

MANAGER'S MONTHLY



SUMMER 2023

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MESSAGE FROM YOUR MANAGER

With the foundation and footings of Fire Station 116 set in place, the Town Commission launched the summer season with discussion of the preliminary Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY 24) budget at the June 20th regular meeting. The FY 24 balanced budget that was presented does not require a tax increase or the unplanned use of cash reserves. The recommended millage rate is 3.5875 mills, which is the same as last year.

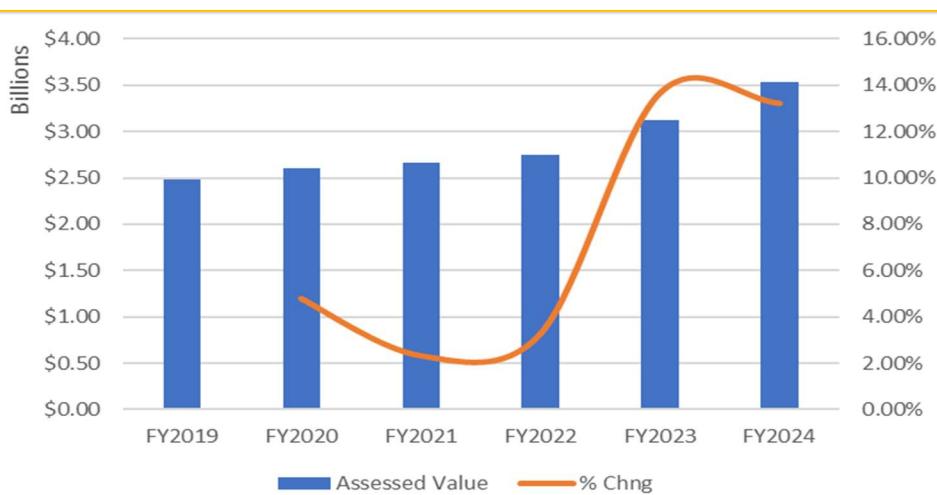


The preliminary FY 24 budget projections show a balanced budget, with General Fund revenues and expenditures totaling \$21,036,034 (a 35% increase over the previous fiscal year). The budget for all funds is \$30,496,710, which includes the General Fund, Water/Sewer Fund, Building Department Fund, and Discretionary Sales Tax Fund. The year-over-year increase in the General Fund is driven by the cost of implementing the new Fire Rescue Department, an increase in solid waste collection rates, and debt service costs for the \$5 million loan associated with the construction of the new fire station.

The Town experienced a 13.3% growth in the taxable value, strengthening the revenue side of our budget. The growth of taxable value is welcomed, as it will support the increase in costs driven by the implementation of the new Fire Rescue Department. The increase in expenses related to the new department is for FY 24 only and will not be repeated

in future years, since the Town will need to carry two Fire Rescue Departments for a period as we transition from Delray Beach to our own department.

We are proud to report that the Town's financial health continues to remain very strong, and we are well positioned to handle the implementation of the new Fire Rescue Department and complete



construction of our new fire station. Our financial position allows us to continue to undertake critically needed capital improvement projects and complete the strategic priorities established by the Commission, all while facing inflationary and uncertain economic conditions.

It is our financial position that has assisted us in being recognized as the **Safest City in Florida**, named a top ten place to retire in Florida, and known as a community with one of the lowest tax rates in the county.

The FY 24 budget is structured on the dynamic five-year financial forecast model (a strategic priority project), developed to ensure the Town's financial position remains healthy, its millage rate stable, and utility system self-sufficient now and well into the future.

The FY 24 budget includes several Capital Projects:

- Beach Erosion/Dune Management Study
- Drinking Water Well Repairs
- Lift Station No. 2 and No. 3 Rehabilitation
- New Town Entry Signs
- Water Meter Replacements
- Public Safety Cameras
- Road & Bridge Repairs
- Generator Repairs
- Library Sewer Repair



The next step in the budget process is the July 18th public hearing that will establish the tentative maximum millage rate of 3.5875, followed by a budget presentation to the Financial Advisory Board on July 27th. The process concludes with public hearings on September 5th for a final presentation and first readings of resolutions to adopt the budget and final millage rate, and September 20th for second and final readings to adopt the budget and final millage rate.

