

The Ocean Breeze

A Publication of the Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW





Mayor's Minute

As you'll see in this issue of the Ocean Breeze, 2019 was a busy year in Atlantic Beach. Despite a lot of new accomplishments, 2019 was, in large part, a year of repair and recovery from the prior year's hurricane. In 2019 we rebounded stronger than ever and as we enter 2020 and a new decade, it is important for us to now look to the future and prepare for what is coming our way.

A strong economy has spurred a cycle of much needed redevelopment in Atlantic Beach. But any pressure to redevelop and grow that we are currently experiencing will pale in comparison to what we will see in the coming years. Highway 70 will transform into Interstate 42 over the next decade. The bypass around Havelock is already under construction. This and other improvements are going to make it much easier to get to Atlantic Beach from the Triangle. In the meantime, the Triangle will remain one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country.

The pressure to grow in Atlantic Beach, and throughout Carteret County, will be stronger than we have ever seen. This does not, however, mean that we must grow. Atlantic Beach controls its own growth. We do this through our zoning ordinances. Ever since we saw a growth spurt during the housing boom of the early 2000s, we have been refining our zoning ordinances to protect the current character of Atlantic Beach. Going forward our goal with redevelopment should be quality, not quantity.



Left to Right: Rich Johnson, Harry Archer, A.B. "Trace" Cooper, III, Danny Navey, Austin Waters & M.J. Forrest.

I am advocating for some changes to our development ordinances that will require the use of better construction materials in Atlantic Beach. But, better materials are not enough. We also need better design. Too many buildings are being built that were clearly designed by builders as opposed to architects. We have great builders in our area, but expertise in construction does not equal expertise in design. Builders often want simple buildings that are, first and foremost, efficient to construct. An architect, however, will design a space around how you live and that will look great inside and out. Design is often the least expensive part of a project, but I believe it is the most important. If you are planning on building in Atlantic Beach, your first call should be to an architect.

Our town will continue to evolve. To ensure our evolution achieves this goal of quality over quantity we must be proactive. We must plan. We must think strategically. All of which means we must look forward in 2020. We should do so, however, with a respect for our past. To me, the future of Atlantic Beach looks a lot like our past, but even better.



Pictured: Mayor Ellen Glasser, of our Sister City Atlantic Beach, FL, administering the Oath of Office to Mayor A.B. "Trace" Cooper, III.

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- Danny Navey- Councilmember
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Board Members

- Planning Board**
 - Neil Chamblee, Chair
 - Curt Winbourne, V. Chair
 - Fred "Joey" Dean
 - Mark Ferrell
 - Doug McCullough
 - Llewellyn Ramsey
 - Sharron Wilson
- Board of Adjustment**
 - Eddie Briley, Chair
 - Michael Bosse
 - Norman Livengood
 - Vada Palma
 - Harrison Smith
 - Curt Winbourne, Alternate
 - Neil Chamblee, Alternate
 - Fred "Joey" Dean, Alternate



Manager's Message

>> David Walker
Town Manager

The end of a decade allows us not only to reflect on the past year but also on the accomplishments of the previous ten years; while laying out a vision for the decade ahead in Atlantic Beach. Looking back, much has been accomplished by the Town in all areas of service to our citizens, as highlighted in this annual report. Without a doubt, some of the most significant improvements from the past decade include the creation and installation of our Town Park & the building of our new Public Services facility, both derived debt-free. We continued to modernize our public water system by adding pumping capacity, new wells, & updated technology. We have completed over \$1.4 million in

stormwater drainage projects town-wide. Our fire department received the first Class 3 fire rating in the county, which is one of the highest ratings attainable statewide. The Town was competitive in receiving a multitude of grants for dredging boating channels and installing numerous pedestrian beach accesses. We installed a network of sidewalks to promote walking and biking as a safe & healthy means of enjoying the town.

