

TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH • JAN/FEB. 2025

MANAGER'S MONTHLY



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*SPECIAL AGENT COMES TO
HIGHLAND BEACH AND FAU*

MESSAGE FROM YOUR MANAGER

On behalf of the Town Commission and myself, I would like to extend a heartfelt Happy New Year to you and your family. As we embrace the promise of a new year, we are excited to continue fostering a strong and cherished relationship with all our residents. Our commitment to maintaining and strengthening this bond is at the core of everything we do, and we will never take your trust and support for granted.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the more than 1,500 residents who joined us on December 5 at St. Lucy Catholic Church to celebrate our 75th Anniversary Mingle & Jingle event. It was a delightful evening filled with live music, dancing, delicious food, and the warmth of cherished friendships—a true reflection of the vibrant spirit of our community and the beauty of our three miles of paradise. Special thanks to Father Horgan and St. Lucy Catholic Church for graciously hosting the event and exemplifying what it means to be an outstanding community partner.

Our “3 miles of Paradise” was recently recognized as the No. 2 Place to Retire in America and the No. 3 Place to Retire on the East Coast by two different groups. This recognition reflects the dedication of our residents and the Town Commission’s unwavering commitment to enhancing and protecting our exceptional beach community.



As we prepare to embrace the opportunities and challenges of 2024, we encourage everyone to enjoy the festivities around town. Please keep in mind the ongoing A1A Reconstruction Project, which may slightly impact travel times. While this temporary inconvenience might require a bit of patience, the result will be a brand-new roadway enhancing our town’s infrastructure for years to come.

Reflecting on the past year, Highland Beach has achieved significant milestones, including:

- The launch of our new Fire Rescue Department and construction of the new fire station.
- Securing state funding to upgrade aging infrastructure and improve our water treatment plant.
- Investing in community-wide public safety and security equipment.
- Enhancing police officer recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Strengthening our financial health without raising our millage rate for the fourth consecutive year and bolstering our reserves to safeguard against unforeseen economic changes and potential storm-related impacts.

We are proud to have achieved these strategic goals without increasing our local tax rate. Furthermore, the Town Commission has endorsed the Strategic Priorities Plan and Capital Improvement Plan for the upcoming year, ensuring alignment with our Five-Year Financial Forecast and reaffirming our commitment to prudent financial management

Looking ahead, we are seeking resident approval in an upcoming referendum to allocate up to \$3.5 million (budgeted funds, with no financing or tax rate increases) for two critical public safety projects:

1. A police/fire rescue marine unit docking facility at Town Hall, partially funded through a Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) Grant.
2. Rehabilitation of the old fire station and apparatus bays, which includes essential structural updates, equipment enhancements, and secure storage for over \$2 million worth of fire rescue vehicles.

These projects are vital to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of our public safety operations, ensuring our town remains a safe and vibrant community. The Town Commission deeply values its relationship with the residents and looks forward to continuing to earn your trust and support. Your input and engagement in these projects are essential to maintaining the high quality of life we all treasure.

Proposed Ballot Language:

SHALL THE TOWN BE AUTHORIZED TO EXPEND UP TO \$3,500,000 USING BUDGETED FUNDS FOR TWO PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS, INCREASE EFFICIENCY, PRESERVE CRITICAL PUBLIC SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENHANCE RESPONSE SERVICES, INCLUDING: (1) REHABILITATION OF THE OLD FIRE STATION/APPARATUS BAYS AND (2) CONSTRUCTION OF A PUBLIC SAFETY MARINE FACILITY FOR MARINE UNIT DOCKING AND WATER RESCUE SERVICES.

Finally, we're excited to announce that the Town Manager's Office is working on the development of the **"My Highland Beach"** app. This innovative tool will provide residents with an easy way to communicate with the town and access critical information—all in one convenient platform.

We thank you for your continued partnership and support. Please visit our website for updates and details, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. We look forward to working together to make 2025 a prosperous and fulfilling year for Highland Beach.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyous and prosperous New Year!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HIGHLAND BEACH?