Special Note: The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has awarded the Town its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its continued commitment to strong financial management and planning, and for use of sound budgeting principles.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HIGHLAND BEACH?

Upcoming Agenda Items (Subject to Change and Additional Items may be Added)

July 18th, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

- Fire Rescue Implementation Update – Town Manager (Recurring until project completion)
- FDOT RRR Project Update – Town Manager (Recurring until project completion)
- Approval to purchase two (2) LUCAS devices for Fire Rescue Department in the amount of \$43,407.74
- Approval to purchase Locution system for the fire station in the amount of \$104,196.00
- Second/Final Read: Property Maintenance Code Ordinance
- Continued discussion of legal opinion on Milani Settlement Agreement Extension (Non-Park Property)
- Discussion of Troiano family request for lot split
- Discussion of revisions to Fire Code
- First Reading of Levy & Setting of the Tentative Maximum Millage Rate
- Amendment to fee schedule to reflect new water and sewer rates effective 10/01/2023

- Approve the Mayor to authorize a professional services agreement with Capital City Consulting, LLC for lobbying services

August 1st, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

- Updated FY 2024 Budget presentation
- Discussion of legal opinion on communication of referendum questions
- Discussion on Canvassing Board activities
- Discussion of the renewal of T-Mobile Lease Agreement
- Consideration of unity of title
- First Read: Fire Code
- Ratification of FOP Collective Bargaining Agreement (Tentative)
- FY 2022 Audit presentation

August 15th, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

- Discussion of ordinance workflow
- Discussion of special magistrate
- Final Read: Fire Code
- Resolution adopting schedule of fees for FY 2024
- Healthcare Plan Approval

Board Vacancies

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

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

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

COMMUNITY

Hurricane season began June 1st and goes on until November 30th, and the National Weather Association predicts for this hurricane season a "40% chance of a near-normal season, a 30% chance of an above-normal season and a 30% chance of a below-normal season. NOAA is forecasting a range of 12 to 17 total named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher)". Regardless of predictions, it takes only one devastating storm to make it a "bad" hurricane season. The Highland Beach PD has a clear message -



HAVE A PLAN & BE PREPARED! With that said, it is critical that you take the time now to obtain supplies and prepare your homes and families, not when a storm is already threatening. To be prepared and understand the necessary actions that need to be taken in the event a storm threatens us, it is important to know about Hurricane Watches and Warnings, and the differences between them. A Hurricane Watch indicates that hurricane storm conditions are possible in the specified geographic areas within 48 hours. A Hurricane Warning indicates that hurricane storm conditions are expected in the specified area usually within 36 hours. Hurricanes are categorized by wind strength on the Saffir-Simpson Scale:

Category 1 storm on the scale storm means wind speeds range from 74 mph to 95 mph.

Category 2 storm brings winds of 96 mph to 110 mph.

Category 3 storm equates to winds of 111 mph to 130 mph.

Category 4 storm has winds of 131 mph to 155 mph.

Category 5 storm is the highest on the scale, with winds greater than 155 mph.

As a barrier island, Highland Beach is in a MANDATORY EVACUATION ZONE when Hurricanes rated as a Category 2 or higher are expected to make landfall. The Town of Highland Beach follows Palm Beach County's Emergency Operations Center Evacuation orders and policies. The Town has a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, and Town staff are trained and prepared for hurricanes or any other natural or manmade disasters that may occur. Additionally, our dedicated members of the CERT Program are trained and ready to assist the Town should it become necessary. For the last several hurricane seasons, the Town's CodeRED notification system has been the most effective means of disseminating critical and timely information to our residents. If you have not yet done so, please make it a priority to register for CodeRED through the Town's [website](#) or by visiting Town Hall or the Police Department.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Highland Beach PD would like to remind all residents that while fireworks are legal for the 4th of July, please EXERCISE CAUTION when handling them. Misuse or negligence when handling fireworks can result in severe injuries or death. Please also note that FIREARMS ARE NOT FIREWORKS! Shooting firearms into the air in place of fireworks is both illegal and deadly. Every year, people nationwide are injured or killed by stray bullets shot in celebration. Let's celebrate Independence Day safely in Highland Beach!



FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT



"I am excited to announce that the Fire Rescue Department has recruited two new staff members: Matt Welhaf, Assistant Chief – Community Risk Reduction and Silvi Pierre, Administrative Coordinator. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce both of them to the community and give brief bios for each that show why I think they will be valuable additions to our team. I will start with Mr. Welhaf.

Matt is our new Assistant Chief, overseeing Community Risk Reduction and acting as a Fire Marshal. Matt's role in Community Risk Reduction aims to prevent and reduce all hazards, not just limited to those related to fires, and to have both the Fire Rescue Department and residents

prepared to handle emergency situations safely and effectively. He has 28 years of Fire Rescue experience, including 22 years with Boca Raton Fire Rescue, where he was the Assistant Fire Chief/Fire Marshal for six years.

Matt has a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Arizona State University, holds the Executive Fire Officer Certificate from the National Fire Academy, and achieved the Fire Marshal Designation from the Center for Public Safety Excellence. He also holds several State Certifications in Fire Safety and Emergency Medical Services. Matt also serves on two State Boards. He is Chairman of the Fire Code Advisory Council and serves on the Fire Code Interpretation Committee.

Matt is excited to share his extensive skills and expertise to protect the residents of Highland Beach. His priority is to ensure a smooth transition of services from Delray Beach Fire Rescue to Highland Beach Fire Rescue. In the coming months, he will be visiting all the condominium boards to assess their needs and provide guidance on fire prevention and emergency preparedness. Based on their feedback and comments, Matt will develop and implement an all-hazards community risk reduction program, customized to fit the specific needs of this community.

Let me now introduce our second new team member, Ms. Silvi Pierre. Silvi has an impressive educational and professional background that while not related directly to Fire Rescue, has provided her with the experience and skills to excel in her new role. She earned a bachelor's degree in Banking and Finance from the National Autonomous University and joined the Norwegian Refugee Council, a prestigious humanitarian organization, as an administrative assistant, where she soon proved to be a reliable and high-performing employee. She was promoted to Logistics Team leader and successfully managed a team of over ten staff for over five years.

Mr. Welhaf and Ms. Pierre are both top notch talents, and I am proud to add them to our Fire Rescue team. Please wish them both a warm welcome to Highland Beach!" –Glenn Joseph, Fire Chief

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

With hurricane season approaching, taking proactive steps to protect your home or condominium from potential damage is crucial. By preparing ahead of time, you can minimize risks and ensure the safety of your property and loved ones. These are the essential steps recommended to help you prepare for a hurricane.

1. Create a Family Emergency Plan

Start by developing a simple yet effective emergency plan with your family. Discuss evacuation routes and designate a meeting point in case you get separated. Keep a list of important contacts handy and ensure everyone understands the plan. Remember, a well-prepared family is a resilient family.

2. Secure Outdoor Items

Those strong hurricane winds can turn innocent objects into dangerous projectiles. Walk around your property and secure or store any outdoor items that could fly away, like patio furniture, potted plants, or garden tools. Also, give your trees a little trim to prevent any branches from causing damage to your home.

3. Reinforce Doors and Windows

Give your doors and windows some love by reinforcing them. Invest in storm shutters or plywood panels to protect against flying debris. This will help keep your home safe and minimize the risk of shattered glass. If you have hurricane impact-resistant windows, please ensure they're in good condition.

4. Check Your Roof

Your roof is your first line of defense against heavy rain and wind. Look closely for loose or damaged shingles, tiles, or other roofing materials. Fix any issues promptly to prevent water from sneaking into your home. Consider adding hurricane straps or clips for extra roof stability during strong winds.

5. Clear Out Gutters and Drains

Don't forget about your gutters and drains! Give them a good cleaning to remove any debris that might clog them up. Clogged gutters can pool water around your property, potentially causing flooding or water damage. Keep the water flowing smoothly by clearing the way.