Throughout the last decade, we were able to achieve these and many other accomplishments while maintaining one of the lowest municipal property tax rates on the NC coast. As we enter a new decade, the Town Council is now involved in plans to bring forth a long studied Public Safety and Admin Center, to replace aging and inadequate facilities, at their present location. The Council is also developing a long-range vision plan anticipating what the development of the Interstate 42 corridor, a direct route from Raleigh to the coast, could mean for year-round access & population growth for Carteret County. It will definitely be a game-changer in many aspects.

For these and many other reasons, we can look forward to the 2020s with renewed optimism. It is my honor to serve as Town Manager of Atlantic Beach and to lead a team of dedicated & talented employees who work diligently to implement the policy directions given by the Mayor and Town Council.

After the unexpected passing of Fire Chief Adam Synder in March, the Town promoted Deputy Chief Mike Simpson to Fire Chief! Chief Simpson has been with the ABFD for 20 years and holds over 20 certifications related to firefighting, EMS and technical rescue operations.

Former Captain, Casey Arthur was promoted to Deputy Chief and also serves as the ABFD Fire Marshal. DC Arthur has served at the ABFD for over 15 years and has both his firefighter & paramedic certifications.

New Fire Chief & Deputy Chief Named for ABFD

Both Chief Simpson & Deputy Chief Arthur are accomplished in their field and are true assets to the Atlantic Beach Fire Department. Congratulations to you both!



>> Pictured Left to Right: Fire Chief, Mike Simpson & Deputy Chief Casey Arthur

ABFD Ocracoke Relief Effort



The Atlantic Beach Fire Department sent several members to Ocracoke Island, post Hurricane Dorian, for a relief trip to help folks directly affected by the storm and flooding. Over a 3-day period, ABFD members, as well as members from other agencies, gutted homes, removed storm debris & provided comfort.



Town Improvements at the Circle

The Circle is one of the most easily recognizable and frequently visited regions of Atlantic Beach. To help maintain a positive appearance, the Public Works Department painted three buildings associated with the water plant & installed a new perimeter fence. Additional parking has also been added at the water plant & is currently available for visitors to the Circle.



The Brent Milgrom Foundation donated \$5,000 for the installation of larger wattage, ground-mounted lights for a brighter display of the Circle flagpole. The new lighting will increase the prior wattage by over 300% & make the flag more visible at night.

Local Artist, Chrissy Suralik, completed a mural on the back of the digital message board at the Circle. The mural is highly visible to visitors, as they exit the Circle, and is a beautiful addition to Atlantic Beach. Thank you, Chrissy, for your hard work & talent!



The Town of Atlantic Beach received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada!

19th Consecutive Year Receiving The Excellent Audit Award

With over 600 local government agencies in our state, less than half qualify for this award.



Town Manager David Walker noted "We are very proud of the fine work done by our Administrative Services Director Sabrina Simpson, and her finance staff, in maintaining the standards to continuously achieve this award. Its quite an accomplishment for a small beach town to receive. This award also puts us in the same league with larger cities in our state. A complete report is located on our website for the public to have full transparency of our finances and operations."

Stormwater Resiliency Plan



North Carolina
Coastal Federation
Working Together for a Healthy Coast



LDSI

ECC
Eastern Carolina Council

In response to Council's Recreational Water Quality initiatives, planning staff have partnered with the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments, the NC Coastal Federation, and LDSI Engineering to create the Stormwater Resiliency Plan. This plan aims to identify both stormwater pollution sources and stormwater flooding hazards and offer options for mitigation. In addition to Town funds, two grants have been secured in order to make this plan possible: \$15,000 Duke Energy Storm Resiliency Grant and \$29,759 NCDEQ 205j Grant. Work on the plan excitedly began in January 2020.