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

- Strategic Priorities – FY2024-25 Updates
- Comprehensive Plan Update
- Continued Discussion of Marine Accessory Structure Ordinance Amendments
- FDOT RRR Project Updates
- Continued Discussion of Milani Park
- Referendum for Public Safety Projects - March 11, 2025
- MyHighlandBeach App Development

Board Vacancies

Board of Adjustment & Appeals - One (1) vacancy for a three-year term.

Code Enforcement Board – One (1) vacancy for a three-year term

One (1) vacancy for an unexpired term ending May 30, 2025.

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

Exciting Announcement: Highland Beach is Going Mobile with a New Mobile App Powered by GOGov!

We are pleased to announce that Highland Beach is enhancing citizen engagement with the launch of a brand-new mobile app.

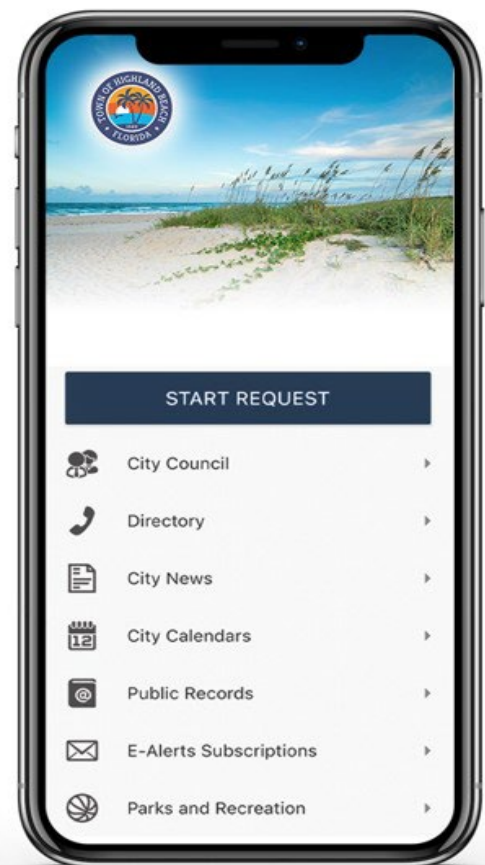
This app will serve as a central hub for staying informed and connected, providing convenient access to:

- News and updates
- Upcoming events
- Job opportunities
- Service interruptions and notifications
- Direct links to our website

In addition to offering timely information, the app empowers citizens to submit service requests with ease, streamlining communication between the community and municipal staff. This innovative tool will enable us to deliver updates and resources more efficiently, fostering a stronger connection with our residents.

The app will soon be available for download from both the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Stay tuned for more details as we prepare to launch this exciting new platform. We are confident that this initiative will enhance communication and bring our community closer together.



Board Member Spotlight – Fred Rosen (Board of Adjustment and Appeals)



I have been very fortunate to be a member of the BAA for the past four years, two years as Vice Chairman and one year to date as Chairman.

Born in Boston in 1942, attended the University of Miami and transferred to the Burdett School of Business in Boston.

I was in the home furnishings industry for over 40 years prior to joining an industry entrepreneur in starting a manufacturing company producing memory foam mattresses and pillows with factories in Tupelo MS, Elkhart IN and Rancho Cucamonga CA with corporate headquarters in West Long Branch NJ.

After retirement in 2005, my wife and I had the opportunity to travel extensively and enjoyed spending much time with my children and grandchildren.

After several seasons in Florida, we became snowbirds in Highland Beach and after the unfortunate death of my wife, I decided to make Highland Beach my home here at the Braemar Isle community in Boca Highland Beach Club and Marina.

I have enjoyed being involved with our community and our town and especially having had the opportunity to work on campaigns that helped elect Commissioner Evalyn David as well as working with my dear friend, Mayor Doug Hillman, doing projects on behalf of Highland Beach.

I look forward to many more years of serving this community and feel so lucky to live in such a well-run community with so many wonderful friends.

