

# TOWN OF HENLOPEN ACRES — June 2021 Newsletter

Dear Neighbor,

Summer has returned, and we are all very grateful to have a degree of normalcy back in our lives at the shore. We hope to see you all soon and often as you enjoy your time in the Acres.

The Commissioners met on June 11<sup>th</sup> to adopt the **Town Budget** for the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year that begins on July 1. To achieve a balanced budget, we have approved a modest increase in the property tax rate from \$2.62 to \$2.94 per \$100 of assessed value. This is the first property increase since 2012 and will raise the average tax bill of \$1,625 by \$200. The Commissioners take great care in managing the Town's finances and are vigilant in maintaining sufficient reserves to fund improvements in our infrastructure and facilities. Treasurer Jeffrey Jacobs has prepared a budget summary in the enclosure, and I encourage you to read it.

It wouldn't be July without our **Annual Independence Day Parade**. Please come out and show your Patriotic Pride as we march around the block from the Marina on July 4th. With prizes for the kids and Hopkins Dairy ice cream for all, we invite everyone to celebrate our good fortune as Americans.

Joni Reich, Mayor

## 2021 Voter Registration & Election

This year's Town election for Commissioner positions will, be held on August 28. The 3-year terms of office for Commissioners Andrew Brittingham and Paddy Richards are expiring. Property owners and residents are eligible to file to become a candidate and to vote in the election, with at least one position to be filled by a resident. You must register with the Town to vote in the election. Voter registration and candidate forms can be obtained from Lisa Michaels at Town Hall or on the Town website.

<b>Deadline to File Candidacy:</b>	<b>Friday, July 9, 2021</b>
<b>Deadline to Register to Vote:</b>	<b>Thursday, July 29, 2021</b>
<b>Election Day:</b>	<b>Saturday, August 28, 2021</b>



**Independence Day Town Parade**

**Saturday, July 4th**

**Town Marina @ 9:00 am**

## Volume 21 Issue 2

### MAYOR:

Joni Reich

### Commissioners:

Andrew Brittingham

Tim Hidell, President pro tem

Jeffrey Jacobs, Treasurer

Paddy Richards, Secretary

John Staffier

Richard Thompson

### Town Manager

Thomas Roth

### Town Clerk

Lisa Michaels

### Public Works

Sonny McClure

### Security

Lee Stewart

*Town Hall 104 Tidewaters*

*Hours: M-F 9-4:30*

• 302-227-6411

• 302-227-3978 Fax

• 302-542-3323 Security

• [townhall@henlopenacres.com](mailto:townhall@henlopenacres.com)

• [henlopenacres.delaware.gov](http://henlopenacres.delaware.gov)

### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

#### Board of Commissioners

#### Quarterly Mtg

Friday, July 9, 2021 at 10am

#### Planning Commission

Friday July 9, 2021 at 2pm

#### Board of Adjustment

As needed

#### Tree Committee

As needed

### TOWN HALL HOLIDAY CLOSINGS:

**Monday July 5**

Independence Day

**Monday September 6**

Labor Day

**Monday October 11**

Columbus Day



**Free Tree Assessment**

As a service to our residents, we have arranged with **Town Arborist Jay Ashby** of Cypress Tree Care to provide all owners with a free assessment of the trees on their property.

Jay will inspect each of your trees, identify their species, and provide you with a written evaluation including any recommendations on maintenance.

To take advantage of this free, no-obligation service, contact Lisa Michaels in Town Hall. Owners do not need to be home for the assessment and are free to hire anyone of their choosing for any follow-up care.

**Mosquito Spraying**

A reminder that the Town sprays for mosquitos every Friday morning between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. This will continue until the first frost in September to help alleviate mosquitos in the Town. Information on chemicals used in the spraying is available at Town Hall.