Causeway Corridor Master Plan

The Town of Atlantic Beach has been working to create the Causeway Corridor Master Plan to provide guidance for improvements to the Atlantic Beach Causeway. The Town seeks to make better use of the 200ft NCDOT right-of-way along the Atlantic Beach Causeway & aims to:

- Maintain or increase the number of parking spaces for Causeway businesses
- Eliminate unnecessary curb cuts
- Improve bike/pedestrian/golf cart flow along the Causeway and across it at strategic points
- Improve landscaping
- Improve visibility for Causeway businesses

The Causeway Corridor Plan proposes increased pedestrian, bicyclist, and golf cart access along both sides of the Causeway, landscaping improvements, traffic pattern updates, and better accessible & identifiable parking areas, to name a few. This project would be completed in several phases and has been submitted to NCDOT for funding consideration.

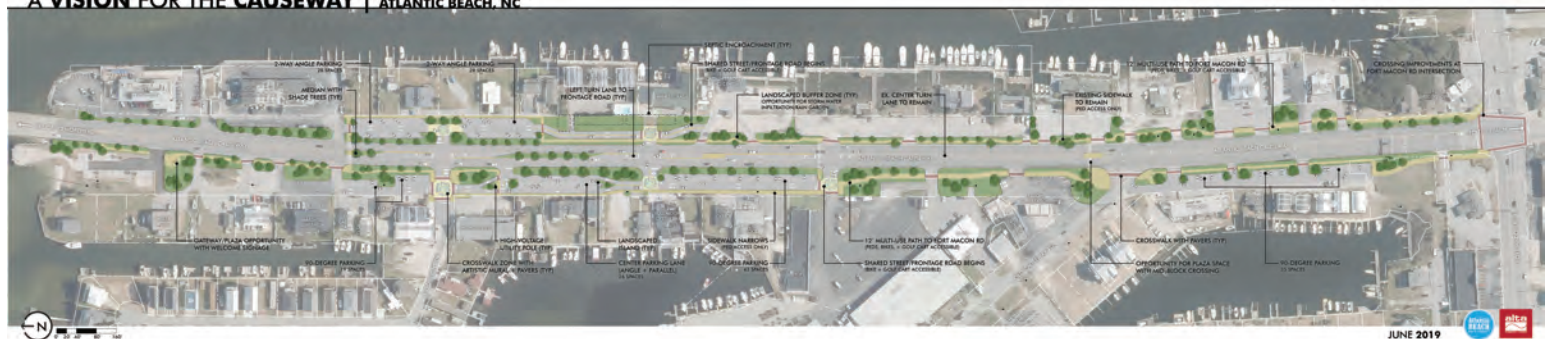
>> PICTURED BELOW IS A DIGITAL RENDERING OF WHAT THE INTERSECTION AT MOONLIGHT DR., PARALLEL TO THE CAUSEWAY, COULD LOOK LIKE



CAUSEWAY CORRIDOR | CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN

>> FULL PRESENTATION AVAILABLE ONLINE AT ATLANTICBEACH-NC.COM/CAUSEWAY-CORRIDOR-MASTER-PLAN/

A VISION FOR THE CAUSEWAY | ATLANTIC BEACH, NC



JUNE 2019





Town Park Additions & Events

2019 was a year of new programs, events, and equipment at the Atlantic Beach Town Park! The 1st Annual Helicopter Egg Drop was held in April with thousands of egg-static children in attendance.

A variety of fitness classes were offered, between June & August, that featured a blend of Barre, Pilates, Yoga, and Strength Training.

Pups & parents packed the park in September for the 1st Annual Barktober Fest. This Oktoberfest style event featured pet adoptions, pet product & service vendors, Crystal Coast Brewing Beer Tent, puppy parade, & food trucks.

The Annual Summer Movies Program migrated, from The Circle, to the Town Park for 2019. With ample parking, easily accessible restrooms & quick snacks from the concession stand, the Town is pleased to offer a more family friendly environment!

Due to the success & popularity of the digital sign at the Circle, a new double-sided digital message board was installed at the entrance to the park in May! This message board features Town events, park programs & specials all year round.