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT



Water-Related Fatalities in Florida: A Persistent Hazard

Unintentional drowning is a significant issue in Florida, which boasts numerous pools, lakes, rivers, and coastal areas. In 2023, the state's age-adjusted drowning rate was 2.0 per 100,000 people. Rip currents pose a particularly deadly threat along Florida's beaches, taking many lives each year. These powerful, fast-moving water channels can quickly pull swimmers away from shore and are challenging to spot and navigate. Public awareness of the dangers of rip currents and knowledge of escape techniques are critical for reducing these fatalities.

Key Causes of Rip Currents

Several factors, including wave action, tidal changes, and underwater topography cause rip currents on Florida's beaches. Uneven wave patterns create differences in water pressure, which form rip currents. High tides and features like sandbars can contribute to their development. These currents often lead to life-threatening conditions for swimmers, making it essential to swim near lifeguards who can identify and manage these risks.

Role of Wind in Rip Current Formation

Wind direction and speed significantly influence the formation of rip currents. Onshore winds increase the likelihood of these currents by pushing water toward the shore, which flows back out through narrow channels. These narrow channels of water flow are called rip currents. Strong winds create larger waves, intensifying the imbalances that lead to rip currents. Choppy, wind-driven wave conditions further amplify the strength and frequency of these dangerous water flows, especially in areas where local geography, such as sandbars or jetties, plays a role.

Staying Safe at the Beach

Beachgoers can enhance their safety by understanding rip current risks and monitoring environmental factors. It's essential to check local weather and surf reports for rip current warnings. Swimming near lifeguards, recognizing signs of rip currents, and knowing escape techniques are crucial for preventing tragedies. With increased awareness and precautions, many water-related fatalities in Florida can be avoided.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Home Security Systems



Nothing is more important than keeping loved ones safe in your home. Home security systems are a proven theft deterrence that protects your home and family from burglaries, fire, carbon monoxide, and even water damage.

Most residences in town have some type of home security system and the Highland Beach Police Department responds to **all** alarm calls. Regardless of the exact cause, there is **NO** charge for response to a false alarm. It is important to know that your home alarm does **NOT** need to be registered with the Town. Home security systems monitored by an alarm company will notify the police department if an alarm is activated and the company cannot contact the homeowner, or a valid passcode cannot be obtained. Your alarm company will notify the Highland Beach Police Department's dispatch center at **561 243-7800** and an Officer will be dispatched to your residence.

Though we live in a safe community where home burglaries are rare, they can and do occur. A home security system is a good option that is a proven theft deterrent that will also provide peace of mind for the safety and security of your home and your family.

If you need any further information or we can be of any assistance with your home security system, please feel free to contact the Highland Beach Police Department.



BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Who's Inspecting Your Project? Understanding Private Providers and Your Rights

The Highland Beach Building Department is dedicated to serving and protecting our residents by ensuring that all construction projects meet the highest safety standards and comply with Florida's building codes. However, recent legislative changes in Florida may impact how property inspections are conducted, and it's important to understand how these changes affect you as a homeowner.

What Changed with HB 267?

Effective January 1, 2025, Florida House Bill 267 introduced revisions to the laws governing the use of Private Providers—independent professionals hired by contractors to perform inspections and review plans. Under this new law, contractors are no longer required to notify or obtain written acknowledgment from property owners when opting to use Private Providers instead of municipal inspectors.

While Private Providers are licensed professionals and must adhere to Florida Building Code requirements, their direct employment by contractors introduces potential conflicts of interest. As the saying goes, relying on a contractor's Private Provider can be like letting the fox guard the henhouse.

The Highland Beach Building Department: Working for You

Unlike Private Providers, the Highland Beach Building Department works solely for the residents of Highland Beach. Our role is to ensure that every inspection is impartial, thorough, and focused on protecting your property, your family, and our community. We hold all contractors accountable and prioritize public safety above all else.



What Can You Do as a Homeowner?