6. Backup Important Documents

Prepare for the unexpected by making backup copies of your important documents. Take photos or scan identification papers, insurance policies, and property records. Store these copies in a waterproof and fireproof container or upload them to a secure cloud storage service. It's better to be safe than sorry!

7. Gather Emergency Supplies

Put together an emergency supply kit to cover your basic needs during a hurricane. Stock up on non-perishable food, drinking water, flashlights, batteries, a first aid kit, medications, and personal hygiene products. Aim for at least a three-day supply. It's always comforting to know you're well-prepared.

8. Stay Informed

Keep yourself informed about the latest weather updates and emergency announcements. Have a battery-powered weather radio or access reliable sources online. Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes and emergency shelters in your area. Knowledge is power, especially during a hurricane.

9. Evacuate When Ordered

The most important of all is to evacuate when the order is given. The safest place you can be is outside of the hurricane. If you choose to stay behind, you are not only putting yourself at risk but also emergency services (EMS). In addition, there are times during a hurricane when EMS is out of service and will be unable to respond to your emergency.

By taking the time to prepare your home or condominium before a hurricane, you greatly increase the chances of protecting your property and ensuring the safety of your loved ones. Remember to create a family emergency plan, secure outdoor items, reinforce doors and windows, check your roof, clear out gutters and drains, backup important documents, gather emergency supplies, and stay informed. Stay safe, be prepared, and weather the storm with confidence.

CODE TIP OF THE MONTH: CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER'S ROLE

Generally speaking, a Code Compliance Officer is responsible for evaluating, educating, and enforcing local codes. This can be in the form of answering questions, issuing violations and/or scheduling code violations for a public hearing. Even though a part of the job does result in violations, a code compliance officer's main objective is to ensure an attractive, lawful, and safe community.

Here are a few common code enforcement areas of interest: working without a permit, excess signage, and property maintenance and parking. Additionally, duties can include zoning regulations, construction planning and stopping unpermitted work. Between enforcing ordinances, rules, and regulations, our Town cannot run efficiently without code compliance.

Voluntary compliance is always the main goal for a Code Compliance Officer. For any questions or concerns relating to Highland Beach Code Compliance please contact Code Compliance Officer Adam Osowsky at 561-278-4540 or aosowsky@highlandbeach.us.

LIBRARY

We are excited to announce that our monthly Book Discussion Group will continue to meet year-round in a hybrid format! All are welcome to join in person or online on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm. The July 19 book is *The School for Good Mothers* by Jessamine Chan. Contact the library for more information.

The Friends of the Library are seeking volunteers to run the Art Exhibit Opening Receptions. Duties include shopping for supplies and setting up refreshment tables during the events, which take place approximately every two months. If interested, email Suzi Hayes at shayes@highlandbeach.us.

Upcoming events:

- July 6th Concert at 5:30 pm: Trio Ethos (classical)
- August 10th Concert at 5:30 pm: Beaux Arts Chamber Ensemble
- Saturdays at 10:30 am: Current Events Discussion Group

"HIGHLAND BEACH'S PUBLIC SAFETY HERO" BY JOHN SHOEMAKER

This is a story of a journey that started in Ajmer, in the Province of Rajasthan, India. Ajmer is located southwest of New Delhi, close to the Pakistan border, the birthplace of Dwayne Fernandes. Dwayne's father was from Goa, a State in southwestern India with coastlines stretching along the Arabian Sea. It has a long history as a Portuguese colony prior to 1961.



As an infant, Dwayne lived on a ship with his mother and father, a Chief Engineer and Merchant Mariner. During his early years, he traveled the oceans. Later, members of his family emigrated to New York, and eventually, Dwayne and his family followed. As fortune would have it, Dwayne's father got a job at IBM in Boca Raton during the early days of personal computers.

Dwayne went to St. John Paul High School in Boca Raton, and with his parent's approval, he joined the Marines at the age of seventeen. He wanted to join them since he thought they were the "toughest outfit" and "if I can make it with the Marines, I can make it through most anything in life," he said. He smiled

when he also admitted they have the best uniforms.

