

Sea Bright Reorganization Meeting: Mayor Details 2009 Plans, Challenges

The Sea Bright Council held its annual reorganization meeting on Jan. 3, 2009, where new Council members Read Murphy and James LoBiondo, both Republicans, were sworn in to office. The Council now comprises five Republicans and one Democrat. William Keeler was elected council president for 2009; Maryann Smeltzer was appointed borough administrator, and David Hoder was reappointed municipal engineer. Members of the town's volunteer committees were also sworn in.

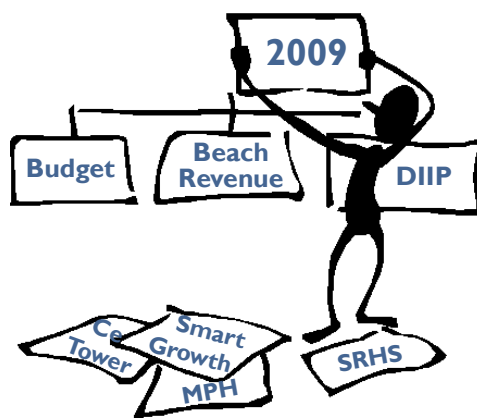
In her reorganization speech, Mayor Maria Fernandes outlined the many challenges facing Sea Bright as we move into 2009. The town's financial situation, of course, was top of mind. In light of the economic downturn, the Mayor asked the Council to introduce a budget with a zero tax increase. "This will not be easy," she acknowledged, "but it can be done if we all work together to make it happen. We must be creative and do more with less spending."

The Mayor and Council plan to cut spending in several areas. First, all professionals serving the town have been asked to retain their 2008 rates. Second, the Council is investigating a way to roll back separate sewer charges into general taxation through a phase-in period. "In other words, eliminate the separate sewer bill," Fernandes explained.

The Mayor also urged the Council to finalize plans for the new lifeguard station, which includes a cell tower, and to decide where to move the recycling center before the summer season begins. "We need to do everything and anything we can to maximize our beach revenues," she noted.

In addition, The Downtown Infrastructure Improvement Project (DIIP) on Center, Beach, Surf, New and Front Streets should be complete by early spring. The submersible pumps being installed on Center and Beach Streets are expected to reduce flooding, and the project overall "should greatly enhance the downtown area," Fernandes said.

Another work in progress is a project that began in 1998: a new Sea Bright bulkhead along the Shrewsbury River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers met with the governing body a few times in



2008 to discuss conceptual designs, and will continue those meetings in 2009.

"Don't speed through Sea Bright" will still be the rule, as the town continues its work with the N.J. Department of Transportation to maintain the speed limit at 35 mph year-round in the north and south beach sections.

The battle to reduce Sea Bright's cost share for students attending Shore Regional High School rages on. The School Funding Advisory Committee, which the Mayor initiated in 2008, made a major breakthrough this year when, after much persistence, it obtained the state-mandated formula used to calculate each town's cost share. A member of the advisory committee, who is an actuary, was able to crack the code.

"We have no complaints about Shore Regional High School," the Mayor emphasized. "What we do object to is our cost share. In 2008, Sea Bright paid \$80,000 per pupil," while Monmouth Beach pays \$31,000 per student, and West Long Branch and Oceanport pay less than \$13,000 per student per year. "We will continue to stress the unfairness of this formula," Fernandes vowed.

Sea Bright faces some important challenges this year. Residents are urged to stay informed by attending regularly scheduled Council and Smart Growth meetings. Meeting days and times are posted on the Web site: www.seabrightnj.com ●

Catching Sea Bright Spirit

Dina Long's address as outgoing Council president reminded Reorganization meeting attendees of Sea Bright's uniqueness. After outlining some memorable events of 2008, including Barack Obama's election, and the economic meltdown, she reminded us that "through it all, life went on here in little Sea Bright."

