



*Town of Ocean City, Maryland*

# REPORT TO CITIZENS

*For Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2014*



El Galeón Andalucía sails out of the Ocean City inlet after spending over ten days docked in the City, photo by Robyn Phillips <http://robynphillipsphotography.smugmug.com/>

## **MAYOR**

Richard W. Meehan

## **CITY COUNCIL**

Lloyd Martin, President  
Mary P. Knight, Secretary  
H. Brent Ashley  
Douglas S. Cymek  
Dennis W. Dare  
Joseph M. Mitrecic  
Margaret L. Pillas

## **CITY MANAGER**

David L. Recor, ICMA-CM

## **FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR**

Martha J. Bennett, CPA

## **To the Citizens of Ocean City, Maryland,**

With the opening of the Ocean City Art League Center in 2013 and current construction of the Performing Arts Center at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center, Ocean City has greatly enhanced cultural and entertainment opportunities for both residents and visitors. Always a vibrant resort, Ocean City is also an attractive and lively year-round residential community. Events such as the El Galeón Andalucía featured in this report and town and non-profit sponsored activities stimulate the local economy, but also enrich the lives of participants.

This report summarizes the Town of Ocean City's finances showing how your tax dollars and service fees were used in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 and what we have and owe at year end. Our goal is to communicate the results of financial operations in a report that is straightforward and easy to read. The information presented in this report was taken from the Town of Ocean City Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2014, (the CAFR), which was prepared by the Finance Department. The financial statements in the CAFR, audited by SB & Company, LLC, give much more detail and disclosures and are prepared in a way that is accepted by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. We invite you to read the CAFR that is available on the Town's website, [www.oceancitymd.gov](http://www.oceancitymd.gov), or you may get a copy by contacting the Finance Department at 410-289-8858.

**NEW:** To keep the residents and property owners of Ocean City better informed, the Town of Ocean City has added a Fall Newsletter in correlation with the Report to Citizens. The new publication can be found on page 9.

## THE ECONOMY

To offset the effects of the national recession on the tourism industry, the Town increased the advertising and promotional budget each year since 2009, increasing from \$3.7 million in 2009 to \$6.3 million in 2014. The successful campaign included the use of social media, Facebook and Twitter, and television ads featuring “Rodney, the Lifeguard” and “Vacation Days” to promote the resort. For the year ended June 30, 2014, room sales were 3.54% above the prior year and food and beverage sales were up 4.13%. Over the past five years, room sales have increased an average of 4.27% per year.

There were 1,564 construction permits issued in 2014, compared to 1,660 in 2013. However, the estimated value of construction in 2014 was \$51,755,670 compared to \$36,287,285 in 2013. Several development projects were started in 2014 including two large hotels, the La Quinta Inn & Suites at 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and The View at 57<sup>th</sup> Street.

## MAJOR INITIATIVES AND DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

### BOARDWALK COMFORT STATION & STAGE



The newly constructed boardwalk comfort station and entertainment stage is located at Caroline Street and the boardwalk. The new building incorporates green technology such as high efficiency lighting and a unique system that uses a combination of chimneys and underground pipes to ventilate the

building. Restroom facilities have been expanded and are fully accessible. An entertainment stage includes a private dressing room and provides a permanent location for concerts and entertainment on the beach throughout the summer season. The comfort station opened December 2013.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Prior to 1994, Police and Fire/EMS each employed their own staff of dispatchers. In 1994, with the opening of the Public Safety Building at 6501 Coastal Highway, all communications functions were consolidated and all personnel were brought together into one department. Since then, this department has developed into a division within the Department of Emergency Services and has experienced technological, and educational advancements. Though never seen, Communications is an intricate part of the overall safety of individuals as well as the protection of life and property.



## COMMUNICATIONS (CONTINUED)

Extensive training is required for each Communication Operator which consists of classroom and “hands-on” training. They are required to attend an Emergency Medical Dispatch Certification course and a Maryland Electronic Telecommunications Enforcement Resource System (METERS), Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) and National Crime Information

Center (NCIC) Basic Assess Training class. During their employment, they must maintain all certifications and licensures required by the Division and are scheduled for training classes pertinent to public safety dispatching, emergency management and crisis communications. They are also required to attend at least twenty-four hours of in-service training each year through

Emergency Management Exercises, and in-service training classes sponsored by the Police Department. At any given time they are able to operate emergency and non-emergency telephones, radios, radio consoles, alphanumeric paging, communications recording equipment, TTY, City Property Alarm Monitoring, camera monitoring and departmental computer aided dispatch.

## FIRE MARSHAL

From the founding of the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Company in 1905, through 1964, the Ocean City Fire Department had the responsibilities of fire prevention and hazard mitigation. In 1964, in anticipation of building growth and the pending annexation of portions of what is now north Ocean City, the Council enacted Ordinance 124, which established three key foundations of fire protection for the town, still present today: the Office of the Fire Marshal, the Fire Prevention Commission and the Ocean City Fire Prevention Code.

The Fire Marshal’s mission is the preservation of life and the protection of property from fire, explosion and other associated emergency conditions in an effort to make the town virtually fire-free, accomplished through the development and implementation of proactive programs and services in the areas of investigations, public education, inspections and regulation. The overall goal is focused on the prevention of death, injury and property loss to the residents and visitors to the Town of Ocean City.

After 2001, the Fire Marshal’s bomb squad was identified as the primary response agency for terrorist incidents involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological,



*Bomb squad responds to a call for a suspicious package*

Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) threats. The Fire Marshals work closely with the Worcester County Fire Marshal’s Office for CBRNE incidents. As a bomb squad member they are certified by the FBI and train and assist state, regional and federal agencies with responsibilities in improvised explosive device response and mitigation. In addition to the Town of Ocean City’s contributions, the Fire Marshal’s Office has received equipment funding from Homeland Security Grant programs for items such as: the robot, bomb suits, rigging kits, containment vessel, and several of the vehicles. Additionally, after their initial certification as bomb technicians, the FBI

fully funds their recertification process which occurs every-3 years.