When hiring a contractor, take these steps to stay informed and protect your interests:

- 1. Ask Who Will Be Performing Inspections.**

Confirm whether your project will be inspected by the Highland Beach Building Department or a Private Provider hired by the contractor.

- 2. Understand the Implications of Private Providers.**

Be aware that Private Providers are financially tied to the contractor and do not represent you, the homeowner.

- 3. Request Inspections by the Building Department.**

As a property owner, you can request that the Highland Beach Building Department conduct inspections to ensure accountability and impartiality.

Why This Matters

Choosing who conducts your inspections is more than just a procedural decision—it's about ensuring safety, quality, and peace of mind. Inspections performed by the Highland Beach Building Department are guided by a commitment to serve the public, not private interests. By selecting the Building Department for your inspections, you can trust that the work on your property is being scrutinized objectively and thoroughly.

Contact Us for Assistance

The Highland Beach Building Department is here to answer your questions and provide guidance. If you have concerns about inspections, permits, or recent legislative changes, call us at **561-278-4540**. Let us help you protect your property and ensure compliance with Florida's building codes.

Code Tip of the Month: Vacation Rentals

The Town of Highland Beach requires a Vacation Rental Certificate if you rent any unit, group of units, dwelling, or building(s) more than three (3) times in a calendar year for periods of less than 30 days or one calendar month, whichever is less, or which is advertised or held out to the public as a place regularly rented to guests. To submit for a Vacation Rental Certificate, you must upload into the Building Department's online portal, a completed Vacation Rental Certificate Application. A link to this Application and to the regulations for vacation rentals, as provided in Chapter 34 of the Town Code of Ordinances, are found on the Building Department webpage. The following Vacation Rental-related fees apply: • Registration fee: \$250.00 • Inspection fee: \$150.00 • Biennial renewal fee: \$100.00 *Additional fees for reinspection, change of agent and violations may apply. For questions relating to a Vacation Rental Certificate, contact the Building Department at 561-278- 4540.

PLANNING AND ZONING



Members of the Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board at the 75th Anniversary Mingle & Jingle Celebration.

For information on dune restoration and preservation, recycling, invasive species, sea turtles, and other environmental issues impacting Highland Beach, please visit the Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board webpage linked below:

<https://highlandbeach.us/260/Natural-Resources-Preservation-Advisory->

PUBLIC WORKS

Highland Beach Fact: Did you Know?

Highland Beach does not add fluoride to its drinking water as part of the water treatment process. The current natural level of fluoride in our drinking water is 0.023 ppm after it passes through our reverse osmosis water treatment system. This level of fluoride is far below the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 4.0 ppm.

Highland Beach's 3-million gallons per day (MGD) water plant uses the process of reverse osmosis to treat our water. The water plant utilizes the Floridan aquifer and draws water from 3 wells that are 1,200 feet deep. Although the water is very pristine, it is high in salinity (salt content).



To remove the salinity and other impurities, the raw well water passes through a series of membranes (filters). The system uses 300 horsepower pumps that force the water through the membranes at very high pressures, more than 350 pounds per square inch (psi). An anti-scalant is used to protect the membranes from a buildup of solids that would result in clogging, and phosphate is used as a corrosion inhibitor as protection for the piping.

Before the finished water enters the distribution system, acid is added for pH adjustment, and chlorine is used as a disinfectant.

The end result is that Highland Beach residents enjoy very pure, award winning, water that is crystal clear.

LIBRARY

Library News – January/ February 2025

The Town's 75th Anniversary celebrations continue at the library! Learn about our Town's history and natural resources at these events:

- February – April: History of Highland Beach exhibit
- January 30 from 5:00-7:00 pm: Meet Your Neighbors Reception for the All Highland Beach Community Art Show
- Lecture series (all at 5:30 pm):
 - February 25: History of Highland Beach by Janet DeVries Naughton
 - March 11: Shells of Highland Beach by Dr. Martin Shugar
 - April 10: Blackwater Diving Off the Coast by Linda Ianniello

Upcoming Events:

