



Town of Dewey Beach Newsletter

MAYOR
Rick Solloway

TOWN MANAGER
Diana Smith

March 2010

COMMISSIONERS
Marc Appelbaum
Diane Hanson
Zeke Przygocki
Marty Seitz

A Million Dollar Budget Turn-Around

The Budget and Finance Committee for 2009, chaired by Commissioner Marc Appelbaum, and the employees of Dewey Beach deserve accolades for doing such a great job managing the budget. The Town ended the year with a budget surplus of over \$250,000. Committee members were David King, Don Ziegler, Dale Cooke, Bob Paulsen, Steve Huse, Dell Tush, Bob Barry, and Mary Nelson.

In a nationwide economic environment where everyone is struggling to convert numbers from RED to BLACK, we thought it would

be interesting to our readership to see what Commissioner Marc Appelbaum had to say regarding this stunning recovery.

"As we approached last year's budget we knew we had problems: no software, no hardware, no CFO (Chief Financial Officer), and no money. Despite this we still wanted to spend money on lots of important issues and nobody wanted to hear anything about any cuts even though we were operating at a \$750K budget deficit..!"

"I cannot speak about the federal budget, nor can I comment about our neighboring towns' budgets; however, I can tell you that at the end of our 2009 year,

the Town of Dewey Beach had a surplus of over \$250,000. That's a One Million Dollar turn-around."

When pressed for some specifics on what was done he provided the following comments:

"Here are some of the things we did last year:

- 1. Committed to a balanced budget; in other words, not to spend more money than we brought in.*
- 2. Created realistic and conservative revenue budgets.*
- 3. Created fact-based expense budgets and provided people with feedback to allow them to contain spending.*

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Public Hearings Planned on Driveways and Street Right of Ways

Learn how this may affect you and your property and have an opportunity to give input to the Commissioners on this important issue.

Town Commissioners are investigating how to create more parking for visitors, improve pedestrian safety, and create a more uniform, aesthetically pleasing appearance in the town with legal parking spaces clearly marked. In the process of doing this, they would like your input about the two ordinance

proposals and want to clarify how these two ordinances might affect you and your property.

The ordinances are designed to create more parking in two ways:

1) **Remove obstructions from the right of ways** (i.e. the publicly-owned strips of land on either side of the paved portion of the street.) On most streets, the Town uses the unpaved right of ways for parking. Even though many streets appear narrow, because of shrubs and flowers and trees growing along the sides, the town's

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Budget Turn-Around

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4. Committed to not allowing budget changes throughout the year- **no** more moving targets.

5. Streamlined the Profit & Loss (P&L) and made sure it was always accurate, timely and available on our website.

6. Reviewed the P&L against budget at every Budget and Finance (B&F) meeting.

7. Through its 2007 election process, the town recognized the need for someone with budgeting experience on council and as B&F Chairman.

"By concentrating on the above, as well as many other things we have done, the Town will be going from a deficit of approximately \$750K to a surplus of between \$100-\$300K. Please keep in mind our landlords' rental businesses helped tremendously with our newly-imposed Accommodations Tax generating approximately \$215K in additional revenue. In other words, a combination of additional income (not counting the Accommodations Tax) and a reduction in expenses has resulted in a huge benefit to the Town (approximately \$600K-\$800K).

We have a few things going on at this moment. The first thing is that our fiscal year end has changed from Dec.31st to March 31st. With this in mind, we are at this very moment working on formulating a balanced budget for our new fiscal year.

We will also be taking a very close look at our various sources of revenue, how our revenue arrives, and for what purposes does it go out."

Driveways and Street Right of Ways

From Page 1

authority actually extends to a width of 50 feet for most streets (like Saulsbury and West) and 100 feet for streets like Read and McKinley. Because the paved portion of some streets is not centered in the right of way, the right of way lines could actually be 6-10 feet inside what many people might consider to be their front yards.