"We lost a number of our dear friends and family members, we saw acts of heroic valor, and enjoyed the great sense of community one gets from living in a small town. And of course, there were the dolphins," Long said. "I always tell people that Sea Bright has the two best things known to man: sunrise and sunset. Not to mention the most eclectic group of individuals ever to be assembled on three miles of sand."

While Long acknowledged that Sea Bright is not a perfect town, "it has old-fashioned virtues, a rich history, a lot of untapped potential, and limitless spirit," she noted. "You might call it Sea Bright spirit."

As Chairman of the finance committee in 2008, Long's greatest challenge was the municipal budget. "What was \$4.5 million in 2007 grew to \$4.7 million in 2008, increased by costs we had no control over. And then our state aid got slashed," she said. "So we got to work, made some tough calls, and managed to deliver a 2008 budget with a very slight increase in taxes.

"I say this like it's a good thing," she added. "But it was 1.3 cents, as compared to the previous year, where the municipal tax rate increased four cents per \$100."

On the bright side economically, some well-needed grant money came Sea Bright's way this year, notably a grant to help construct a handicapped-accessible ramp over the sea wall to the public beach.

And the Council's accomplishments were many in 2008: the borough's personnel policy (continued next page)

Catching Sea Bright Spirit *(cont. from page 1)*

was revamped, police standard operating procedures were updated, and borough management was streamlined to become more efficient. The Army Corps of Engineers finally finished its Shrewsbury River Floodplain study, and an Oyster Garden was started to improve water quality in the Shrewsbury River.

But most notable in 2008 were our volunteers, according to Long: "Our everyday heroes who embody Sea Bright spirit," she said. "We are blessed with devoted Fire Department and First Aid Squad volunteers. In 2008 they brought us a Firemen's Fair, and the community events my family looks forward to every year."

Long also recognized the work of the Recreation Committee, which ran children's programs and events and coordinated a successful skimboarding competition that won an award from the Monmouth County Parks System. She

also acknowledged the library trustees and the generosity of Liz Von Ziegaser, which created the "beautiful new Franz Von Ziegaser addition to the Library," she said.

"The Beautification Committee has Sea Bright looking better than ever with plantings and this year's holiday decorations," Long noted. "And thanks to Andrew Mencinsky and the surfer's alliance, we also got new dune grass fencing to protect our beach."

Long outlined some daunting challenges facing Sea Bright as we head into 2009, particularly the inequity of taxes paid to Shore Regional High School. She vowed to "continue in our opposition to this unjust formula. We will not let up."

In closing, Long reminded attendees to remember and value "what brings us all here together as neighbors. You might call it Sea Bright spirit." ●

Safe Disposal



The N.J. Department of Environmental Protection recently issued public guidelines for the proper and safe disposal of unused, unneeded, or expired household medications.

Do not dispose of excess, expired, or unwanted medications or hazardous materials by flushing or pouring them down the drain. Instead, all residents should follow these four simple steps:

Step 1: Mark out personal information.

Step 2: Mix with water and coffee grinds, cat litter, or dirt.

Step 3: Place in opaque container, such as a coffee can, and seal.

Step 4: Hide in the trash.

These hazardous materials include: oil-based paint and varnish, antifreeze, aerosols, pool chemicals, corrosives, pesticides, herbicides, solvents, thinners, motor oil, gasoline, and more.

For a list of hazardous materials and proper disposal guidelines, as well as listings of scheduled collection events, log on to: www.njhazwaste.com/monhome.htm ●

Smart Growth Courts a Renovated Borough Hall

Plans continue to move forward to renovate the current Borough Hall and add court facilities. Architectural firm Monteforte has been hired to help guide Sea Bright and the Smart Growth committee through the design phases.

There's a sense of urgency to completing this project quickly because Monmouth County Judge Lawrence M. Lawson had mandated Sea Bright to relocate the court office from the current trailer to a permanent location. The judge wanted to see

firm plans for a new court facility, or he would put the court on "Emergency Status" and retain all Sea Bright's court revenue until it complies.

