



MEET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT

Friday, September 9, 2011

6:30 PM • South Coastal Library

Come early, doors open at 6:00 PM

— Note Our New Location —

CANDIDATES FOR BETHANY BEACH TOWN COUNCIL

Five candidates for three council seats. You can vote for three candidates, two candidates, or just one, if you choose)

Tony Carmen Joseph T. Healy
Jerry Dorfman Thomas P. Lennon
Carol Olmstead

Election Day is Saturday, September 10th
At Town Hall Noon till 6 PM
(Be Sure to Bring Proper Identification)

Eligible voters are Bethany Beach property owners, up to eight owners who are listed on the deed, not just the one who receives the tax bills. All of you are automatically registered and eligible to vote in municipal elections.

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VOTING BY ABSENTEE BALLOT BY MAIL (TWO STEPS)

You must obtain, fill out, and return an official request for an absentee ballot. A copy of the request form is enclosed for your use, or you can obtain one by downloading a copy at www.townofbethanybeach.com. Be sure to follow the absentee ballot instructions very carefully. Encourage your co-owners to do the same. Use Section A on the affidavit. It does not need to be notarized, and you can check the box that says you are a property owner and will be absent from Bethany on election day. Be sure to exercise as much care filling out the affidavit or request form as you do with the ballot itself. When the ballot arrives, cast your vote or votes and mail the ballot back.

VOTING BY ABSENTEE BALLOT IN PERSON (one step, walk-in process)

You may vote in person early by visiting Town Hall anytime from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or on the last three Saturdays before election day - August 20, August 27, and September 3. Ask for the official request form for an absentee ballot, complete the form and return it. You will then be given your absentee ballot. Mark the name or names of the candidate(s) of your choice, following the instructions very carefully. Then hand your ballot in then and there. BBLA applauds Bethany Beach for making absentee voting here so easy and convenient.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS ARE RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTION

BBLA surveys Bethany Beach property owners each year in January, when townspeople are asked to renew membership in BBLA. The Association has also adopted an e-mail information and alerts format to inform members of actions pending before Town Council. BBLA communicates the views of its Board of Directors to Town Council and suggests to its members that direct communication of their own to Council members is an effective and necessary means of involving townspeople in important decisions affecting the quality of life in Bethany Beach.

BBLA believes that Town Council is not doing enough to promote active and continuing involvement in its decisions on the part of property owners whose taxes pay for those decisions. We cite the demise of the Communications Committee and failure to include a comprehensive survey of the views of taxpayers as part of the writing and adopting of the Town's comprehensive plan.

Please use the space provided in BBLA's Elections Newsletter to share your views on the state of public involvement as practiced by Town Council. Specifically, comment on the demise of the Communications Committee and the failure of the Town to include a survey in the run-up to the Comprehensive Plan. You may defend the Council's present public "input" efforts or suggest ways to strengthen, encourage, and institutionalize more public involvement in Council decisions, or both.

Please try to limit your comments in this Newsletter to your views about public involvement in Council's decisions that affect the tax-paying property owners in Bethany Beach.

ANTHONY CARMEN

To Bethany Beach Landowner's Association

I'm writing to share my perspective concerning the demise of the Communications Committee for the town of Bethany Beach, Delaware. The question to ask is, "What effective role, if any, did the Communications Committee play in helping with the flow of information and/or transparency for town government?" Getting feedback with constructive criticism, and, letting people know that the Town Hall door is always open, encourages trust and candor. If the door isn't open, or if the Communications Committee fails to function or exist, then fear and apprehension develops.

A perfect example was the ongoing issue of transmission lines being routed through our streets, or any residential community for that matter. Because there wasn't an effective transfer of information between the residents and town hall people, residents became emotional and issues of trust were heightened. We the adversely affected homeowners made every attempt to facilitate the proper exchange of factual information to encourage the formulation of a proper beneficial decision for the town folks. Town Hall eventually did the right thing after five months; what took so long?