Concerts – at 5:30 pm

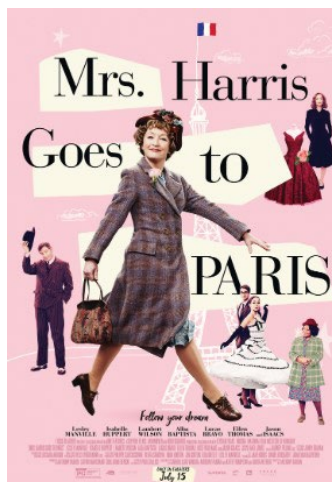
- January 23: Volta Group (classical)
- February 6: Mia's Sizzle Review (multimedia & piano)
- February 13: JayCee (cabaret)
- February 20: Sheila Browne & Roberta Rust (Shostakovich viola & piano)

Library Hours:

Monday – Thursday	10:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Friday	10:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Saturday	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Movies – at 5:30 pm

- February 4: Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris
- February 18: It Ends with Us



Ongoing Activities:

- Monthly Book Discussion Group: February 12 at 5:30 pm
- Dancercise: Mondays at 5:30 pm
- Yoga Flow with Mallory: Wednesdays at 5:00 pm
- Current Events Discussion Group: Saturdays at 10:30 am
- Learn to download eBooks: call for appointment
- Small Fry Story Time plus Crafts: Wednesdays at 4:30 pm, ages 4 and up
- Toddler Time - Stories and Rhymes: Saturdays at 10:30 am, ages 2 and 3

Call us at 561-278-5455 for more information.

Welcome to Yoga at Highland Beach

Join our local yogi Mallory Hope for a 60 minute calm yoga flow.

\$15/ per person. All ages and levels are welcome to join.

Please bring your own yoga mat, towel, & water.

Dates below for the upcoming Sunday morning sessions in front of town hall.

Class will be held outside.

Sunday January 26th 9:00-10:00 AM

Sunday February 9th 9:00-10:00 AM

Sunday February 16th 9:00-10:00 AM



Reminder: 60 Minute Calm Yoga Flow Wednesday weekly 5:00-6:00pm at Highland Beach Library

Connect with Mallory via email hello@malloryhopes.com

SPECIAL AGENT COMES TO HIGHLAND BEACH AND FAU

BY JOHN SHOEMAKER

In a continuing effort to recognize those Veterans who live in Highland Beach or serve our community, we share a short story about each and post it on our town website: [Veteran Heroes of Highland Beach | Highland Beach, FL](#) Please visit this tab to read stories and profiles of our citizens who have served or are serving our country and our town. Remember, we have heroes in our midst!



This story is about Jason Nadolinski, who was born in Buffalo, NY, moved to Florida in his youth, and attended high school in Coral Springs. Even as a junior in high school, Jason knew he wanted to join the U.S. Navy. In September 1990, he enlisted as a Seaman Recruit in Miami and was sent to the Navy Recruit Training Command in San Diego. He found it to be a surprising physical challenge and a culture shock.

Grinding it out, he learned the pride he felt at graduation in his dress blues. As fate would have it, Jason was selected for and earned his way in Naval law enforcement and became a rated Master-at-Arms (MA). This followed his family's tradition with his father and uncle in the U.S. Army Military Police.

Later, he was assigned to the U.S.S. Saratoga, an aircraft carrier that patrolled the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas. He served at the time of the two Iraqi wars, Desert Storm and Desert Shield, and the liberation of Kuwait. Even as U.S. Navy law enforcement officers, all sailors are trained and constantly drilled to be firefighters at sea. He had to complete a one-week shipboard firefighting school and then a one-week aircraft firefighting school in Norfolk, VA. One of the examples he discussed was constant battle drills at sea – never-ending drills and the terrorist bombing of the U.S.S. Cole. That ship was saved by well-trained sailors who responded with excellence to save their ship.

He continued to perform routine police patrol duties and then supervisor duties while at the Norfolk Naval Station in Virginia, Naples, Italy, Sicily, Italy, and various other locations. He was then selected to be a Military Police Investigator and became a Chief Master-at-Arms in 2004.