2) Require that each 50-foot-wide lot use only 20 feet of its width for driveways. This restriction has been a part of our zoning code for many years but it hasn't been enforced. There are many properties in Dewey with driveways that span the entire width of their properties. If passed, the ordinance will require that all driveways be reduced to 20 feet (per 50 ft lot). Planning and Zoning officials have estimated that these measures could reclaim up to 670 parking spaces. Although Commissioners have held numerous discussions at town meetings on these ordinances since July of 2009, they realize that this is a complicated issue and want to hear more about what the property owners think about these plans. **To be sure everyone understands the proposals and the citizens have ample opportunity to give their input, public hearings are planned for the following dates: Saturday, March 20 and Saturday, April 3 at 10am.**

These hearings are not progressive so you can attend either or both of them. These meetings can be viewed on the webcasts if you are not able to attend. Since the decision may affect your property, it's important that property owners review the documents on the website: www.townofdeweybeach.com by clicking on the date of the meeting on the calendar on the right. Property owners may also voice their opinions and ask that they be read into the record by e-mailing the town manager dsmith@townofdeweybeach.com. These proposals are major changes. Everyone should be involved in the decision-making process concerning Dewey's future.

Dewey Goes Digital: Attend Dewey Beach Town Meetings Online

By Ken Lodge, Town Transitional Liaison

Dewey Beach has installed an easy to use system that allows anyone with a computer and a high speed Internet connection to view the town meetings from any location, worldwide. So if weather, traffic, health, or personal/work schedules have interfered with your ability to attend the Dewey Beach Town Council Meetings in the past, you now have an alternative – you can attend "virtually."

Every Town Meeting will be streamed in live video format to the Town's website. Furthermore, each video stream will be stored on the website for viewing at your convenience at a later date. This system is still in its startup stage, so there are some technical difficulties that still need to be

resolved, but to the untrained eye, "It's the next best thing to being there..." At the January 9, 2010, Town Council Meeting we had people 'attending' from as far away as Tokyo and San Diego.

Harry Wilson reports, "I just spent an hour and a half watching and listening to a two-hour plus meeting. That is absolutely the best innovation Dewey has ever utilized! Anyone who is truly interested in their Dewey Beach property and what is going on in the Town no longer has the ability to say 'they didn't know' or 'I wasn't informed' on an issue."

Dick Cleaveland, the Webmaster and technical genius behind the project, has made it extremely easy to log onto the webcast. The most direct way is to

simply go to www.townofdeweybeach.com and go to the left-side menu and click on 'video presentations'. Or if you are viewing the meeting at a later date, select the date of the meeting on the calendar (upper right of home page) then select the meeting in the calendar itself, and find the link to the meeting.

The Town is striving to provide property owners with as much information as possible about what's happening in our town. Any suggestions on how we can further this effort are appreciated. Please email your suggestions to Diana Smith at dsmith@townofdeweybeach.com.

Storm Stories: The Big Blizzard at the Beach

By Diana Smith, Dewey Beach Town Manager



Less than one week into my new position as Dewey Beach's Town Manager, I found myself facing a State of Emergency without even a pair of snow boots in my closet. With white-out conditions, snowfalls reaching two feet and drifts of 5-6 feet, Dewey Beach was facing an event that was anything but normal. What I also realized was that I was not dealing with these storms alone. With one snow plow, Alvin and members of the Dewey Beach Police Department went to work clearing roadways. Within a short amount of time, once it was safe to do so, residents in Dewey Beach could utilize their roads. The administrative staff began working to

ensure expenditures due to the storm were documented, answered calls from concerned residents and worked to ensure it was business as usual in town hall. Our police officers and dispatchers were called to emergency duty. Officers answered calls, helped stranded motorists, and checked in on residents. The dispatch center in Dewey Beach handled call after call, professionally and expediently, answering questions and easing the minds of many. To the residents of Dewey Beach, it is important that you all know that the employees who serve you are dedicated to our town.