So, Dwayne went to Paris Island, S.C., and Tustin, CA, in 1986 and was selected to go to supply school based in Camp Lejeune, N.C., and later at the Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro, CA. This gave him a chance to learn all that is



involved in supply/parts support for Marine helicopters. Soon, he would be reassigned as an aviation supply clerk at bases in Okinawa and later at Subic Bay, Philippines.

Dwayne finished his enlistment as a Marine in October of 1990 and came back to Florida. With his experience in the Marines managing equipment and supporting a large organization, he took a low-entry, very low-paying job as a front desk clerk for the Delray Beach Police Dept. It would prove to be a time to show his discipline and work ethic while giving him the opportunity to read and study volumes of police reports. Soon the Chief of Police asked him if he would like to be a police officer.

While Dwayne was a Marine, there was no war to fight, but little did he know he would be directly involved in the drug war.

Returning from the Police Academy with high honors, he started in "Community Policing" on a bicycle. It was a time to learn, meet residents, and understand the community's problems and needs. One event propelled Officer Fernandes to public notice when he and his partner came across a home on fire. They immediately went inside to rescue what turned out to be an elderly, blind amputee. After being hospitalized and recovering from smoke inhalation, he was awarded the Medal of Valor.

Later, he was reassigned to Carver Estates in Delray, which at the time was a Federal Housing community with high crime. Again, working with the residents, his team dramatically reduced crime and was nominated for the Herman Goldstein Award. This led to another new assignment working with the DEA Task Force for three years. During that time, he was also an undercover agent dealing with drug problems in our area.

As a police officer in Delray, Officer Fernandes was awarded "Police Officer of the Year" six times. He did emphasize that he got excellent mentoring from another officer, Craig Hartmann. Currently, the Highland Beach Chief of Police,



at the time, Officer Hartmann was a Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and Major for the Delray Police Dept.

Chief Hartmann hired Officer Fernandes in 2009 on a part-time basis and became full-time in 2020. Today, Officer Fernandes is

our town's Detective and supports investigations of crimes, background checks of personnel, crime analysis, IT requirements, and data management. He emphasized that with the outstanding support of our citizens, the Police provide continuous training while expanding to adjust to the growth of our area.

Detective Fernandes won Officer of the Year for Highland Beach in 2022.

It is true that Highland Beach is one of the safest communities in Florida and the U.S. The worst problems involve relatively minor "crimes of opportunity": cars unlocked and/or have key fobs in them, theft from open garages, thefts of bicycles, and such. However, there are significant crimes that don't happen in Highland Beach but hurt its residents, which are crimes of Internet fraud, especially among the elderly.

Detective Fernandes is a family man and has been married 28 years to Joan and with two daughters, Ilani and Leiani, both with college backgrounds. His wife works in correction compliance and as a fraud investigator at a credit union, while Dwayne's mother is a special education teacher in Boca Raton.

He has high praise for residents being so accepting and cooperative with the police department. He describes Highland Beach as a wonderful place with great community spirit. Detective Fernandes strongly believes that there is a foundation of mutual trust within the department and a level of camaraderie that creates an effective team spirit.

Detective Fernandes and the entire Police Department are strong evidence that we have an effective Public Safety Team that we can trust in a world of volatility and concern.

Clearly, they are our heroes who take the risks and prove their worth every day for our safety and security.