Jason progressed to earn classifications as an NCIS Military Criminal Investigator, NCIS Protective Services Specialist (similar to a Secret Service agent's job for protecting high-level personnel), Maritime Liaison Agent, Advanced Criminal Operations, Instructor, and Expeditionary Force – Combat Skills.

Over the next two decades, he served at various Naval stations in Norfolk, VA; Naples, Italy; Quantico, VA; Djibouti (Horn of Africa); and San Diego, CA.

At one point in his career, he was sent for eight weeks of U.S. Army training for deployment to Afghanistan. After "Army Warrior Training," a last-minute mission change was made. He

and his team ended up in – of all places - Doral, South Florida, leading a protective services assignment for a 4-Star Air Force General commanding the fight against the drug war and NARCO terrorism in the Caribbean Sea at U.S. Southern Command. This reinforced the need for leadership agility.

Along the way, Jason earned his BS in Criminal Justice Management, a Master's in Science for Public Safety from the University of Virginia, attended the Naval War College – Senior Enlisted Academy at Newport, R.I. (Resident Session 140), and the elite FBI National Academy at Quantico (Session 255).

His gradual promotion over the 26 years was as impressive as his rank of Command Master Chief (E-9), the highest enlisted rank in the Navy.

Jason spent the last ten years of his Naval Reserve career assigned to NCIS performing special duty orders for criminal investigations, undercover operations, special projects, and protective service operations across the globe. He retired from the Navy in 2017 after active duty and reserve service of over 26 years.



Jason was selected as a Special Agent when he transitioned from active duty in the Navy to the Reserve Service to pursue civilian law enforcement. He served with the Treasury and the U.S. Customs Service, which eventually became the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). He



was a Senior Special Agent – Team Leader for five special agents and two intelligence support personnel assigned to the National Security Group. He was detailed full-time from DHS and deputized to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) - Detroit Division and FBI Counterintelligence Task Force (CITF) - Miami Division during the period of 2016-2023. In 2022, he received the DHS Excellence in Law Enforcement Award for a complex foreign counterintelligence investigation and subsequent Federal conviction of the main subject.

Finally, after 23 years of service, he retired from DHS as a Senior Special Agent on August 31, 2023, and then reported immediately to the Highland Beach Police Department for duty as a Police Officer on September 1, 2023!

Our Chief of HBPD, Craig Hartmann, saw the opportunity and worked his magic to continue adding personnel with outstanding credentials. Jason served full-time as an HBPD Police Officer until he was offered a position in 2024 at FAU as their Director of Military and Veteran Student Success, Division of Student Affairs.

But that did not end his involvement in support of the Highland Beach Police Department. He continues to serve HBPD as a Reserve Police Officer (part-time).

In his daytime job at FAU, he has five employees who directly assist over one thousand military and veteran students. Their mission is to support current military, veteran, and ROTC students' (Cadets) success, graduation, and mapping their degree programs to meaningful internships and employment. His team facilitates education benefits, VA certifications, and special recognition programs and operates a full-service Military and Veteran Student Success Center at the main Boca Raton campus.

Jason is married to Lidia, a mortgage specialist at the Flag Star Bank, and they have a 16-year-old son, Jared, who is a junior at Spanish River High School in Boca Raton. While he plays varsity lacrosse, Jason and Lidia are incredibly proud of his achievement as an Eagle Scout and Order of the Arrow member. Jared and his Boy Scout Troop have posted U.S. flags at the South Florida Veterans Cemetery grave sites on Veteran's Day and continuously donated various items to Veterans in need at a Veterans Nursing Home.



Jason has traveled the world and believes Highland Beach is a truly wonderful, unique place on Earth. It is more than beautiful; with spectacular facilities and condominiums, it is a secure, peaceful paradise. We are so blessed to have Jason and Lidia support our Town's Police, community, local university, and way of life.

TOWN COMMISSION



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