

TOWN OF OCEAN VIEW
DELAWARE

October 8, 2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

FROM: Carol S. Houck, Town Manager 

SUBJECT: Town Manager Report for the Council Meeting of October 13, 2020

It is my pleasure to provide you with information related to the activities of the Town and my engagements during the past month:

201 Central Ave Exterior Improvement Project:

Since my last report the exterior improvement project has been substantially completed. Awnings for over the four side doors have yet to be placed. We will have a final walkthrough in the weeks ahead to determine any punch list items. The project went very smoothly. We are very happy with the updated look of the building and are looking forward to improved efficiencies in relationship to the increased insulation between the cement block and exterior materials.

The project also included the installation of new signs along Central that allow for identification from both directions vs. the original sign. Installation took place this week and will be followed by clean up of area (after the exterior project) and landscaping. Along with this sign being replaced we are also moving ahead with replacing other Town signs in the same color scheme to allow for continuity of recognition. One of our large signs along Atlantic Avenue needed to be replaced due to its cracking which led to an evaluation of all others and the decision to move ahead and replace them all at the same time.

Vestibule- the vestibule addition is still progressing in that we are awaiting new plans for its installation. A new vendor for the glass enclosure has been engaged to align with All States to ensure attachment to the new façade causes no issues. Additionally, I plan to engage our holiday decoration contractor with All States to determine how best to adhere (or not).

Tree Trimming – Folk Lane Park and John West Park:

Additional tree trimming became necessary at both Folk Lane Park and John West Park in relationship to dead limbs that may have presented safety concerns. Both areas will be entering a maintenance stage after we get a handle on their necessary trimming for both appearance and safety.

John West Park – Turf:

The park sod is doing well except for areas that have a fungus. These areas will be overseeded this month with some area's re-sodded by R and L Irrigation. This is part of our warranty. The older, original sodded area (closest to Central) will also undergo an overseeding to help it to regain its thickness and fill in gaps.

Holiday Events Plans:

Please refer to the memo and my recommendation for 2020 events in relationship to ongoing COVID-19 concerns/restrictions.

Electric to the Far end of John West Park:

We are completing the installation of electric to the far area (walking path) of John West Park. Delmarva Power agreed to directional drill under West Ave and our path at no cost to the Town to bring electric to this area. Our electrician placed the necessary equipment and outlets. This addition will greatly improve our delivery of various activities in the park.

Fall Concerts:

Our Fall Concert Series has now concluded. We were able to get two of the three planned concerts in and they attracted large crowds of viewers from the community. Both were held with mask requirements and spacing between groups of attendees. We painted 6 x 6 squares throughout the park and closed the playground during the concerts.

I received a good number of thank you comments related to Ocean View being willing to offer the concerts with the necessary precautions in place.

2nd Floor Flooring Installation:

The installation of new carpet and planking on our 2nd floor is scheduled to take place Thanksgiving week. Staff are beginning the process of cleaning out files and desks to allow for the necessary furniture moving. All materials are the same as that which was installed on the first floor earlier this year. This is a FY21 Capital Project.

November 4th Sussex County Association of Towns Dinner Meeting:

Ocean View plans to host the November SCAT meeting at Bear Trap Dunes. The featured speaker will be newly appointed Secretary of Transportation Nicole Majeski.

Pilot Street Scape Project:

I have been working on the pilot street scape project approved in the FY21 Capital Budget. The intent is for the pilot location (close to the entry of Ocean View after coming over the Assawoman Canal bridge) to include a bench, large planter, refuse and recycling units and a decorative light fixture. This item will be further discussed at our workshop of Oct 27th.

Property Ownership Items:

I have been working on several property ownership issues – one relates to Tingle Street boat dock and ramp and the other is that of Town Road.

The Tingle Street ramp and dock ownership has determined and I am now attempting to gather path forward info from DNREC regarding the owner's and others in Kelly Estates interest to rebuild the dock and establish a Boat Ramp and Dock association.

The Town Road matter was brought to my attend more recently and we have determined some information while additional effort is needed. This item will be brought back to Council for direction, likely at your November Council meeting.

Outreach to Bethany Beach – Bladder Dam Study:

I was notified by an Ocean View business owner of a new study related to improving the flooding situation in Bethany Beach that the Town completed. The business owner expressed concerns that if Bethany Beach moved forward with this it would increase flooding to areas around Assawoman Canal in Ocean View.

I reviewed the study, and it is preliminary with no actual recommendations made at this time. I also reached out to the Bethany Beach Town Manager to discuss the report and advise that the Town of Ocean View respectfully wishes to be kept abreast of activity related to this matter and that we are obviously opposed to anything that will increase the chance of flooding in our Town. It appears the effort is still very preliminary, and funding is not in place. We should however stay abreast of this matter going forward.

Outreach to Millville – Partnership Opportunities:

As you are aware, the Town of Ocean View sent a letter to the Town of Millville in relationship to areas of involvement that might benefit from increased partnership. While we have yet to receive any formal response to our letter it was, or a portion thereof, was discussed at a Millville Town Council Workshop. Regarding reports of the meeting, from my standpoint, the information and quotes in a newspaper article were not reflective of the letter we sent which was a good intention of working together more to the benefit of both towns and our greater community. My discussions with the Millville Town Manager have suggested there is interest in doing so. For now, we await a formal response again, per my conversation with the Millville Town Manager.

Government Access Channel:

We are in receipt of the signed agreement from Mediacom and we are looking forward to launching our Government Access Channel. Software equipment and hardware necessary to doing so has been received and we are awaiting coordination between TelVue and Mediacom to get started with implementation. I will keep you posted on this project going forward.