The judge has since been notified that the town has firm plans to build a new court facility.

"The work on Borough Hall fits well with Smart Growth's ongoing plans to either renovate or reconstruct new beach, court, police, and other facilities," says Smart Growth committee chairman Brian Kelly. ●



Firemen's Fair Sets (Ferris) Wheels in Motion

Get ready for the second annual Sea Bright Firemen's Fair, May 14-17, 2009, in the Peninsula House parking lot. Bring your family and enjoy carnival rides, games of chance, live music, food and drinks. A 50/50 raffle drawing, and an incredible gift auction are some other featured events. Volunteers are urgently needed to help the fair run smoothly.

In addition, the Recreation Committee is requesting donations for a special Gift Auction held in conjunction with the Fair. If you have gift certificates, merchandise, or anything else that would make a nice basket, or if you can donate some time to this great community event, please contact Kathy Morris, 732-842-0099 x27 or email: sbcreation@comcast.net ●

Sprucing Up the Beach

Sea Bright is planning an Earth Day cleanup on Sat., April 25. The town will work with Clean Ocean Action to clean the beach from top to bottom. Volunteers and people willing to serve as "block captains" to organize specific sections of the beach are needed. If you want to help, please email Councilwoman Dina Long:

councilwomanlong@gmail.com.



Attention SBBA Members:

Here's an exciting opportunity to put your ad message in front of thousands of Firemen's Fair attendees. The 13 games-of-chance booths are available for your sponsorship, and all proceeds benefit the Sea Bright Recreation programs. Sponsorship includes a custom-made banner that hangs in the booth, and the opportunity to give out your promotional literature such as nominal gift cards, menus, coupons, etc. Exclusive and shared sponsorships are available. For more information, contact Kathy Morris: 732-842-0099 x27 ●

On Your Mark, Get Set, Run!



The 8th annual KDM Foundation 3-Mile Fun Run takes place March 15. The post-run party will be held at the Mad Hatter. The annual run pays tribute to Keith McHeffey, a local 9/11 victim. The KDM foundation, created in his honor, has raised funds for scholarships and last year made a generous donation to the proposed Sea Bright recreational facility/skatepark and the Police Explorers program. For more information and to register for the run, log on to:

www.kdmfoundation.com

Addressing Street Numbers

If you or a family member had a 911 or emergency response situation, how fast would you like help to arrive? If your home or complex does not display visible street numbers properly, then you risk slowing down the help you need while responders search for your address.



height and not greater than 10 inches in length. The owner or occupant must display the number assigned to each building on the front of the building and/or condominium unit or in the front yard at or near the front entrance to the building or premises.

To help emergency responders find your home quickly, be sure you are in compliance with the law:

- All residences must conspicuously display street numbers in the front area of the property. The numbers must measure a minimum of four inches in
- Live in a condo complex? All condominium units must be identified by the name of the condominium project, followed by the unit numbers.
- The number must be visible to persons passing by the premises on the abutting public street. ●

Highlands Bridge Replacement

New Traffic Plan, Web Site

Summer will soon be here, along with the heavy traffic congestion on Ocean Avenue, particularly at the entrance/exit to Sandy Hook. With the Highlands Bridge replacement construction continuing, the N.J. Department of Transportation will try to ease some of that congestion by enacting the following traffic plan, which will begin Memorial Day.

All traffic exiting Sandy Hook will go north over the Highlands bridge. Those who want to go south will drive over the Highlands bridge, then do a U-turn under the bridge (the road under the bridge will be reopened).

The NJDOT will pay for three police officers - one on the Sea Bright side and two on the Highlands side - to help guide motorists through this plan. Eliminating the southbound exit traffic light should keep traffic moving and eliminate the one-

to three-hour exiting delay that many motorists experienced last year.

If you were caught in some of those traffic jams last summer, do a little online homework before you get in the car this year.