The Fire Marshal’s Office has numerous programs focused on proactive fire prevention measures. Some of these programs are: sprinkler protection of common areas in high-rise structures and multi-unit structures, fire code updates for assembly structures, restructuring to support residential building inspections, certified bomb squad by the FBI, the Quality Assurance Program as well as other smaller programs and code revisions aimed at fire prevention and supportive of the residents and business owners in the Town of Ocean City.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

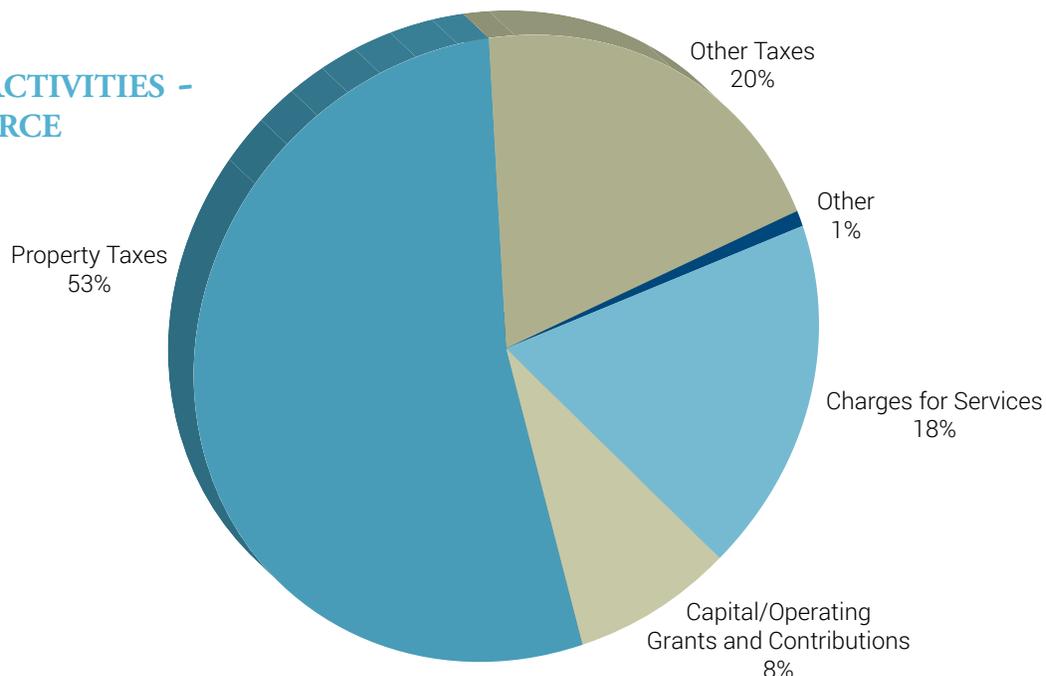
The financial information in this report distinguishes functions of the Town that are principally supported by taxes and intergovernmental revenues, *governmental activities*, from other functions that are intended to cover their costs primarily from user fees and charges and are *utilities and business services*. The governmental activities of the Town include general government, public safety, general public works and beach, sanitation and waste removal, highways and streets, economic development, recreation and culture, and construction of capital assets. The utilities and business services of the Town include water, wastewater, the Roland E. Powell Convention Center, transportation, the Ocean City Municipal Airport and Eagle's Landing Golf Course.

## GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

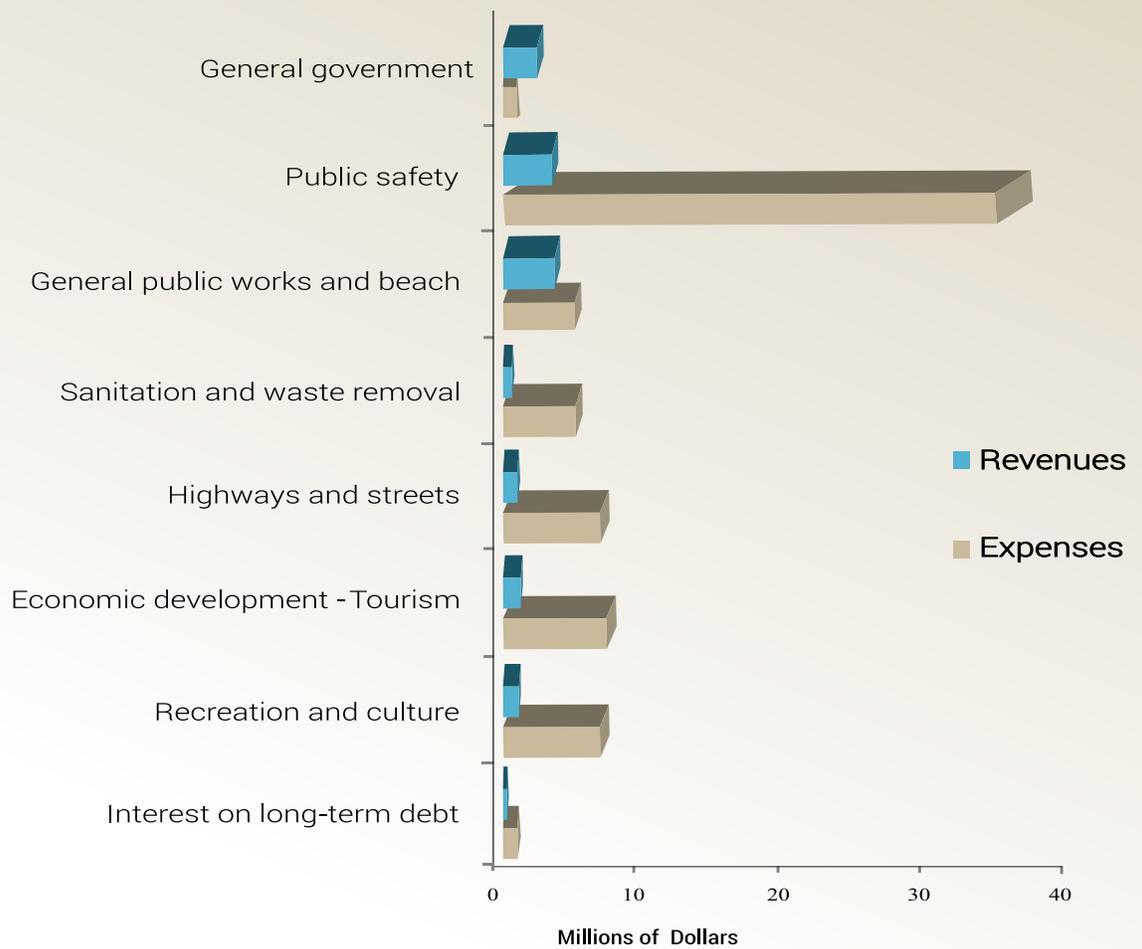
Governmental activities such as police and public safety, solid waste collection, and community services are generally supported by taxes and revenues shared from the federal government, State of Maryland and Worcester County as the fees collected for each activity do not generally cover all expenses.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM			WHERE THE MONEY GOES		
	2014	2013		2014	2013
<b>REVENUES</b>			<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Revenues:			General government	\$ 1,314,758	\$ 1,118,606
Charges for current services	\$ 14,238,098	\$ 13,843,347	Public safety	36,112,813	34,030,231
Operating grants and contributions	3,432,044	3,223,755	General public works and beach	6,329,540	5,315,570
Capital grants and contributions	105,000	551,735	Sanitation and waste removal	6,230,810	6,034,146
General revenues:			Highways and streets	7,787,410	7,157,008
Property taxes	42,199,671	41,425,378	Economic development - Tourism	7,998,815	8,055,355
Other taxes	16,042,019	15,069,904	Recreation and culture	7,654,518	7,685,116
Grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs	3,055,727	2,827,684	Interest on long-term debt	1,462,237	1,640,586
Other revenue	865,918	462,672	<i>Total expenses</i>	<u>74,890,901</u>	<u>71,036,618</u>
<i>Total revenues</i>	<u>\$ 79,938,477</u>	<u>\$ 77,404,475</u>	Increase in net assets before transfers	5,047,576	6,367,857
			Transfers to other funds	(3,363,267)	(3,480,205)
			<i>Increase in net assets</i>	<u>\$ 1,684,309</u>	<u>\$ 2,887,652</u>

## GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES - REVENUES BY SOURCE



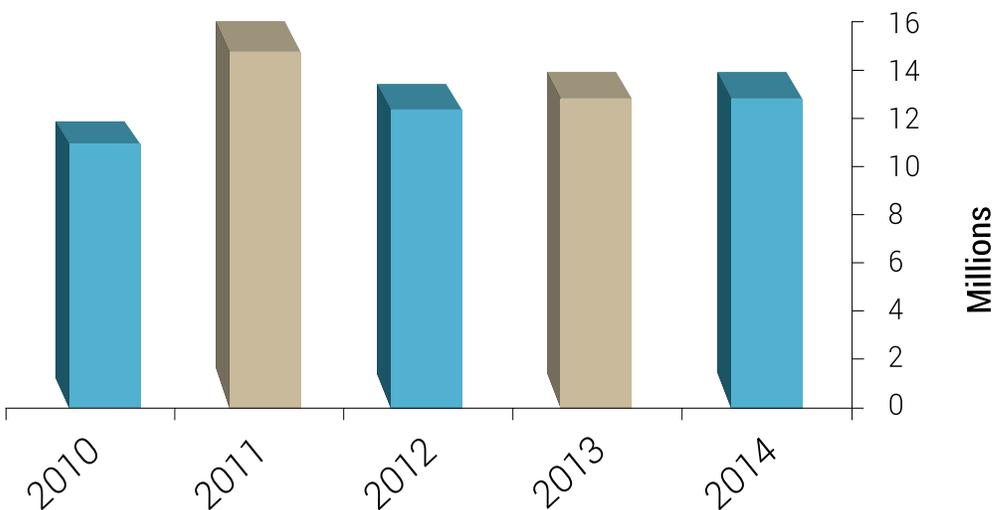
The following graph indicates the service fees and expenses of governmental activities which shows the extent in which the governmental functions produce revenues to their program costs. Expenses not covered by direct program revenues and fees are covered primarily by taxes, licenses, and state and county-shared revenues. Program revenues and fees covered 23.9% of governmental expenses in FY-2014.



The Town's overall financial position improved in 2014, increasing \$8,436,618 or 5.5% above 2013. The increase was primarily due to receipt of state and federal grants. There were gains in business-type activities of (\$3,389,042) before transfers of \$3,363,267 from the general fund resulting in an increase in net position of \$6,752,309. In governmental activities there was an increase of \$1,684,309 in net position. Total revenues in 2014 increased 6.8% or \$7,603,313 from 2013, while expenses increased \$3,887,043 or 3.7%.

Public Safety is the largest governmental function with expenses of \$36,112,813 in 2014, a 6.12% increase from 2013, primarily due to a decrease in cost for pension and retiree health contributions. It is comprised of the police department, \$21,878,102, 60.6%; emergency medical services, \$589,795, 22.2%; communications, \$1,611,215, 4.5%; fire department, \$1,908,521, 5.3%; fire marshal, \$1,124,186, 3.1%; construction inspection, \$598,682, 1.7%; emergency management, \$589,795, 1.6%; and electronics, \$370,360, 1%. With 24-hour operations, 213 of the Town's 531 full-time employees work in public safety. An additional 167 employees are hired in the summer season.

## UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE



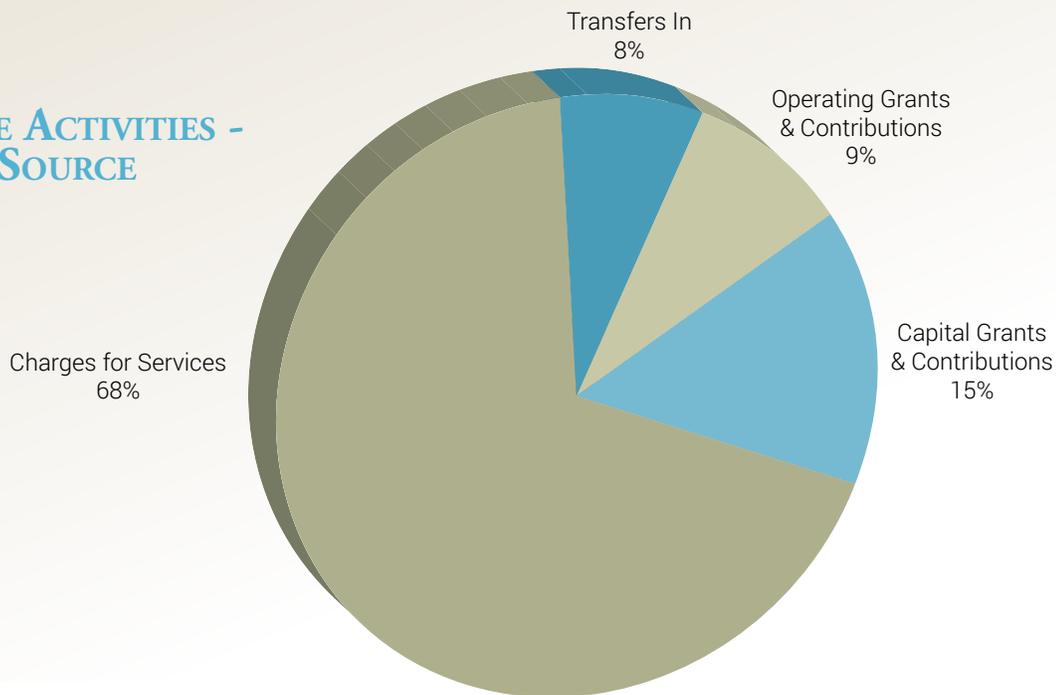
### WHAT IS FUND BALANCE?