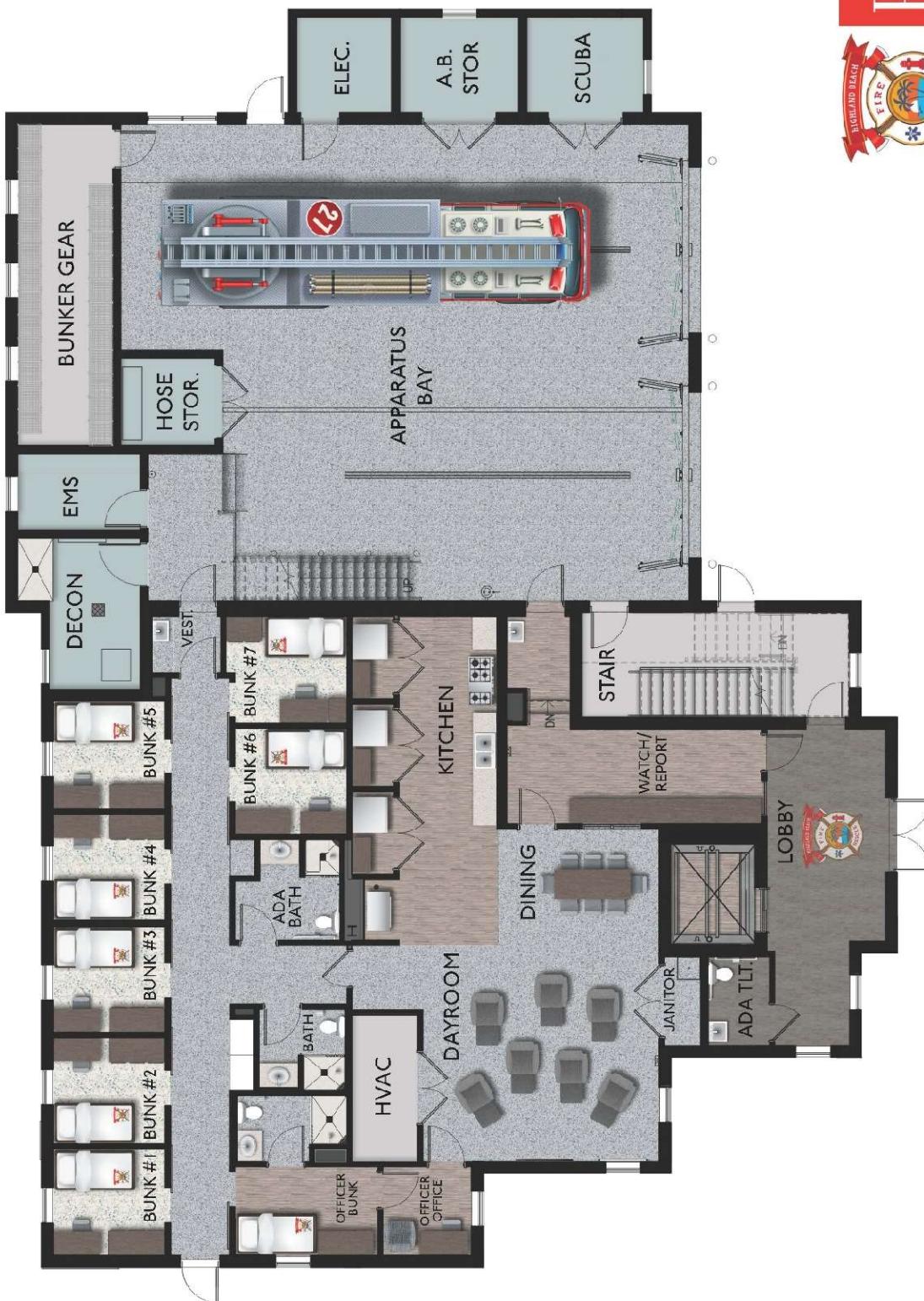
We salute all our police officers.