The NJDOT has established a project Web site and Web cams to provide information and inform motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians of changes in mobility or access while the Highlands bridge replacement is being constructed.

This Web site provides written information, reports, photos, drawings, estimated schedule of construction activities, and Web cameras that show current images of the project area.

To view the site, go to: www.njcommuter.com. Select "Construction Updates" from the bullet list on the main screen. Then select "Route 36 Highlands Bridge Replacement" from the bullet list on the main screen or light blue left margin menu. ●

Logo Motion

SBBA Chooses Winning Design

When the Sea Bright Business Alliance (SBBA) was officially formed in January 2008, it turned to the public for help in creating a logo.

"There were so many talented submissions to the contest, it was difficult to choose just one," notes founding SBBA member Joan Osgoodby. "So we put it up to vote to all the SBBA members, to determine the winning design democratically."

David Rhee of Rumson submitted the winning design. The SBBA, Councilwoman Peggy Bills and Mayor Maria Fernandes presented Rhee with a prize of more than \$1,000 in gift certificates and merchandise at the SBBA meeting Thursday, Feb. 12. Robert Nott of Sea Bright was also chosen as an honorary winner and presented with a \$200 check for his



winning Sea Bright Skyscape design, which will be used on the SBBA Web site: www.VisitSeaBright.com.

"Everyone who entered the contest received a Certificate of Appreciation along with a \$15 gift card to Mad Hatter," Osgoodby adds. "We did this to express our deep appreciation for the time, effort, and consideration the contestants put forth in submitting their creative entries to our logo contest. We want to thank everyone for getting involved, and for their continued support of the Sea Bright businesses."

The SBBA also reminds you to save the date for the second annual Taste of Sea Bright: Oct. 3, 2009. If you were there last year, you know how much fun it is; and if you missed it, you probably heard about it. Details will be posted on the SBBA web site: www.VisitSeaBright.com. ●

Getting a Read on Library Events

Here's the latest news from the Sea Bright Library. Have you checked out the new addition yet?

Log on for computer classes: If you would like to learn how to use the Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel, or Photoshop, consider taking one of the various computer classes the library offers. Call 732-758-9554 for class dates, rates, and details.

Movies, movies, have we got movies! Why spend money at the theater when the library presents movies every Friday night? Children's movies are shown the first Friday of the month; adults the third Friday, both at 6:30 p.m. Senior movies are offered on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 2 p.m. The movies are all new releases; check the sign in front of the library for the titles. Have an idea for a great movie to show? Call the library to suggest a film.

Gift and remembrance suggestions: The Library would like to develop a collection of classics, and needs your help. If you have a friend who is difficult to buy a gift for, consider buying a book for the library. The Library will purchase the book, dedicate it to your friend, and give you a card to present to your friend. The book can also be purchased in memorium. The library offers a list of books for you to choose from.

No habla Espanol? Learn a foreign language: The Monmouth County Library (MCL) now offers a Learn a Language program. To access the web link, all you need is a county library card. Log on to monmouthcountylib.org, go to electronic resources, and click on Tell Me More. Then enter your MCL card number, register, and follow the prompts. ●

No Kidding: Oceanport Plans Preschool Classes

Sea Bright parents, here's an exciting expansion plan being considered by the Oceanport School District. The district hopes to offer preschool classes to three- and four-year-olds, with or without disabilities, who are economically disadvantaged. Tuition and transportation are free for students who qualify. If space and funding permit, the district will also open the program to tuition students for \$800 per month. The program will run six hours per day, five days per week, and will follow the school calendar. Classes will begin in September 2009. Rolling admission is now open; for more information, please call Robin Dunikoski at 732-229-8851 x2213. ●

Save the Dates

Sea Bright is planning some exciting events in 2009. Mark your calendars now so you don't miss out!