"Fund balance" is the difference between assets and liabilities for governmental funds and is a key measure of financial health. The Town of Ocean City subdivides fund balance into *Restricted, Committed, Assigned, and Unassigned* portions. The restricted and committed portions represent set-asides for existing obligations. The unassigned portion represents set-asides for future purposes and is available for emergencies. Think of the unassigned as the savings account of the fund. It is the Town's policy to have a minimum of 15% of expenses in unassigned fund balance. At June 30, 2014, the percentage was 18.2%.

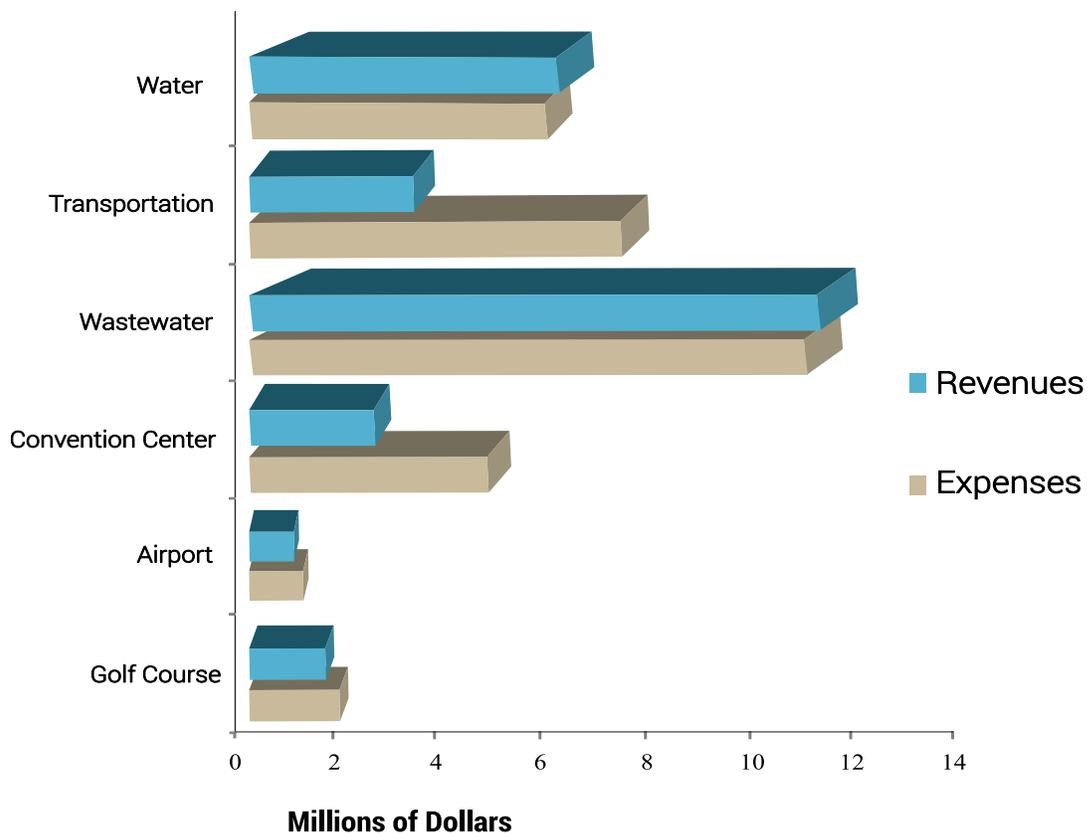
## UTILITIES AND BUSINESS SERVICES

The Town operates two utilities and four businesses and accounts for their activities similar to businesses in the private sector. Operating revenues and expenses result from providing services and delivering goods. The Water Fund operates the water treatment plants and distribution system; the Wastewater Fund operates the sewage treatment plant, pumping stations and collection system; the Convention Center Fund accounts for the activities of the Roland E. Powell Convention Center; the Transportation Fund accounts for the operations of the Town's bus system and boardwalk trams; and the Airport Fund and Golf Course Fund account for the operations of the Ocean City Municipal Airport and Eagle's Landing Golf Course. Fees and service charges are 68% of all revenues.

### BUSINESS-TYPE ACTIVITIES - REVENUES BY SOURCE



The following graph indicates the portion of expenses that are covered by service charges to customers for business-type activities. In water, wastewater, and golf funds, service charges or reserves cover all costs. The operations of the transportation, airport, and convention center recovered 46.6% of expenses from user charges.



## UTILITIES AND BUSINESS SERVICES

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
<i>Where the Money Comes From:</i>		
Charges for current services	\$ 28,624,075	\$ 27,936,713
Operating grants and contributions	3,593,254	3,627,269
Capital grants and contributions	6,501,328	1,988,370
Other revenue	49,366	146,360
<i>Total revenues</i>	<u>38,768,023</u>	<u>33,698,712</u>
<i>Where the Money Goes:</i>		
Water	6,251,720	6,428,575
Airport	1,615,099	1,906,293
Wastewater	11,966,765	11,710,740
Convention Center	5,438,689	5,221,549
Transportation	8,036,903	8,007,909
Golf Course	2,069,805	2,071,155
<i>Total expenses</i>	<u>35,378,981</u>	<u>35,346,221</u>
Increase (decrease) in net assets before transfers	3,389,042	(1,647,509)
Transfers	3,363,267	3,480,205
<i>Increase in net assets</i>	<u>\$ 6,752,309</u>	<u>\$ 1,832,696</u>

## WHAT WE OWE

The Town borrows most of the money that it spends for major capital improvements by selling general obligation bonds or from loans that do not require collateral. The Town's bonds have interest rates from .2% to 5% and are paid from 10 to 20 years. At the end of 2014, the Town owed \$94,683,809 in debt. \$49,227,772 of the debt, or 52%, will be paid from service fees from business-type activities and the tax on food and beverages. At June 30, 2014, there was \$6,387,857 reserved from food tax receipts to pay principal and interest on bonds for the convention center included in the above amount. The remaining \$45,456,037 in debt will be paid from general tax revenues.

