

# MANAGER'S MONTHLY



JANUARY 2023

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# MESSAGE FROM YOUR MANAGER

I truly hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and wish all our residents a Happy New Year filled with health, wealth, and much happiness. As I jump into my fifth year as Town Manager, I am very honored to be serving the residents and the Town Commission and am excited to help the community achieve its goals for the future, primarily the commencement of our own Fire Rescue Department.

We are in the final design and construction planning stages for our new state-of-the-art, two-story Fire Station that will transform the Town Hall Complex. Site planning finalization will be quickly followed by construction, which is set to begin in April 2023 and is anticipated to last 12 months, concluding just in time for the May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 go-live date established for our Fire Rescue Department. The Commission will be providing more updates as it relates to construction over the coming weeks and as always, I encourage residents to visit our [website](#) to stay up to date on Town news and events.



At the first Town Commission meeting of the year, the Commission discussed the recent state law pertaining to Building Certification. The state law not only requires condominium buildings to be inspected and then reinspected to ensure structural and electrical integrity of the building, but to also set aside significant reserves for future capital projects. The Commission found the reserve requirement to be an overreach by the state government since condominium buildings themselves must now be inspected and certified every seven years, with discovered structural issues remedied within a year. Following their discussion, the Commission authorized Mayor Hillman to send a letter to our local legislatures encouraging them to remove the reserve requirement and make it optional.

The Town Commission also kicked off 2023 by starting its annual strategic planning process, whereby the Commission evaluates and prioritizes a multitude of important initiatives and projects. The strategic priorities plan that is developed from this process provides the roadmap for the work to be completed by staff and how Town resources are to be effectively allocated. Besides the establishment of our new Fire Rescue Department and construction of a new Fire Station, major initiatives include collective bargaining with our two employee unions, development of a five-year financial forecast model, upgrade of the Town website, design of Town entry signs, and capital improvement planning.

Each of the ranked initiatives and projects fall into four strategic operational categories that identify the department and appointed boards responsible for implementation:

- Organizational Excellence
- Public Infrastructure & Resiliency

- Community Safety
- Community Enrichment & Sustainability

Another important element of the strategic priorities plan is the vision, mission, motto, and organization values that together indicate who we are, where we are going, and what we strive to be while delivering public services. I encourage residents to review the strategic priorities plan.

Vision: The Town of Highland Beach is a beautiful safe harbor in paradise whose residents never leave.

Mission: To provide exceptional governance and municipal services, in partnership with our residents, in a fiscally responsible manner with an emphasis on planning for the future.

Motto: Three Miles of Paradise

Values:

Help citizens live a better life by providing a safe and secure community.

Inclusiveness – we respect people, value diversity and are committed to equality.

Give exceptional citizen service.

Honor public trust through ethical behavior, transparency, and servant leadership.

Lead with integrity at every level.

Assure fiscal responsibility and accountability.

Nurture and respect our natural environment.

Deliver services through collaborated efforts and coordinated actions.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HIGHLAND BEACH?

### Save the Date – FDOT Public Meeting

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be holding a Public Meeting in reference to the SR-A1A Resurfacing Project on Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in the Town Library.

### Board Vacancies

Board of Adjustment & Appeals – Two (2) vacancies for three-year terms

Financial Advisory Board – One (1) vacancy for unexpired term ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and one (1) vacancy for unexpired term ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board – Two (2) vacancies for unexpired terms ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024



Residents interested in serving on an Advisory Board or Committee can submit a Board Application to the Highland Beach Town Clerk's Office no later than 4:30 PM on Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Board Applications are available online at [www.highlandbeach.us](http://www.highlandbeach.us) or in the Town Clerk's Office.

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

### Community Art Program

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

### Town Entry Signage Design Contest Key Dates

Now until February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – Submit your design idea for the Town of Highland Beach Entry Signs by dropping off a hard copy at Town Hall or emailing [TownSign@highlandbeach.us](mailto:TownSign@highlandbeach.us).

February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – Last day to submit designs.

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

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

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



## TOWN CLERK

### 2023 Election Information

The next Municipal General Election (nonpartisan) is Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The purpose is to vote for a Commissioner for a three-year term ending March 2026, and a Commissioner for an unexpired term ending March 2024. Note: Early voting is not available for municipal elections.

The Town's qualifying period ended on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, at noon, and candidate Douglas Hillman



(incumbent) ran unopposed for the office of Mayor-Commissioner. Therefore, Mayor Hillman shall be deemed to have voted for himself per Florida Statutes 101.151(7).

Note: To be eligible to vote on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, you must be a registered voter in Highland Beach and in Precinct 2801. All Highland Beach registered voters should ensure that their correct address is on file with the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Office. Per Florida Statutes, Section 101.6103, the United States Postal Service cannot forward Vote-by-Mail ballots.