Then there were the elected officials, volunteers and concerned citizens. There are stories of elected officials personally checking in on residents and helping motorists, residents taking in neighbors and offering their homes, businesses helping our employees, and one particular volunteer (Dick Cleaveland) who helped me keep our website up to date regarding closures and other related storm information.

With the storms behind us (hopefully), I say "thank you". Thank you Chief Mackert for standing beside me and teaching me during this event, thank you all of our staff for their outstanding work, to all the members of Council, to the volunteers, and thank you Dewey Beach, a community that comes together during tough times to help their neighbors and town. I am proud to be a part of this amazing community.



Meet our new Town Manager, Diana Smith

We welcome Diana Smith who recently moved here from Georgia to take the position of Dewey Beach Town Manager. Diana brings a wealth of experience in government, strategic planning and management. We look forward to working with you, Diana. Thank you to Joy Howell who developed the questions and conducted the following interviews with Diana and Ken Lodge, our interim liaison.

How has your entry into Dewey been? Is it about what you expected or not?

The snowstorm wasn't expected, but what I've found is you learn a lot about a team of people when a situation like this occurs. Everyone has been super, pulled together, and worked as a team, both the staff and the community. People have put other residents up in their houses that didn't have heat. I can't say enough about Alvin who does our roads, he's done an amazing job, and our Police department was there right alongside of him.

It's been a great week, having Ken as a Transitional Liaison has been great for me, you never really know what to expect. You do as much research as you can, there are always things you don't expect though. We need to work on putting some policies and procedures in place that just haven't been there. The community is closer knit than I thought which is nice to know. People have said, "we're here as resources." The community has some amazing resources here, people really want to help and it is action not just words. We don't have a huge staff in Dewey, but I can use these committees as my staff, so to speak, and they will be a great resource.

What has surprised you so far, either personally or professionally?

That I was going to have to buy snow boots the first week I was here!!!(laugh) Professionally, the biggest surprise is how involved the Council is in a lot of issues throughout town. They are all very knowledgeable, which is good, but I'm hoping that as I build trust with them, I'll be able to take some of that burden away from them. On the personal side, we have already fallen in love with this area, there is a lot to do around Dewey and Rehoboth, and you're close to major metropolitan areas as well which you can enjoy and then come back home.

What are your goals for your tenure here, or your short term goals if you haven't formulated long term goals yet?



In the short term, we're going to reformat the agenda process, get some policies and procedures in place and take a close look at some of our contracts, to make sure we have instituted best practices for Dewey, and make sure we are getting the best for our money. I'd like to create a five year strategic plan for the town, and really understand what we need to do to achieve it. I'll probably get out a citizen survey to see what direction they would like to see the town move in, and do the survey prior to the season starting. I'd like to ask what citizens expect from the town government, and then after the season is over I'd like to send out another one, see what we did well, what we can do better, and get ideas on how we can improve it. I'd like to generate more public input from people, I fully believe in open government and customer service excellence. We want to put more things on our website to make it friendlier to our citizenry. I'd like to have something on there to have the agenda emailed to citizens every month automatically as soon as it is posted. I'd like to have a form they can fill out and have their comments read into the record if they can't be at the meeting. It will come to me and I can read their comments into the record and they don't have to be in attendance. The more a community is behind you the greater your chances for success. I'd like to make sure we have public forums in which there is really open dialogue between the Town Council and the public to discuss these issues. The more information you can provide, the more awareness there is, the more understanding there is.

What unique skills and experience do you think you bring to Dewey that will be helpful at this point in the community's development?

My strategic planning background should really help. I started out as a county clerk, did legislative issues, long term planning, grant writing and program development, so I understand various aspects of local government. I've seen various issues and how they can be resolved.

Do you have ideas about how to build a sense of community?

I think Dewey has a very strong community but we have to build trust in the local government. I want to reach out and establish trust with the community. Once I can do that, then we can start building a partnership with the community and the government.