There is an obvious need for the revival of the Communications Committee, in order to alleviate this stressful scenario from happening again. It is imperative that there be a continual commitment for such committees, which are desperately needed to make decisions that might impact our community. Although my wife was terminally ill, we thought it important enough to both personally serve Bethany Beach on this endeavor. Town council has made considerable efforts to promote, and strengthen public relations, however; if the town can provide the fourth of July parade chairman with permanent office space, then so it should go with any other committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Carmen

JERRY DORFMAN

In the past two years I have talked to and been available to many, many citizens of Bethany Beach. Folks have contacted me by phone, email and in person. As a Council member I am very proud of the way current Council meetings have time provided where the town citizen's views are heard and taken into consideration on each agenda item. Two recent agenda items are a classic example of this. After hearing citizen input by phone, letters, email, and at the Council meeting on July 15th, Council voted unanimously to deny NRG/Blue Water Wind from using Bethany Beach as the onshore conduit for power lines for their proposed off shore wind farm. In addition, at that same meeting Council voted overwhelmingly to allocate \$55,000 and partner with the Army Corp of Engineers to determine if a solution to the Towns flooding problems can be found and possibly be resolved.

This is a Council that not only listens to its citizens, but will soon provide them live audio access to its Council and Planning Commission meetings.

The Communication committee did a terrific job putting the town's web site together. It is a great source for communicating what is going on in our town. The Communication Committee has accomplished their mission in assisting the Town Council by providing ways to improve and enhance communication to all the various stakeholders in Bethany Beach, and therefore has been disbanded for now.

The Planning Commission is the committee that is responsible for putting the Comprehensive Plan together. Much time and research goes into the development and writing of this very important document. The 2010-2020 Comprehensive Plan took in excess of a year and a half to complete. There were ten public meetings held by the Planning Commission dedicated to the Comprehensive Plan, as well as two Town Council workshops, and two Town Council public hearings. In addition a draft copy was posted on the Town's website with a minimal response from the community, and that includes members of the BBLA and its board.

In conclusion, I am a member of the Town Council because I love our community and since being on Town Council, I have volunteered my time, talent and my passion to my hometown. Again, I have talked to and been available to many, many people and the feedback is that our town is a great place to live, vacation and to do business. The members of our community are happy. The controversies are few. We are one of the few municipalities in the State of Delaware that is financially stable.

Respectfully submitted

Jerry Dorfman

JOSEPH T. HEALY

Dear BBLA Members:

The single question posed for the Election Newsletter revolves around the issue of communications. I have found during my term in office, that I have received many pieces of correspondence addressed primarily to the Town Council Membership. This correspondence generally concerns a single issue of particular concern to the writer. I've read this correspondence and tried to incorporate it in my deliberative process regarding an issue. I have also received countless verbal communications regarding an individual's position on a particular issue. This verbal communication, more often than not, has been general in nature and has been a personal thank-you for my time, and attention, and that of the Town Council to the broad range of issues that have come before the council.

My background has been in the fiscal arena and therefore, I have championed, fostered and accentuated Bethany's emphasis on fiscal responsibility. I plan, when reelected to continue my vigilance in this area.

Please keep in mind the understanding of finance should be viewed as a language not only as a prologue of the past, but, as an enlightenment of the future.

I ask, based on my time and attention to all issues during my time as one of your Town Council Members, as well as my specific financial and management experience, your consideration of my candidacy. This is most appreciated, thank you.

Joe Healy

THOMAS P. LENNON

Because Bethany Beach is a resort town and because two thirds of its property owners live somewhere else as a primary residence, and because most of us live very busy lives, the Town Council should be much more deliberative in how it governs.

Specifically, the Council meeting should be at a time that is better suited to the citizens who live in Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, etc. – probably Saturday mornings or afternoons. Also there should be a system in place informing citizens of pending code changes or amendments. The Council has been acting as if the Town were their private fiefdom. The local newspaper, the Coastal Point, could be used more efficiently.

On the question of the comprehensive plan, I believe that the outcome was a fait accompli before any information was ever given to the citizens – our input was really not wanted!

In order to have a resort community be functional for the people, plans and schedules and systems have to be more known to the people in order for us to analyze and process what is being considered. I do not see that happening.