### Vote-By-Mail

Voters who wish to receive a Vote-by-Mail ballot for 2023 through 2024 elections must complete a new Vote-by-Mail ballot request. Any registered voter can Vote-by-Mail. By law, special accommodations are available for military and overseas voters and voters with disabilities. For additional information on Vote-by-Mail or to request a Vote-by-Mail ballot, please contact Wendy Sartory Link Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections at <https://www.pbcelections.org/Voters/Vote-By-Mail>, (561) 656-6200 (Office number), (561) 656-6230 (Fax number), or visit the PBCSOE office in person.



### Important Dates and Deadlines

- Deadline to register to vote is on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Deadline to request a Vote-by-Mail ballot be mailed to you is 5:00 PM on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Deadline to return a Vote-by-Mail ballot is 7:00 PM on Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### Become a Poll Worker

If you are interested in becoming a Poll Worker and would like to work during Highland Beach Municipal Elections, please contact the Wendy Sartory Link Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Office at <https://www.pbcelections.org/Poll-Workers/Requirement>, the Poll Worker Department at (561) 656-6200, option 3, or by email at [pollworker@votepalmbeach.gov](mailto:pollworker@votepalmbeach.gov) to review requirements, positions, and to submit an application.

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).

# BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Since the 1970s, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) have saved thousands of lives and have helped cut the number of home electrocutions in half.

GFCIs are electrical safety devices that trip electrical circuits when they detect ground faults or leakage currents. A person who becomes part of a path for leakage current will be severely shocked or electrocuted. These outlets prevent deadly shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs by even a slight amount from that returning.

A GFCI should be used in any indoor or outdoor area where water may come into contact with electrical products. The National Electrical Code currently requires that GFCIs be used in all kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and outdoors.

Even today's modern electrical devices are subject to the basic principles of electricity. One of the most important being – water and electricity don't mix! Luckily, there is a technology available to help protect you from this shocking hazard. In fact, Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters have been providing this type of protection to consumers since the early 1970s.

## What is a ground fault?

A ground fault is an unintentional electrical path between a power source and a grounded surface.

These leakage currents usually occur when an electrical appliance is damaged or the electrical parts are wet, causing electrical current to flow outside of the circuit conductors. If your body provides a path to the ground for this current, you could be burned, severely shocked, or electrocuted.

## What are ground fault circuit interrupters, or GFCIs?

GFCIs are electrical safety devices that are designed to protect people from electric shock and electrocution. Typically, GFCIs are installed in areas where water and electricity are in close

## CODE TIP OF THE MONTH: STORMWATER

Here are a couple tips for dealing with the typical ponding and puddles that arise during heavy downpours. First, make sure that when bulk trash and tree trimmings are placed out every week, they do not obstruct the flow of water to the storm drains. Under no circumstance should bulk trash be placed directly on top of the storm drain grates located on the swale next to the road. Bulk trash should never be placed on the street or sidewalk, but instead should be placed on the grass adjacent to the road. This will allow stormwater runoff to easily flow out to the intracoastal waterway and into grassy swales instead of restricting flow and causing flooding. Second, investing in a rain sensor for your irrigation system, or manually turning your sprinklers off before or after rain events will prevent excess flooding and unnecessary water usage. Ensuring that your yard is not saturated with water by limiting each zone to no more than 15 minutes and operating between the hours of 12:00 AM and 6:00 AM will allow moderate amounts of rainwater to be absorbed into the ground more easily. Of course, make sure all sprinkler heads and pipes are intact and not flowing large amounts water into the ground. Third, creating more pervious space with plants and other vegetation on your property allows water to be absorbed into the ground instead of being directed to roadways and sidewalks. Ensure that your gutter system is operating properly, and the runoff is directed to these pervious areas. The more paved, impervious land that is created, the worse the impact of rainfall will be on all other areas. Ultimately, when mother nature decides to unleash the deluge, there is not much we can do to stop all the water accumulation, but following these tips can help improve the ability of the ground to absorb the water and channel it off the roads and sidewalks.

proximity, such as the bathroom, kitchen, garage, basement, and outdoors. They are especially useful for cord-connected appliances and equipment used outdoors or near water.

#### How do GFCIs work?

GFCIs prevent deadly shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs by even a slight amount from that returning, indicating a loss of current.

#### Are they effective?

Since the 1970s, GFCIs have saved thousands of lives and have helped cut the number of home electrocutions in half. Since first including a home GFCI requirement in 1971, the National Electrical Code (NEC) has continually expanded the requirements to include additional locations. The NEC currently requires that GFCIs be used in all kitchens, bathrooms, garages, basements, crawlspaces, and outdoors.

#### Is it cost effective to switch to GFCIs?

GFCI outlets are generally inexpensive, starting under \$15.

#### Can I install them myself?

GFCIs should only be installed by a licensed, qualified electrician. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and provide flexibility in using receptacles that are not GFCI-protected. They are commonly used outdoors.

To learn more about GFCIs, please visit [www.esfi.org/ground-fault-circuit-interrupters-gfci/](http://www.esfi.org/ground-fault-circuit-interrupters-gfci/).

## FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

"The plan to organize the Highland Beach Fire Rescue Department is proceeding on schedule. We have taken delivery of the new fire rescue medical transport unit and signed a contract to purchase a 107-foot Pierce Ascension Ladder Truck to support the current unit operated by Delray Beach Fire Rescue. The team also finalized the graphics for the emergency response vehicle. We are excited to unveil the design to the residents soon.