Audit of Business Licenses:

We have engaged a firm to complete an audit of business licenses in Ocean View. The intent is to ensure the identification of all businesses operating in Town. Afterwards, we will likely perform a similar effort every 5 years.

Governor's Calls – COVID-19:

I continue to participate in calls along with Mayor Reddington and the Mayor provides a summary of the discussion.

Halloween:

The State has put out its recommendations for celebrating Halloween. We have shared the information from the State on our Website and on our FACEBOOK page. Additionally, the Coastal Point has asked about the date and time of trick or treating in Ocean View. We have held to the past practice of Halloween trick or treating taking place on October 31st and between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. A copy of the States guidance is attached.

Report of Activity from Maintenance Manager Jerrad Steele:

I am happy to advise that we hired Tyler Hughes to fill the part-time maintenance position. He is in our customary 90-day probation period and is being exposed to all areas of the work and trained, as necessary. Feedback will be provided midway to ensure expectations are understood.

1. Daily playground safety check at John West Park
2. R+L biweekly grass cutting at John West Park and 201 Central
3. Setting up and working concerts in the park
4. Installing gutter guards at 32 West
5. Weekly rounds of town checking for trash in ditches and damage to street signs, etc.
6. Changing out light bulbs to LED bulbs at 201 Central per energy audit
7. Completed the cleaning of town trucks biweekly
8. Replacement of speed limit sign in Country Estates, Mitchell Estates and Betts Avenue to meet MUTCD guidelines
9. Purchased new generators as budgeted for Town events, etc.
10. Completed the trimming of brushes around 32 West and 201 Central
11. Raking up debris and pinecones in John West Park
12. Repair of fabric around playground area
13. Oversaw the Local Tree Experts cut all dead branches at Colt Park

14. Completed the order for street signs and post from state sign shop
15. Shuttle our work trucks to Atlantic Auto for service
16. Weekly mosquito spraying all over town – this is now complete for the year
17. Oversaw the Local Tree Experts dead wooding at John West Park
18. Conducted a weekly clean up at the shop
19. Conducted routine tree and bush trimming that were blocking speed limit or stop signs
20. Mowing of grass at Colt Land and the shop
21. Cleaning and breaking down mosquito for the season
22. Daily building checks at 201 Central and 32 West



COVID-19 Guidance for Communities and Families: Stay Safe this Halloween

There are many ways to celebrate Fall this year including safe Halloween activities. Protect yourself and your household by knowing your risk. The Delaware Division of Public Health offers the following tips to help you safely enjoy all that the season has to offer.

IMPORTANT: Individuals who have recently tested positive for COVID-19 and who are currently isolating from others, as well as those individuals who have recently been exposed to a person with COVID-19, should not participate in any in-person Halloween festivities and should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters in any of the following scenarios.

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses. There are several safer, alternative ways to participate in Halloween.

Consider low risk activities:

This might be the Halloween to stay home, enjoy some quiet time with a fresh apples and nutritious snacks (OK, maybe some candy) and consider some family activities. Activities that can be done at home with members of your household will pose less risk than traditional trick-or-treating.

- Pumpkin carving and decorating your home
- Hosting a virtual costume contest, Halloween get together or drive-by decoration viewing with friends and neighbors
- Having a Halloween movie marathon
- Having a scavenger hunt (think Easter Egg hunt) in and around your home rather than going house to house.

Protect yourself during moderate risk activities

Traditional trick-or-treating poses some additional risk because of all the hands in the candy bowls. If you choose to take part in some traditional Halloween activities, make sure to modify the activities and take precautions to lower risk.

- Wear face coverings at all times. (Hint: Most Halloween masks are NOT protective enough to be considered face coverings)
- Provide treats without direct contact. For example, you could place individual treat portions on your porch and interact with treaters from at least 6 feet away with



everyone wearing a face covering or through a window. Make sure to sanitize your hands between treat handling.

- Host open-air, socially distant gatherings. Don't bob for apples.
- Find a farm where you can pick-your-own pumpkins or apples. Be sure to frequently sanitize, wear a face covering, and maintain 6-foot social distancing from individuals who don't reside in your own household. If you visit a farm, store or stand, make sure it is one that is requiring everyone kindergarten age and up to wear face coverings and is taking other steps to keep people socially distanced and safe. The Delaware Department of Agriculture has developed guidance that can be found here: <https://agriculture.delaware.gov/communications-marketing/buy-local-delaware-guide/>
- Attend trunk-or-treat events with proper social distancing and face covering requirements in place along with other precautions. Larger events (more than 250 people) must have a DPH-approved plan (plans may be submitted to hspcontact@delaware.gov)

Avoid high-risk activities, where face coverings and other requirements are not enforced. People involved in gatherings or activities that are not in compliance with current restrictions may be at risk for penalties or administrative actions.

- Traditional door-to-door trick-or-treating in which treats are handed out to each child should not take place this year and need to be avoided.
- Trunk-or-treat events should not be conducted unless there is a process in place to maintain social distancing between families and enforce the use of non-costume mask face coverings. Larger events (more than 250 people) require a plan to be approved by DPH (plans may be submitted to hspcontact@delaware.gov).
- Avoid hayrides with people from outside of your household unless everyone is wearing a face covering and is 6 feet apart from non-household members.
- All indoor activities with people outside of your household should be avoided, including:
 - Any indoor parties, like costume parties.
 - Indoor haunted houses unless they have proper precautions in place. Larger attractions (more than 250 people) must have a DPH-approved plan.