the small scale things add up. While the Stormwater Division works hard to prevent and mitigate these effects, there are a variety of measures that anyone can do to exercise responsible stewardship. From the way homeowners manage their yards, to the ways businesses operate, there is a wealth of information available from the Stormwater Division on best practices, both large and small, that can have positive impacts.

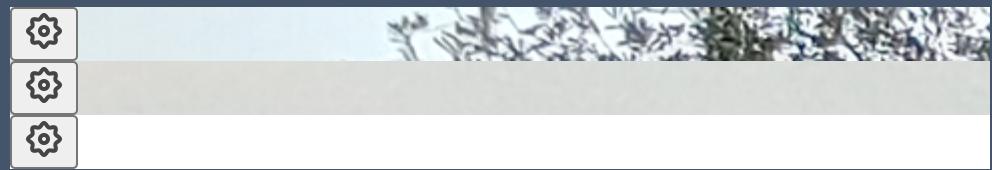
Information on how you can improve your "stormwater footprint" or other stormwater related questions can be submitted to the Administrator directly, by calling 910-201-8052. You can also fill out and submit a Division Contact form provided on the Stormwater Division page of the Town Website at [www.OakIslandNC.com/STORMWATER](http://www.OakIslandNC.com/STORMWATER) or by clicking the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



# PHOTO REVIEW: DECEMBER 2021





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