PGAL



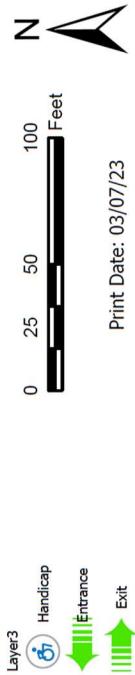
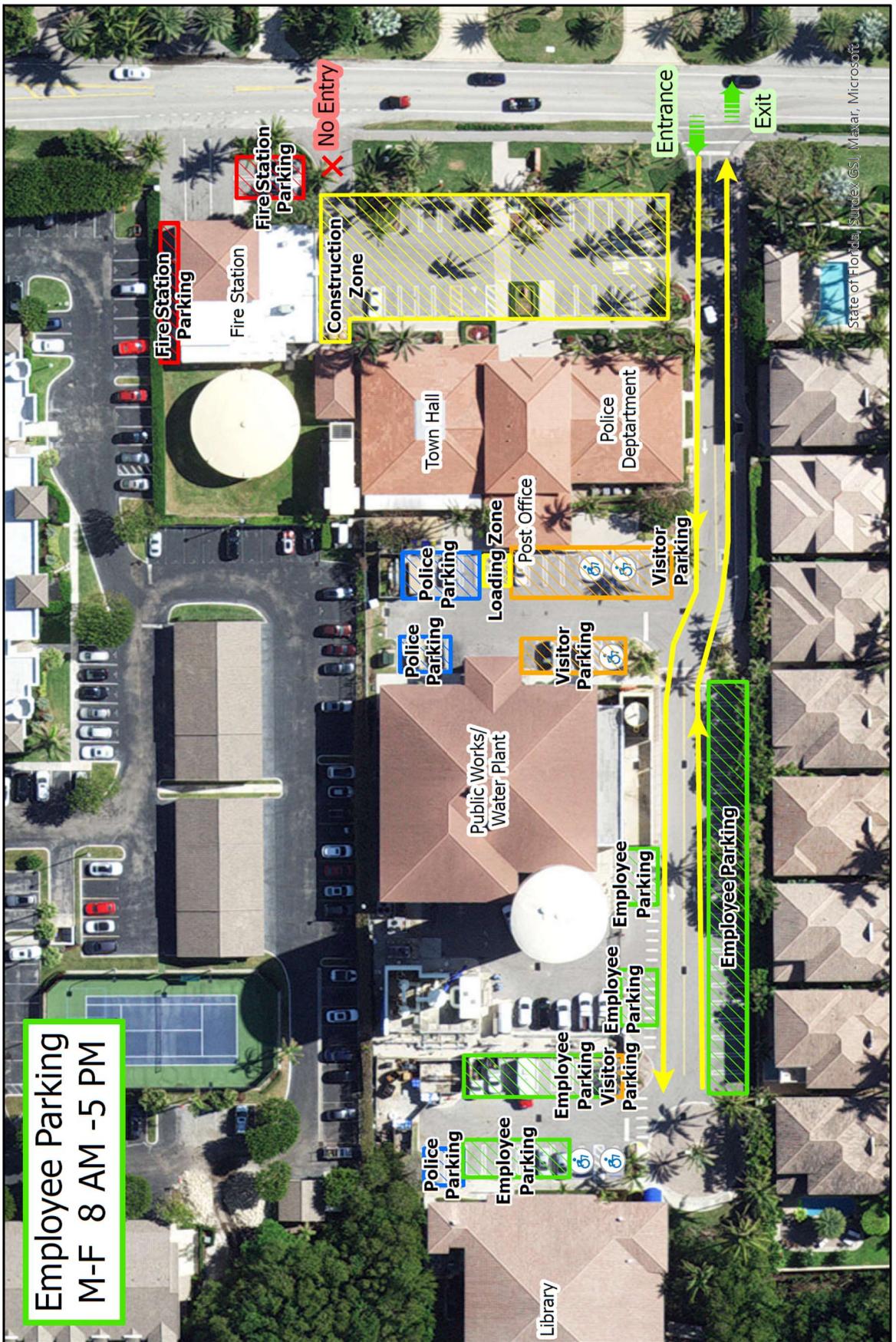
FIRST FLOOR PLAN





SECOND FLOOR PLAN





**Highland Beach
Parking Map**



Mayor Natasha Moore
Email: nmoore@highlandbeach.us
Cell: (561) 702-2650



Vice Mayor David Stern
Email: dstern@highlandbeach.us
Cell: (561) 664-0426



Commissioner Evalyn David
Email: edavid@highlandbeach.us
Cell: (561) 414-6109



Commissioner Judith Goldberg
Email: jgoldberg@highlandbeach.us
Cell: (561) 718-3468



Commissioner Don Peters
Email: dpeters@highlandbeach.us
Cell: (561) 718-3470