### WHY SELL BONDS?

By selling tax exempt bonds, the Town obtains financing at a low interest rate and spreads the cost of the project over many years instead of adding the total cost to your tax bill in one year.

The Town has several pension plans that its employees participate in and has made a commitment to the employees to fund their future pensions. At June 30, 2014, the plans had an actuarial value of assets of \$101,993,880 and an actuarial accrued liability of \$119,186,275. This means that \$17,192,395 still needs to be contributed to the plans. Employees contribute 5-8% of their pay to the plans and the Town plans to fund its portion of the liability over the next ten years. The Town had assets of \$20,986,696 to fund retiree health benefits and an actuarial liability of \$46,079,000. The unfunded actuarial liability is being funded over twenty-five years.

## WHERE WE STOOD ON JUNE 30, 2014

The Town's statement of net positions provides a "snapshot" of where we stood financially on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the last day of the fiscal year. Net position represents the Town's spendable resources and ownership (equity) in the assets that make up the Town's land, infrastructure, and buildings.

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>		<u>Business-type Activities</u>		<u>Total Primary Government</u>		%
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	
Current and other assets	\$35,244,048	\$38,536,189	\$31,170,138	\$24,715,478	\$66,414,186	\$63,251,667	5.0%
Capital assets	94,687,042	88,696,464	112,248,228	107,245,192	206,935,270	195,941,656	5.6
<i>Total assets</i>	<u>129,931,090</u>	<u>127,232,653</u>	<u>143,418,366</u>	<u>131,960,670</u>	<u>273,349,456</u>	<u>259,193,323</u>	5.5
Deferred Outflows of Resources	118,622	135,520	432,132	517,090	550,754	652,610	-15.6
Long-term liabilities outstanding	48,465,330	48,737,265	49,227,772	43,860,933	97,693,102	92,598,198	5.5
Other liabilities	10,418,686	9,149,521	4,320,035	5,066,445	14,738,721	14,215,966	3.7
<i>Total liabilities</i>	<u>58,884,016</u>	<u>57,886,786</u>	<u>53,547,807</u>	<u>48,927,378</u>	<u>112,431,823</u>	<u>106,814,164</u>	5.3
Net position:							
Invested in capital assets, net of debt	57,349,894	53,768,043	70,435,192	65,917,836	127,785,086	119,685,879	6.8
Restricted	115,000	165,000	6,272,857	7,474,542	6,387,857	7,639,542	-16.4
Unrestricted	13,700,802	15,548,344	13,594,642	10,158,004	27,295,444	25,706,348	6.2
<i>Total net position</i>	<u>\$71,165,696</u>	<u>\$69,481,387</u>	<u>\$90,302,691</u>	<u>\$83,550,382</u>	<u>\$161,468,387</u>	<u>\$153,031,769</u>	5.5%

# EL GALEÓN ANDALUCÍA SAILS INTO OCEAN CITY

El Galeón Andalucía, a replica of a Spanish Galleon from the 16<sup>th</sup> century of the New Spain and of Tierra Firme, sailed into Ocean City as part of the Tall Ship exhibit sponsored by National Air, Sea and Space Foundation in August 2013. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, this type of ship was used for trading with various ports in America and Asia.

Galleons were originally constructed of oak, pine and various hardwoods for the hull and decking and required hundreds of expert tradesman working day and night to complete and were used mainly for importing and exporting goods. Harsh conditions on board coupled with long periods of time at sea, led to most of the crew perishing. It was due to this reality that advanced rigging systems were developed so that it could be sailed with a skeleton crew.



El Galeón Andalucía was built during 2009 and 2010 by the Fundación Nao Victoria and developed by Ignacio Fernández at the Punta Umbria shipyard located in Huelva, Spain. Its name refers to the land of the galleon's birth, Andalusia, which is located in the south of Central Madrid. The ship is constructed of iroko wood, oak and pine fiberglass and polyester resin, cast iron, wrought iron and galvanized iron nails and took 16 months to complete. The sails were made in Barcelona, Spain. Usually there is a 20 member crew, however, they can accommodate up to 30 crew members. Although it is primarily wind powered, it also has 2 – 400hp engines which assist during port arrivals and departures, during bad weather and improper wind direction. Additionally, it has 10 cannons, 4 anchors and 3 miles of rope. El Galeón Andalucía is the only galleon class vessel sailing today. The ship was featured in the recent NBC series Crossbones which starred John Malkovich as the legendary pirate Blackbeard. During the event in Ocean City, over 14,000 people toured the vessel.

## OPERATING INFORMATION FOR 2014

### General Information:

Year-round residents	7,092
Registered voters	5,267
Average summer population	253,561

### General Government:

Construction permits issued	1,564
Value of construction	\$51,755,670

### Solid Waste

Trash processed (tons)	33,895
Trash recycled (tons)	189

### Wastewater:

Daily treatment capacity (gallons)	5,445,000
Summer treatment average (gallons)	9,603,000
Plants daily capacity (gallons)	18,000,000

### Water:

Daily average consumption (gallons)	4,637,616
Plants daily capacity (gallons)	18,000,00

### Fire and Emergency Services:

Fire responses	1,262
Ambulance responses	4,157
Fire Safety inspections/re-inspection	2,423
Fire investigations	98
Volunteer Firemen, Life Honor, Gold Badge	235
Classified Emergency Medical Technicians/Fighters	44
Seasonal Emergency Medical Technicians	67

### Public Safety – Police:

Total arrests	2,921
Parking violations	10,460
Classified officers	105
Seasonal officers	100

### Tourism and Recreation:

Seasonal Beach Patrol Personnel	190
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*Would you like your utility bill sent to your email address?*

If so, please email the following to: [myocwaterbill@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:myocwaterbill@oceancitymd.gov)

- Account Number
- Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address

Please indicate if you would like email only or email and printed bill.