Are there additional services you'd like to see Dewey provide to residents and visitors?

I'm still figuring out what we do provide and what we don't provide. As Dewey grows in an organizational way, we'll be able to provide more community-based programs, like the movies on the beach, for example. That is a great community event. I'd like to do programs in the spring and the fall that can help businesses stay open longer. I'd like to see current services grow more, IT-wise, public safety wise and with planning and zoning services. The survey should tell us more about what the community would like to see. In the meantime, I would welcome having people to call or email me with ideas at dsmith@townofdeweybeach.com, cell-302-841-9582.

Final Thoughts from our Town Transitional Liaison, Ken Lodge

We thought it would be nice to hear some thoughts from Ken who served as our transitional liaison, filling our vacant Town Manager position for a month or so until Diana was officially on board. Ken deserves special thanks for his excellent work in keeping things under control and moving us forward with technology by being the second genius behind the streaming video for town meetings. (See Dewey Goes Digital.)

What goals and objectives did you set for yourself when you agreed to be Interim Town Manager? Were you able to accomplish those, and why or why not?

My primary goal was to create and maintain an environment where the existing people and processes would continue to function with minimum disruptions and delays. The town is extremely fortunate to have people who work in Town Hall who know their jobs well and can work with a high degree of independence.

Since purchasing my property 37+ years ago, I have attended many town meetings. An objective of mine was to improve the effectiveness of these meetings. Specifically:

- Runaway time schedules for town meetings. To address this issue, I used the concept of blocking out time slots for agenda items and using a timer to keep things on schedule and moving.
- Lack of proper decorum during meetings, especially during the public comment session. To improve this decorum, I made use of the “roving microphone” to eliminate cross talk among the public and gently force an orderly flow to the public comments.
- Lacked openness and involvement, especially for non-resident property owners. As a non-resident property owner, I am well aware of the feeling that I lacked easy access to the town's business. I felt introducing webcasting would be a significant step in improving the feeling of involvement in the town government.

I believe I accomplished the objectives that I set for myself, because I forced myself to set realistic expectations for a two month assignment.

What advice would you have for the new Town Manager?

My advice for a new town manager is to manage by principle. And do

everything in your power to resist the external and internal forces that will try to sway you from those principles. This might require an extra step in decision making for a litmus test to see if the decision aligns with your principles.

What are the best things about Dewey town government?

Without question the people who work in the town hall represent the best part of the town's government. One of the more difficult aspects of my assignment was resisting the temptation to implement changes that would require more than two months to put into practice. Things are working in town hall not because there are well defined systems and processes in place, but because there are people working there who are willing to work long hours under less than ideal conditions to get the job done.

The second best part of Dewey's government is the diversified background of the highly qualified volunteer citizens willing to participate in the governance of their town. There's no doubt that the town government is in the need of some well defined processes and procedures, but the world's best processes and procedures are useless without good people to apply and use them.

What things do you think we need to improve on?

I recommend the town undertake a project to explicitly define each and every step that is taken in providing services, similar to what American industry has done with their ISO9000 program. It is a slow and laborious process, but the end result will be improved services being provided by more proficient people

However, there are some areas that with minimum effort could produce significant gains in efficiency and cost savings. Here are three such areas:

- A more integrated computer/software system would have a profound effect on the processing and accounting for the various business transactions.
- Establish a function within Town Hall to perform a uniform and continuous review and proofreading of ordinances, resolutions, and code prior to sending laws to the town solicitor.

- An overall master scheduling system would ensure better timing on projects and eliminate the fire drills that seem to occur at various times during the month/year.

Final thoughts? Anything you'd really like property owners to know, especially those who aren't here much in the winter months or only here as second home owners?

As a non-resident property owner, I am sensitive to such things as “winter politics”. During my tenure as a town manager, I have attempted to extend the reach and transparency of the town government by implementing streaming video. I strongly encourage the administration to continue pushing forward on utilizing technology to further this effort.

