

BOROUGH OF HIGHLANDS, N. J.

INCORPORATED 1900

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Mayor's State of the Borough

2021 July Monthly Report inclusive of 7/31/21

After issuing the Mid-Year report, I've been asked to do this report monthly and post to a new page on the Borough website. We continue to work closely with the Administrator and Department Heads, we continued to balance the management of the health crisis and do the Borough's business.

The July Report is as follows:

- Working with the County Division of Aging, Disabilities and Veteran's Services, and our Recreation Department, we participated in signing up Seniors and those with Disabilities for the Register Ready program. The program registers their physical and medical needs in case of an Emergency. The County also provided "Go Bags" for medication, vital documents and other emergency items.
- We received the following grants:
 - \$246,703.38 from the American Rescue Plan
 - \$165,000 from the NJ Transportation Municipal Aid
 - \$38,722 from FY 2021 Police Body Camera Grant
- The Bay Avenue Area in Need of Redevelopment Study was released and the Public hearing was heard by the Land Use Board.
- The Affordable Housing Mid-Point and the 2020 Annual Report were released.
- This year Summer Camp partnered with the team at Ocean Protection Advocacy Kids [OPAK] to offer our kids an outstanding Marine Science Camp.
- The Summer Concert Series came back and was widely attended.
- Maj Jong Mondays started at the Community Center.
- Community Movies On The Beach also had a comeback showing "A Night at the Museum".
- Adult Book Club also started and meets each week at a different restaurant in town.
- Ordinances:
 1. Three ordinances passed in regard for Zoning for Retail Cannabis.
 2. Two ordinances passed addressing parking.
- As of 7/31 Highlands COVID-19 Vaccinations

	Total	18+	30+	65+
1 shot	51%	58%	60%	73%
Complete	47%	53%	55%	67%
New Cases in July= 11				

The state of the Borough at the end of July 2021:

- Our community continues to pull together during this pandemic. Residents, staff, businesses, civic/charitable organizations, and clergy continue to work together to get us through the biggest health crisis of our lifetime.
- The Recreation Department as well as other Borough organizations embraced the lifting of the gathering bans by filling the month with events, games and music.
- This month, I participated in the following calls/meetings: 1 with Federal representatives; 2 with State representatives; 2 with County representatives and 5 Municipal to make sure Highlands received all information, grant opportunities and awareness of programs being offered.

The Governing Body's Goals for the remainder of 2021 with updates {highlighted}:

- Create Overlook Park at old Stymie's property [empty lot diagonally across from OLPH] – reviewing proposals – **working with the Environmental Commission**.
- Enter the Community Rating System [CRS] program for lower flood insurance - getting proposals from engineering.
- Validate all Borough owned property/Update Open Space Plan [last 2008] & Registered Open Space Inventory [last 1992] – Open Space Committee & legal will complete this year.
- Update the Steep Slope Ordinance – **with Shade Tree Commission & Environmental Commission for update recommendations**.
- install higher riprap [rock wall in front of boardwalk] at Vets Park – **The Marine Engineers at Colliers are working on a Borough wide Resiliency Plan.**

Status on other priorities:

- Replace trees on the slope with sea grass – grant writer looking for grant.
- Remove unused phone and cable lines throughout the Borough – waiting for response from both Verizon and Comcast.
- Move electric out of flood zone in Borough parks – waiting for quote.
- Address inequities in tax assessments – looking into different software, must work with County on this.
- Address runoff issues from Monmouth Hills – on-going discussions with State, County and Middletown officials. Monmouth Hill's hired an engineering firm to try to solve the problem. Waiting for that to be given to us.
- Complete North and Valley St pump improvements [including Valley pipe to the bay] – this is with engineering. **Preparing to go out to bid.**
- Complete Waterwitch Pump upgrades and install backup generator – engineering is working with FEMA.
- Waterwitch and Bay Avenues sanitary project – waiting for DEP to sign off on the change below so we can go to bid. **We added the following streets to Phase 1: the entirety of Waterwitch Ave [from R36 to Marine Place], North St, Gravelly Point Road, Ralph St, William St, Ocean Ave and Beach Blvd.**

All the best to you and yours. We will get through this together.

Mayor Carolyn Broullon