- April 11:** Easter Parade and Egg Hunt
- May 14-17:** Fireman's Fair
- May 25:** Memorial Day Service
- June 22:** Monday Drum Circle on the Beach begins
- July 4:** Fireworks at dusk
- July 7:** Tuesday Movies on the Beach begins
- August 24-28:** Junior Police Camp
- Sept. 12-13:** SkimBash weekend
- Sept. 27:** Fireman's Field Day
- Oct. 3:** A Taste of Sea Bright
- Oct. 31:** Halloween Parade/Costume Contest
- Dec. 4:** Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting

It's Reigning Cats and Dogs



Here's some important information for Sea Bright cat and dog owners.

Licensing: To comply with current licensing ordinances, you must license your pet. Contact Borough Hall for information.

Leash Requirements: All dogs are required to be kept on a leash.

Disposal Requirements: All pet owners and keepers are required to immediately and properly dispose of their pet's waste. 🐾

Easter Parade

Put on your Easter bonnet and stroll to the Sea Bright Municipal Parking lot (behind the Fire House) for the annual Easter Parade and Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 11, sponsored by the Sea Bright Recreation Committee.

The parade begins at 11 a.m., and prizes will be awarded for Best Bonnet (Female) and Most Dapper (Male) in five age groups: 1-4; 5-8; 9-12; 13-17; and adults. There will also be a prize for Best Stroller.

Immediately following the parade (around 11:30

Welcome to the Neighborhood

Take a walk through downtown Sea Bright and you'll spot some new restaurants and stores. Please stop in and say hello, and support them with your business.

Bagel Cove, 1064 Ocean Ave.

There is no better breakfast than a hot, freshly made bagel and a cup of gourmet coffee. You'll find that, and much more, at the Bagel Cove. This inviting little store offers hot and cold sandwiches of all types, wraps, several varieties of homemade cream cheese, dinners to go, Italian specialties, hearty soups, muffins, and more. The bagels are baked on the premises daily, and the bread is delivered from Brooklyn. Owners Todd Sinforoso and Rich Porretta are gearing up for the summer crowds and will be open seven days a week – from 5:30 a.m. till at least 7 or 8. Beach deliveries are available.

Gracie & the Dudes, 1062 Ocean Ave.

Owners Brian and Michelle McMullin bring 16 years of experience in the ice cream business to their new Sea Bright store. The store, named after the McMullin's children – Gracie, Will (the Dude) and new addition Sadie – features all natural products made on the premises. The hard and soft ice cream, Italian ice, and fat-free frozen yogurt are all made without high fructose corn syrup, artificial colors or flavorings. Summer hours are Sunday-Thursday 12 p.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday noon to 10 p.m.

Kotobuki, 1132 Ocean Ave.

When you're in the mood for sushi, head to Kotobuki. This new restaurant offers a full

menu of traditional Japanese cuisine, including sushi, sashimi, hot pots, rolls, teriyaki and tempura. Bento boxes are also available. Kotobuki is open for lunch and dinner; check out the lunch specials.

Coco Tay, 1080 Ocean Ave.

From beach to black tie, you'll find everything you need at this ultra-chic boutique, which recently moved to Sea Bright from Atlantic Highlands. In addition to designer clothing, you'll also find jewelry and handbags custom-designed by Coco herself. Visit the Web site: www.cocotay.com for more information. 🌟

Your Vote Counts

Be sure to vote in these important upcoming 2009 elections held at the Cecile F. Norton Community Center (Borough Hall):

School Board Election: Tuesday, April 21.

Polls open 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Primary Election: Tuesday, June 2.

Polls open 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

General Election: Tuesday, November 3.



a.m.) the Easter Egg hunt begins. (Parents, the hunt takes place on the beach, so you might consider a change of clothes/shoes for parade participants). More than 4,000 eggs will be hidden, and rumor has it the Easter Bunny and Carrot will make a guest appearance.

In case of rain, the events take place in the gym. For more information, or to volunteer as a parade judge, call Sea Bright Recreation: 732-842-0099 x27 or email: sbcreation@comcast.net. 🐾

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