Visit our website to check your utility and tax account balances or to pay these bills online.

[www.oceancitymd.gov](http://www.oceancitymd.gov)



## What's Inside:

**2 Strategic Planning**  
The Town of Ocean City develops a five-year blueprint for the future

### Online Services

Ocean City is committed to providing online services to our residents, businesses and property owners

**3 Update from the City Engineer**

An up-to-date look at the projects we are working on

**5 FAQs from City Hall**

Answers to the most commonly asked questions

**6 Flood Map**

Town of Ocean City staff are working closely with FEMA representatives to aid citizens...



Town of Ocean City, Maryland

# Fall Newsletter

## So long Summer, Hello Fall: Stay Connected, Stay Informed All Year Long!

**A**s the seasons change, many of you will pack up your summer residence and put away your flip flops, fleeing the beach until the spring. As a municipal government, it's important that we stay connected to you no matter the season, which is why we rely on many different communication tools to keep you connected:

- **eNews Alerts:** *You've Got Mail!* You can have Town of Ocean City information delivered directly to your inbox. Visit the **eNews Alerts** tab on the top of the website: [www.oceancitymd.gov](http://www.oceancitymd.gov) and sign in! You can

add your personal preferences and receive alerts on a wide variety of subject matters, including jobs, council meetings, council agendas, RFP's, recreation programs, surfing notifications and much more!

- **FM Radio Station:** Program your radio to **99.5 FM!** Thanks to a hazard mitigation grant from the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the skill and dedication of a very experienced staff, the Town of Ocean City now has a quality channel to provide Ocean City residents and visitors real time information, including public service announcements, evacuation information,

and weather and emergency alerts. Also, for our out of town property owners, we have a customized App for Android (Google) and iPhone users, which can be downloaded at your App store!!

- **Social Media:** For those of you who use **Facebook** and **Twitter** to get your news, have no fear, Ocean City offers pages for you to "follow" or "like" to keep you informed. Visit <http://oceancitymd.gov/sociallinks.html> for a full list.



# Strategic Plan Goals & Priorities for 2014

## GOALS 2019

-  1<sup>st</sup> Class Resort and Tourist Destination
-  Financially Sound Town Government
-  More Livable Community for Residents
-  Excellent Service through a High Performing Town Organization
-  Revitalized Ocean City: Development and Redevelopment

## MANAGEMENT AGENDA 2014

### Top Priority

- Planning and Zoning Evaluation
- 800 MHz Radio System Replacement
- Sports Destination Marketing Program: Expansion
- 9-1-1 Primary Answering Point/
- 3-1-1 Non Emergency Government Information Center
- Information Technology Upgrade Plan

### High Priority

- Caroline Outdoor Stage: Upgrades
- City Facilities Security Plan
- License Plate Recognition Program for Route 90
- Whiteside Facility Replacement
- Tall Ship Capacity
- Network Backbone Replacement
- Land Acquisition/Disposal Strategy

### Moderate Priority

- June Behavior Action Plan
- Beach Events/Tournaments Expansion
- Seasonal Police Comprehensive Evaluation
- Avaya Phone System Replacement
- Town of Ocean City Equipment and Labor Guidelines

For the past two years, elected officials, management, and community stakeholders have worked together to develop a Strategic Plan for the Town of Ocean City. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to develop a five-year blueprint for the future as well as a one-year action agenda.

Facilitated by Lyle Sumek Associates, Inc., this plan outlines the vision, goals, mission, core beliefs and one-year work plan for projects recognized as top, high and moderate priority, to best achieve our community's top five goals. In addition, efforts are currently underway to develop a Tourism Strategic Plan.

The complete Town of Ocean City Strategic Plan is available for your review at [http://oceancitymd.gov/City\\_Manager/StrategicPlanFinal.pdf](http://oceancitymd.gov/City_Manager/StrategicPlanFinal.pdf)

## Online Services

Ocean City is committed to providing online services to our residents, businesses and property owners, allowing you to accomplish your needs more effectively from the comfort of your own home! Here is what you can do ONLINE with the Town of OC:

- **Building Permit:** By simply going online, contractors and citizens will now be able to complete the most common steps in the building permit process including applications, payments and scheduling inspections. In addition, the online program improves access to permit information by allowing citizens and contractors to perform inquiries directly from the Internet. Please note online services are limited to plumbing, electrical and mechanical permits. <https://ocgov-portal.com/wps/portal>
- **Online Records:** The Laserfiche Document Management System provides documents and information accessibility and availability with self-serve information access. The new system allows scanned records to be available to the public online through weblink, providing users with the ability to search documents which are indexed by subject matter, as well as the ability to browse folders, conduct full-text searches and the capability to export images to PDF format for high-quality printing and e-mail capability. [http://oceancitymd.gov/Planning\\_and\\_Zoning/](http://oceancitymd.gov/Planning_and_Zoning/)
- **Bill Pay:** Pay your utility, tax and other town bills from the comfort of your home by using the town's automated payment system. Visit: <https://www.paybill.com/townoceancity/>
- **Licensing:** Businesses and property owners can now complete routine tasks associated with licenses with a few simple steps online. The online licensing program allows citizens to search for licenses, renew licenses and pay for licenses. <https://ocgov-portal.com/wps/portal>

## COMING SOON

### Enjoy our smoke free beach and Boardwalk

Beginning in May 2015, Ocean City will offer Designated Smoking and Non-Smoking Areas on the beach and Boardwalk. At this time, an official ordinance has not been passed; however, you can sign up to be notified of changes at [www.oceancitymd.gov](http://www.oceancitymd.gov).



# Update from the City Engineer:

We have many exciting projects taking place throughout the Town of Ocean City, including the beginning and completion of several buildings in our community. Here is an up-to-date look at the projects we are working on.....



## OC Fire Department - Station 4

The Ocean City Fire Department's Station 4, located at 129th Street and Coastal Highway, is complete. The new building, recognized in the Town of Ocean City's Capital Improvement Plan and the Town's Strategic Plan, has been a priority for the Fire Department for years, due to the concentration of high-rise structures and year-round residents in the north end of the town. The new structure boasts 11,500-square-feet, increasing the capacity of the engine bay by more than one third. In addition, the new building will provide areas for both duty crews and the department's successful live-in program. A ribbon cutting for the new station is planned for late October, at which time firefighters will begin calling the new building home.