There are two distinct areas I believe would significantly improve and increase citizen involvement:

1. To provide a two-way interchange between the remote property owners and the town government. There are current technologies such as Twitter, toll free calling, texting, email, etc. which can play an important role in improving “incoming” communication.

2. Improvements in “outbound” communication are also needed to keep the citizenry informed of all upcoming events. Currently the town is only employing passive notification, requiring people to be on the lookout for notices on the website, newspapers, etc.

The technology exists today that allows for a more proactive notification of important meetings. An accurate list of current email addresses and telephone numbers needs to be maintained, as well as a toll-free recorded message with current events. Several of these systems can be useful in emergency situations.

It is the Town's responsibility to provide channels of communication for the public to access. However, despite how much technology the town employs, it is still the responsibility of the property owner to stay informed of the town's activities. Until some of these proactive methods are in place, I suggest that everyone set their computer homepage to www.townofdeweybeach.com.

A Special Thank You to All Our Dedicated Volunteers

Dewey Beach is blessed to have many highly talented volunteers to help our town run more efficiently. The commissioners would like to extend a special thank you to all volunteers. However, there are some individuals who stand out because of their tremendous level of commitment and talent.

One person who exemplifies community service is **David King**. He is Vice Chair of Planning and Zoning and served in that capacity through the rewriting of our zoning code. David spent a tremendous amount of time doing research and attending meetings during this period. But not to be one who felt

that was enough time devoted to our town, he also serves as Secretary for the Budget and Finance Committee and recently assumed more responsibility as Secretary of the newly-formed Infrastructure Committee. David, a special thank you goes to you for all that you do for our town.

Dick Cleaveland is another highly dedicated volunteer and we are all very grateful to him for his work with our website and recordings of Town Council and other meetings. Dick was the impetus behind our latest advance into high technology with streaming videos of many town

meetings. He has not only done the behind-the-scenes work on getting this set up but he's there for every meeting to make sure things go smoothly.

We would like to recognize our **Search Committee** members who did such an excellent job in finding our highly qualified new Town Manager. They accomplished this in spite of working within a compressed timeframe and pressure to find the best candidate as quickly as possible. Members included **Betty Laird, Chair; Joy Howell, Jim Dedes, Ken Lodge, Anna Legates and Rick Solloway.**

Appreciation Corner

Special Thank You's go to our Volunteer of the Year and our Lifeguard of the Year for 2009. They were both presented their awards at the Rehoboth/Dewey Chamber of Commerce Awards Ceremony on January 14.



**Dewey Beach Lifeguard of the Year,
Rob Mason**

Rob was selected by his peers based on his commitment to public service. Rob currently serves the Town of Dewey as a Lieutenant on the Beach Patrol, as an Open Water Rescue Lifeguard Instructor, as Director of the DBP Junior Lifeguard Program, and as an Open Water Rescue Jumper for the Delaware State Police Aviation Section. He is completing a Masters degree in education at Wilmington College. Rob is truly an asset to the DBP and the Town of Dewey Beach.

**Volunteer of the Year for 2009,
Jim Dedes**

Jim Dedes was named volunteer of the year by the Town Commissioners. He has been a dedicated volunteer for Dewey Beach since early 2005 when he became a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Little did he know that he was joining P&Z just before the approval of our town's Comprehensive Development Plan. He spent the next year and a half in meetings revising the Dewey Beach Zoning Code to be in compliance with the Plan. Since then he has been a member of the Search Committee for a new town manager and a member of the Policy Committee as well at the newly-formed Marketing Committee.



Town Committees Reorganized

The Commissioners have reorganized Town committees to be more efficient and effective. Many of the previous committees had become inactive and had overlapping roles. By Resolution passed on December 12, 2009, six committees were dissolved and three new ones were created.

The Display, Events, Public Intoxication, and Noise Committees were dissolved and their functions moved to a newly-created Marketing Committee.