Fire Station construction is also proceeding at an accelerated pace. The location has been finalized, and the design documents are being developed for permitting. We expect to begin construction by the end of the first quarter of 2023.

It takes a great deal of effort and leadership to bring this complicated project to fruition. This much progress would not be possible without the enthusiastic support of the elected leadership, the Town Manager's executive team, and the whole Highland Beach community. We appreciate your support." -Glenn Joseph, Fire Chief



# LIBRARY

The library is the perfect place to unwind after the busy holiday season. Our January calendar is full of fun cultural events (all begin at 5:30 PM unless noted):

- January 12<sup>th</sup> Art Exhibit: Meet the Artists Reception from 5:00 – 7:00 PM
- January 17<sup>th</sup> Movie: 1917
- January 19<sup>th</sup> Concert: Duo Beaux Arts (4-hands classical piano)
- January 31<sup>st</sup> Movie: The Father

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



## HIDDEN HEROES TOWN

The Town of Highland Beach is proud to honor and serve all of our veterans and their families. With that sentiment in mind, we are very happy to announce that we have officially become a “Hidden Heroes Town”, an initiative of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation that offers health and wellness resources and aid to veterans and their caregivers. For more information, please visit [www.hiddenheroes.org](http://www.hiddenheroes.org) and [www.highlandbeach.us/veteranheroes](http://www.highlandbeach.us/veteranheroes) or contact Commissioner John Shoemaker by phone at (561) 859-2686 or via email at [jshoemaker@highlandbeach.us](mailto:jshoemaker@highlandbeach.us) or Town Clerk Lanelda Gaskins at (561) 278-4548 or [lgaskins@highlandbeach.us](mailto:lgaskins@highlandbeach.us).



# "VETERAN GIVES SERVICE TO HIGHLAND BEACH" BY COMMISSIONER SHOEMAKER

Although David Stern graduated from Pace College in New York City and was given an opportunity to start his career with a good job offer in retail supply management, in 1963 Dave decided to join the Army Reserve and fulfill his military service.

A quiet, unassuming man, Dave went to basic training and then on to Fort Dix in New Jersey for his six months of active duty before continuing his full six years in the Army Reserves. While he enlisted as a private, he soon worked his way up to Staff Sergeant. He was also assigned to the "Special Reserve Force" as a Supply Sergeant.

As many in the military know, the US Armed Forces' success over the years was very much dependent on its outstanding logistical capability, unmatched by any country in the World.

Looking back, Dave said that one aspect that has stuck with him all his life is the focus on leading a disciplined life of exercise. And sure enough, today, he still weighs less than when he enlisted in the Army.



Being in Army logistics/supply was a perfect start to a career that would continue for decades after the Army and began with a focus on supply operations for several retail companies. He would hold positions from Vice President to Executive Vice President and President. Brand names included Abraham & Straus to the multi-billion-dollar operations of the "Ross Stores" as Vice President of Store Communications and store planning.

Even after he retired, Dave did not rest. He has served the community of Highland Beach over the years holding volunteer positions as a member of many boards/teams including the Water Plant Audit team; member of the Charter Review Board; and both member and later Chairman of the Board of Adjustment and Appeals; member and later Chairman of the Code Enforcement Board, and a member and later Chairman of the Financial Advisory Board.



That kind of track record supported his recent appointment by the Town Commission to fill the vacancy when Commissioner Peggy Gossett-Seidman won the election to our State Legislature.

While doing all of that, Dave has also been active as President of the Temple Sinai in Delray Beach, and currently serves as an Arbitrator for the FINRA (Financial Industry Regulatory Authority).

If that is not enough, Dave is currently the President of the beautiful Highland Place Condominium Association.

All of this demonstrates a commitment to service and Highland Beach has greatly benefited from his contributions. It also points to the fact that the Town has many open positions on various Boards needing residents who will utilize their backgrounds and skills to assist our town in dealing with a myriad of needs as we deal with typical challenges on a barrier island in Florida.

Dave and his wife, Judy, love Highland Beach. They have two married sons, one a Superior Court Judge in R.I. and the other in Real Estate in Florida. In addition, they have a total of five grandchildren.

Judy owned a Flower shop in New Jersey and had previously sold real estate. When they moved to Florida she went back to real estate and became a Broker for Prudential.

When David and Judy moved to Florida in 1988, they purchased a home in the Woodfield Country Club in Boca Raton. When they visited the beautiful town of Highland Beach, they immediately decided that it was the place they wanted to live. They moved to the "Clarendon Condominium" and settled in but later left for a great job opportunity in California.

However, they never forgot Highland Beach and after Dave retired in 2000 they moved back to the "Highlands Place Condominium" in Highland Beach, where they presently reside.



Dave's commitment to service for the community is proven by decades of volunteer work and is always ready to join in efforts to make us all proud of our town.

He is a Veteran hero who makes us proud.







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