## Breaking Ground for Beach Patrol

Ocean City officials gathered in September for an official groundbreaking ceremony to begin construction for the new Beach Patrol Headquarters. The new three-story building will be located at the corner of Talbot Street and South Philadelphia Avenue, which is directly across the street from its existing location. With traditional Ocean City aesthetic design, as outlined by Ocean City Development Corporation's downtown design standards, the new building boasts 10,000 square feet of space and provides facilities for beach patrol vehicle and equipment storage, training, roll call and administrative areas. In addition, the two million dollar project holds a multi-purpose training room and an area for the Ocean City Police Department's Bicycle Unit. Completion of the new building is expected during the summer of 2015.



## Performing Arts Center

Construction of the new Performing Art Center, located in the Roland E. Powell Convention Center, is nearing an end. The 1,200 seat auditorium replaces the prior stage, the original first floor exhibit hall and a portion of the second floor ballroom. It includes two tiers of fixed seating, dressing rooms, concession area and box office. State-of-the-art stage equipment allows greater flexibility, allowing diverse types of performing arts to be featured in the auditorium.

The first performance to grace the stage will be The Texas Tenors who wowed crowds on *America's Got Talent* and won the hearts of millions. Mark your calendars for their Christmas show on Saturday, December 13. For more information, please contact Sharon Bradford @ [sbradford@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:sbradford@oceancitymd.gov) or 410-723-8608.

## Special Projects to Note:

- The Mayor and City Council recognize that some canals throughout the City have filled in to the extent that they are no longer navigable. On October 31, 2013, the City earmarked \$500,000 to begin dredging the highest priority canals. Canal dredging is underway at Hitchens Avenue and Trimper Avenue. Crews will then move to the canal across from 48th Street at Wight Bay Condominium and the canal just south of 52nd Street. In addition, the shallow areas near five storm drain outfalls will be dredged as well.
- Recoating of the seawall along the Boardwalk has been completed by the Department of Natural Resources. This year, the Army Corp. of Engineers will be rebuilding the concrete cap and recoating the inlet jetty seawall. The seawalls are integral structures that help protect Inlet and Boardwalk properties from storm surges that pound the coast.

# Winter Schedules

**Winterfest of Lights:** Join Santa Claus at Ocean City's Winterfest of Lights, November 20th through January 4<sup>th</sup>. Board the Winterfest Express for a one mile journey set to music through 58 acres of spectacular lights featuring themed displays and a 50-foot Christmas tree! After your ride, warm up with a cup of hot chocolate at the Winterfest Pavilion and browse the Yukon Cornelius Gift Shop. Santa will be available every evening through December 23<sup>rd</sup>.



**November 20, 2014 – January 4, 2015**

*\*Special tree lighting ceremony on Thursday, November 20, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Northside Park's Winterfest Village at 127th Street and the bay, is free and open to the public.*

**Sunday through Thursday from 5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.  
Friday & Saturday 5:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.**

Admission is \$5.00 for those 12 years and older,  
and FREE for those 11 years and younger.

Trams are handicap accessible.

## Coastal Highway "Beach Bus":

**October 26, 2104 – April 2, 2015**

**Sunday-Thursday**  
6:20 a.m. – 11:35 p.m.  
Every 40 minutes

11:40 p.m. – 6:15 a.m.  
NO BUS SERVICE

**Friday and Saturday**  
6 a.m. – 6 a.m.  
Every 30 minutes

## Solid Waste Schedule:

**October 14, 2014 - May 10, 2015**

### RESIDENTIAL:

#### Monday

Oceanside (75th Street to 146th Street)  
Bayside (75th Street to 135th Street)

#### Tuesday

All Areas (Inlet to 74th Street)  
Bayside (136th Street to 146th Street)

### COMMERCIAL:

**Monday/Wednesday/Friday – All Areas**

*\*No Trash Collection on Thanksgiving Day,  
Christmas Day and New Year's Day.*

## Holiday Information

The following holidays are observed by the Town of Ocean City and administrative offices will be closed on these dates:

**Veterans Day: November 11, 2014**

**Thanksgiving: November 27-28, 2014**

**Christmas: December 25-26, 2014**

**New Year's: January 1, 2015**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: January 19, 2015**

**Presidents Day: February 16, 2015**

## Christmas Tree Drop Off

The Town of Ocean City is once again providing a Christmas tree drop-off at the 100th Street Municipal Parking Lot. Trees can be placed in the northeast corner of the lot from Dec. 26-Jan. 15. Please remove all tinsel, ornaments and non-wooden items from the tree.

## Election Day – November 4!

The office of the Mayor and four council positions will be on the ballot during the regular election, which will be held November 4, 2014, in the Roland E. Powell Convention Center. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Contact the City Clerk's Office, room 220, City Hall at 410.289.8824 for more information.

# News Briefs from the Department of Public Works

• **Water Reminder:** The Department of Public Works is reminding citizens that you should flush your water pipes by allowing the water to run for a few minutes when you return to your home or property after being away for an extended period of time. Also, the bi-annual hydrant flushing (which occurs in the fall and spring) is scheduled to begin in late October. Residents and businesses are reminded that after flushing there may be a slight discoloration of the water. This is not harmful and will dissipate after a short time. If you wish to clear your pipes, run cold water for several minutes until the water runs clear.

• **St. Louis Avenue – Phase III:** Work has begun on the final segment of the St. Louis Avenue Project, which encompasses St. Louis Avenue from N. Division Street north to 4th Street; N. Division Street from St. Louis to the Bay; 1st Street from

Philadelphia to the Bay; 2nd Street from Philadelphia to St. Louis; and 3rd Street from Philadelphia to the Bay. Road closures are expected. For more information or for questions or concerns, please contact the Public Works Department at 410.520.5428.

• **Little Salisbury Street Improvements:** Residents in the Little Salisbury neighborhood should expect street improvements to begin during the winter months. During the project, which will take place over the next two years with the exception of the summer months, the storm water piping system, inclusive of catch basins, are being replaced. In addition, sidewalk work will be addressed in both cases of ADA compliance on H/C corner ramps and replacement of those areas that may currently be in a state of condemnation due to cracks, uneven surfaces or surface delamination.

Also working in conjunction with the Town, Comcast, Verizon, and DPL will be doing some system upgrades to their cabling in the Little Salisbury neighborhood. This too will involve some partial sidewalk removals, directional boring, and excavation activities.