Marketing Committee Members:

Mayor Richard N. Solloway, *Co-Chairman*
Commissioner Diane Hanson, *Co-Chairman*
Jim Dedes
Sally Read
Kelly Ranieri
Steph Przygocki
Denise Campbell
Steve Huse
Steve Montgomery

The Voter Registration Committee was dissolved and re-established as the newly-created Elections Committee with a wider scope of responsibility.

Elections Committee Members:

Beverly Corelle, *Co-Chairman*
David Kaminsky, *Co-Chairman*

The Roads Committee has been replaced by the newly-created Infrastructure Committee which has a wider scope of responsibility and will be managing the Bayard Avenue Project.

Infrastructure Committee Members:

Rick Judge, *Chairman*
Albert Genemans
Mike Harmer
Mark Nordquist
David King

The CIS Committee was renamed the Information Technology (IT) Committee with broader responsibilities.

IT Committee Members:

Mayor Richard N. Solloway, *Chairman*
Steve Huse
Richard Cleaveland
Dave Davis
Rose Lucas

The Charter and Code Committee was established.

Charter Committee Members

Town Manager, Diana Smith, *Co-Chairman*
Mary Nelson, *Co-Chairman*

Continuing Town Committees:

Audit Committee Members:

Don Ziegler, *Chairman*
Steve Montgomery
Joe Churchman

Budget And Finance Committee Members:

Commissioner Marc Appelbaum, *Chairman*
David King
Don Ziegler
Steve Huse
Ken Lodge

Policy Committee Members:

Commissioner Marty Seitz, *Chairman*
Dave Davis
Betty Laird
Ryan Malone

Dewey Beach Civic League in cooperation with the Town of Dewey Beach Plans Town Beautification Day on May 1 Save the Date.

Volunteers are needed for cleanup after the winter, planting of trees and flowers, and lots of great camaraderie with fellow members of the town. It will be capped off with a Happy Hour at the Starboard from 5 to 7 pm that evening. To volunteer please contact Chair Marie Hutton at mariefhutton@msn.com or by phone at 302-674-5159. Volunteers will meet at Sunset Park at 8:30am. Bring gloves, sun tan lotion, tools, hats and anything else you can think of!

Accommodations Tax Reminder

Tax due on accommodations provided between October 1 and March 31 of the year shall be remitted to the Town by Thursday, April 15, 2010.

2010 Rental Licenses

A reminder letter and application forms were sent in December to all those who had previously applied for a rental license. If you decide to rent your property but have not previously, a license is required. If you rent and you've not sent in your payment, it is required to be paid before actively renting your property.

Report from Police Department

By Sgt. Clifford Dempsey, Dewey Beach Police

In preparation for the summer season, the Dewey Beach Police Department has begun their annual speeches addressing the topic of "Senior Week". Over the years, members of the Police Department travel to High Schools in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia and speak to students and parents informing them of the rules and regulations, penalties, and consequences of bad behavior when they visit our area. During the presentation, information is also provided on all emergency facilities if the students need to contact Police, Fire or EMS services.

Every year new schools are added and the response has been phenomenal. It is not uncommon to have 200 people attend these events. It is not our goal to prevent these young people from visiting our area. Our Goal is to ensure when they do arrive, they act responsibly and protect themselves and others from the dangers they can encounter. Over the years we have succeeded in reducing the amount of injury, property damage and noise that we experience over the three weeks of Senior Week. We will continue to use this proactive approach and inform as many people as possible of our mission.

From The Editor

Budgetary restrictions permit us to send only one hard copy of the newsletter to the property owners on file. If you would like to receive additional copies via email, please contact me directly.
Email: dianehanson@townofdeweybeach.com or
Phone: 302-226-5998.

We also need volunteers who can help write and proofread. Please contact Diane Hanson at the email or phone number above.

Diane Hanson
Commissioner

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