Thomas P. Lennon

CAROL OLMSTEAD

As a current Bethany Beach Town Council member, I welcome the opportunity to address how over the past several years public input has been encouraged, and given more than due consideration, as conclusions are reached and decisions made on behalf of our town citizens. Indeed, there has been continuing effort on the part of the town and the Town Council regarding public communication as recommendations are implemented and improved upon.

Agendas for both Town Council Workshops and monthly Town Council meetings are available to the public on the town website (www.townofbethanybeach.com) as well as in the Town Hall Lobby at least a week in advance of meetings.

Workshops are held regularly to allow council members along with interested members of the public to seek information and openly express views previous to issues being placed on a Town Council Agenda. Many citizens choose to express their views regarding a particular issue by e-mail or letter, all of which are made available to Council members. Others will address Council members directly either by telephone or in person. Public Hearings regarding important issues affecting the town are held not only when required, but as a means of gaining public sentiment even at times when not required. Our Town website also contains minutes of past meetings (along with information regarding every aspect of our town.) Citizens can now access and listen to Town Council and Planning Commission meetings via the internet, while they are in session. Members of the public in attendance at Town Council meetings are invited to give input as each agenda item is addressed and before a vote is taken.

That the views of the citizens of Bethany Beach play a major part in the decision making process as our current council members seek to do what best serves Bethany Beach and it's citizens is evident. A few recent instances demonstrate this.

- * The proposal by NRG and Blue Water Wind to bring their power lines onshore in Bethany brought an outpouring of public interest. Citizen input was key as council moved to reject the proposal as not being in the best interest of our town and its citizens.
- * Council did require sufficient documentation as regards the proposal to partner with the US Army Corps of Engineers in seeking a viable solution to the tidal flooding in Bethany Beach. Be assured that the strong citizen support for this was attended to as Council also gave consideration to the possible financial commitment involved on the part of the town.
- * When a recommendation to change the metered parking times was refuted by citizens and members of the business community, council listened and came to a compromise that all found acceptable..

Space does not allow for citing the many other instances during my time on the Bethany Beach Town Council when the views of the Bethany citizens have had impact in council decisions. This process allowing our citizens to participate in town governing works well. Surveys do not provide an opportunity for open exchange and individual opinion on issues. That the Town Council, elected by the voting citizens of our town, should be led by one organization representing only a portion of our town citizens does not seem reasonable or democratic. It is my understanding that The BBLA membership is comprised of under 50% of the eligible voters in Bethany Beach. The views of the landowners association are considered along with the views of all of our citizens.

The revised Comprehensive Plan for Bethany Beach was discussed and reviewed over a period of two years at our monthly Planning Commission meetings. Previous to being accepted by Town Council, two Public Hearings were conducted to provide for public comment and input. Little public input was received due largely to the diligent work on the part of the Planning Commission members.

The Communications Committee, along with a few other standing committees over time, was suspended when it appeared the committee no longer had a contribution to make in their role of assisting the Town Council. Committees are appointed by Council when it is determined that a committee might be of assistance in a specific area. The Communications Committee provided a great deal of assistance to the town, over several years, in beginning and in improving the town web-site. In recent years staff has filled the needs of the town that were previously supported by some committees. The Bethany Beach Town Council, supported by the town staff, during the years I have served, has sought and will continue to be open to ways to better communicate with the citizens of Bethany Beach, our business community, our neighboring towns, Sussex County, and our elected State and Federal officials.

Carol Olmstead

Suggest a Question

Hear's my question(s) for the Bethany Beach Town Council Candidates:

Your questions will be raised at Candidates night. Similar questions will be summarized together. Either e-mail your questions to Steve Trodden, the program moderator, at baseball1957@verizon.net or use this coupon and mail it to
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Bethany Beach, DE 19930

Bethany Beach Landowners Association
P.O. Box 401
Bethany Beach, DE 19930
www.bbba.info
Join BBLA and Help Us Help Our Town!
• MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ISSUE
• ABSENTEE VOTING INFORMATION