^^Join us at this year's Easter event at the Town Park on April 4, 2020



Doubletree West Beach Access Completed



The 325' handicap accessible beach access, adjacent to the DoubleTree by Hilton, reopened in August! It is currently being used by residents and visitors as a much-welcomed addition to the West end of Atlantic Beach. The structure's framework was installed by Bogue Banks Construction, with final decking and railings installed by our own Public Works Department. (Please note the walkway is public but parking is for guests of the DoubleTree only). The beach access was made possible by a state CAMA grant of \$95,705. The Town received a 50% matching grant from the Division of Coastal Management and we extend our thanks to the DoubleTree by Hilton for partnering with us on the 50% local match.

>> WWW.ATLANTICBEACH-NC.COM/PLAY/BEACH-ACCESS



AB Loops Connection to Fort Macon State Park

In June, the Atlantic Beach Public Works Department completed the sidewalk extension that connects the AB Loops sidewalk system directly into the Nature Trail within Fort Macon State Park! The Nature Trail spans 3.2 miles along both the sound side & ocean side of the park.

This addition was long planned & part of a master plan to connect AB & Fort Macon. Park Officials contacted the Town in 2015 with the proposed sidewalk connection & we are proud to say that it is finally complete!

The AB Loops system offers over 9 miles of walking trails &, with this addition, those trails can now directly access over 3 miles of nature trails at the State Park!

>> NEW SIGNAGE WAS ADDED FACING EAST FOR VIEWING AS YOU EXIT FORT MACON STATE PARK



>> WWW.ATLANTICBEACH-NC.COM/WALK-ATLANTIC-BEACH-MAPS/



Stay Connected

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WEBSITE

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Want to hear about Town events first? Be sure to follow us on our social media accounts for the most up-to-date AB events & information!

Current Social Media Stats:
39,000+ Facebook Followers
38,800 Facebook Likes
4,500+ Instagram Followers

Golf Cart Program Success

The Town recently began a Golf Cart Registration Program that allowed these types of vehicles to drive within certain "travel zones" in Atlantic Beach. During 2019, the ABPD registered almost 60 carts. If you are interested in further information regarding this program, or would like to register your golf cart, you can visit the Town website or call the Atlantic Beach Police Department during regular business hours at 252-726-2523.



>> WWW.ATLANTICBEACH-NC.COM/POLICE-DEPARTMENT/GOLFCARTS



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Published by the Town Manager's Office

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David Walker, Town Manager, townmanager@atlanticbeach-nc.com

Morgan Gilbert, Director of Recreation, Communication & Special Events

Katrina Tyer, Town Clerk

Calendar of Events: 2020 Dates to Remember

- | | |
|---|--|
| >> St. Paw-tricks Day
Sunday, March 15, 2020 | >> July 4 Fireworks
Saturday, July 4, 2020 |
| >> Easter at the Town Park
Saturday, April 4, 2020 | >> National Night Out
Tuesday, August 4, 2020 |
| >> Town Park Open Season
April-October, 2020 | >> Barktober Fest
September, 2020 |
| >> Beach Music Festival
Saturday, May 16, 2020 | >> Spooky Seas Trunk or Treat
October 30, 2020 |
| >> Summer Movies- Town Park
June-August 2020 | >> AB Christmas Parade
December 4, 2020 |
| >> Fitness Classes- Town Park
June- August 2020 | >> Smoke on the Water Bonfire
December 30, 2020 |



Beach Music Festival: SAVE THE DATE

May 16, 2020



Steve Owens & Summertime Band
Band of Oz
The Embers
North Tower
Mighty Saints of Soul

*Band schedule is tentative & subject to change



MON 5/11
Beach Music
DJ at TackleBox
Tavern
8 PM

TUE 5/12
Beach Music
Trivia at Crystal
Coast Brewing.
7:30 PM

WED 5/13
Business After Hours
presented by R&D Brewing
at the DoubleTree with
Gary Lowder
& Smokin' Hot

THUR 5/14
Beach Music Pub
Crawl with shuttle
service.
6-10 PM
\$10/Person

FRI 5/15
Sponsor's Reception
at Memories Beach
Club. Catering
provided by
On The Rocks

SAT 5/16
2020 AB Beach
Music Festival
11AM-6PM