**Welcome New Property Owners:**

86 Tidewaters  
Raymond & Petra Kimsey - Washington, D.C.

**Town Personnel Changes**

We've had several personnel changes recently:

- **Rob Thompson** and **Charlie Streacker** both retired from the Streets Department. **Jan Bennett** also retired from the Security Department. We wish them all well in their retirements.
- We'd like to welcome our newest Security Officer **Eddie Wilkowski**. Eddie has an extensive law enforcement background, and we're pleased to have him join the Security Department.
- **Bob Ribinsky** of the Streets & Water Departments has been promoted to Project Manager. In his new role, Bob will help plan and oversee improvement projects in the Town. Congratulations Bob, on your new role.

**Rear Exit from Town**

The gravel road past Town Hall behind the cemetery is owned by the U.S. Army Corps. Residents may travel on the road in either direction from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Security closes and locks the gate at other times. Please use caution when driving, as traffic is two-way and there are often bicyclists and pedestrians using it.

**Cul de Sac Parking**

Parking permits for the cul de sacs at the ocean end of each street are available at Town Hall. Cars without a Permit will receive a citation from Security.

**Happenings in the Acres**

Mayor Reich and Tree Committee members planted a Magnolia tree near the Marina in observance of **Arbor Day**. Left to right: Tom Roth, Henry DeWitt, Joni Reich, Lou Montgomery, and Jeff Jacobs.

Jean Thompson spotted a rare Piebald Deer on Rolling Road. Piebalds make up less than 2% of the white deer population. A genetic condition causes the unusual patches of white across its body. Great sighting, Jean!



At their Quarterly Meeting on June 11, 2021, the Board of Commissioners met to review the Henlopen Acres' current fiscal year-end forecast; a preliminary six-year capital replacement & improvement schedule; and approve the budget for the upcoming 2021-2022 fiscal year.

For the current fiscal year ending June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Town forecasts operating revenues at, or close to, expenses. These results include successfully funding items of significance such as completing the engineering and design phase of the master control panel to our water plant; installing an emergency back-up water interconnection to Rehoboth Beach; purchase of a new security patrol vehicle and a pickup truck for the Streets Department; and planting 22 trees to replace those lost in windstorms, and to re-populate areas previously cleared.

The preliminary Capital Projects Schedule thru FY 2026-2027 includes dredging the marina basin in Fall 2021 with ongoing maintenance dredging of the channel entrance each year thereafter; replacing major equipment in our water plant that has reached the end of its useful life; a major road resurfacing project; and assessing the viability of installing fire hydrants at key locations throughout the Town to provide residents a more secure emergency water supply when needed.

Lastly, the Commissioner's reviewed a proposed \$997,000 Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1. The budget is based on projected ordinary income of \$966,315 and expenses of \$977, 813 resulting in an operating deficit of approximately \$11,500. The budget maintains our infrastructure, staff, and services at current levels, and contemplates funding an initial engineering assessment of the Town's roads.

Following discussion of options to balance the annual Operating Budget, while providing continuing support to the Town's ongoing and expected capital projects, the Commissioner's voted to increase the property tax rate from \$2.62 per \$100 of assessed value to \$2.94 per \$100. This increase marks the first adjustment to the Town's tax rate since 2012 and, on average, will increase the property tax approximately \$200 per parcel.

The Commissioners continue to review sources of revenue for the Town. Revenue from the state such as street aid and transfer taxes are important, but the amount of such revenue is difficult to accurately forecast beyond calculating their historical averages. Every effort is made to develop fee schedules that cover the costs of providing services such as building review, variance applications and business licenses. For example, the water usage fee was increased \$35 to \$475 for each household per year such that it will covers the routine operating and maintenance costs of the water system. In addition, following a review of annual slip rental fees for nearby marinas, the Commissioner's endorsed increasing the Town's slip fees an average of \$225.

In closing, the Commissioner's believe that the budget as approved will provide the resources needed for the Town to continue to provide all needed services to maintain our Town's quality of life.

I would be pleased to address questions on the budget from the Town's property owners and residents. Please call Town Hall to arrange such a discussion.

Jeff Jacobs, Treasurer