Residents should be aware that the infrastructure upgrades will include a sequence of events such as saw cutting of the road surface, excavation for the trench creation and pipe installation, backfilling of the excavation, and then pavement "patching" of the trenched area. Upon completion of all activities described above, we will then commence some roadway surface milling (as needed), some roadway surface crack repair (as needed), some pavement fabric installation over cracked surfaces (as needed) and then a mass re-pavement, via overlay, of the entire neighborhood.

## Leaving OC? The OCPD Will Check On Your Property for FREE!!

With many residents and businesses vacant for an extended period of time during the winter season, resort police offer a program to prevent burglaries, trespassing and other crimes. The Ocean City Police Department's Residential Security Check Program allows residences and business owners to register their properties with the OCPD when they are leaving the area for an extended period of time, in turn, leaving police to "check" on the property during their daily patrol shifts.

In addition to being a wonderful crime prevention tool, residential security checks promote proactive police-citizen interaction and encourage the sharing of vital information about our community. For more information, or to fill out an online registration form, visit <http://oceancitymd.gov/Police/securitycheck.html> or call 410.723.6610.

## Problem Property? Contact the PRESS Committee:

The Property Review and Enforcement Strategies for Safe-housing (PRESS) Committee is a group of town officials authorized to address communitywide quality of life issues. The group, consisting of members from the police, building, zoning, fire marshal and finance departments, functions as a task force designed to meet regularly and discuss civil and criminal code violations within the community.

In an effort to hold properties to a high standard and ensure code compliance, city agencies issue citations for various violations, including repeated violations of overcrowding, fire and life safety, noise, and other housing violations. PRESS members are hopeful that addressing complaints on a case by case basis will improve living conditions for residents and renters. In addition, the committee aims to improve structure and esthetics of buildings within the community.

The PRESS Committee encourages all community members to report properties that they feel may be in violation of a safety, building or health code. Citizens with complaints or concerns are asked to contact Blaine Smith, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development at 410.289.8855.

### Rental Info to Know!!

If you rent your property to anyone at any time, the law requires you to obtain an Ocean City rental license and an Ocean City noise control permit. This is to maintain the character of single family residential districts and assure compliance with all laws, ordinances and regulations applicable to rental housing units within the corporate limits of Ocean City. It is also the purpose to ensure safe, healthy and habitable housing conditions in rental housing units, to prevent deterioration of rental housing units and to encourage responsible management, maintenance and use of rental housing units by the inspection and licensing of these units.

Applications may be obtained at City Hall or by contacting 410.289.8833.

# FAQs from City Hall

### Q: When can I ride my bike on the Boardwalk?

A: Bicycles are permitted on the boardwalk from Tuesday after Labor Day through Friday before Memorial Day, at any time, (with the exception of Springfest & Sunfest). From Saturday of Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day, you may cruise the boards between 2:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. of the same day.

### Q: Can I bring my dog to the beach or Boardwalk?

A: Your four-legged family members can join the fun on the beach and boardwalk between October 1 and April 30. Dogs must be kept on a leash and owners must remove any waste deposited on public or private property. Don't forget to take your pup for a trip to the Dog Playground, located at 94th Street and bayside, so your pet can let loose and enjoy their time in Ocean City.

### Q: How do I buy tickets for Springfest/Sunfest?

A: It's EASY!! Just stop by the Roland E. Powell Convention Center Box Office, Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or contact TicketMaster at 1-800-551-SEAT or [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). Our die-hard fans can sign up to join the VIP Club and be the first to receive concert announcements, future event dates and complete event schedules! For more info, visit: [http://oceancitymd.gov/Recreation\\_and\\_Parks/vip.html](http://oceancitymd.gov/Recreation_and_Parks/vip.html).

### Q: How do I arrange for bulk pick-up?

A: If you want to get rid of household items, such as appliances and furniture, contact Ocean City's Solid Waste Department. Service operates Monday through Friday from May 1 through September 30. From October 1 through April 30, the service operates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The cost is \$20 for the first item or \$30 for up to three items and \$5 for each additional item. For more information, please call 410-524-0318.

### Q: When are the hours of operation?

A: Most of our administrative offices at City Hall are open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., with the exception of holidays.



# Know Your Address – Make it Visible

**K**nowing your address might seem like something that should have been learned in elementary school. Unfortunately, if a visitor is in need of medical attention or calls 911 for emergency response, they often times don't know their location and it can be quite challenging for our personnel to try to determine where they're located rather than immediately send help their way. The address, which may not seem like a "must know" to visitors, can be critical for first responders, including fire, EMS and police, during emergency and lifesaving response time.

"Most of our visitors disregard the address where they're staying as soon as they arrive," said Emergency Services Director Joe Theobald. "Once they turn off their GPS and park their car, they are officially in vacation mode, which is exactly what we want. Unfortunately, if one of our visitors is in need of medical attention or calls 911

for emergency response, they often times don't know their location and it can be quite challenging for our personnel to try to determine where they are located rather than immediately sending help their way."

Owners of rental properties are encouraged to display a complete address, including the name of the building, on the back of the front door of their rental. Lastly, visitors are encouraged to know where they're staying.

If you are not sure of your assigned street address or if it differs from the service address listed at the top of your utility bill, please call Karen Zera, GIS Coordinator for the Town of Ocean City at 410.289.8466 or email [kzera@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:kzera@oceancitymd.gov). "We certainly hope our visitors never need to call us," Theobald finished. "But in the worst case, if they need us during their trip to Ocean City, we want to be there for them and we want to be there fast."

**Program your  
radio to 99.5 FM**

**Out of town property  
owners, residents and  
visitors can download  
our APP at the APP  
store on Andriod and  
Apple devices.**



## Town of Ocean City works with FEMA on FIRM/FIS



**M**any citizens have heard about the newly proposed Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report, which have been drafted by FEMA and affect much of Ocean City from the previous flood hazard zones. During the past several months, Town of Ocean City staff has worked closely with FEMA representatives to aid citizens in determining their current and future flood risk and answer questions regarding the impending changes.

"The maps are still preliminary and have not yet been officially adopted," said Ocean

City Chief Building Official, Kevin Brown. "Some areas of Ocean City may now be out of the floodplain zones and may not be required to obtain flood insurance, however; we strongly encourage property owners to maintain their current flood insurance policy."

Preliminary copies of the newly proposed maps are available online at <https://msc.fema.gov/>.

The projected maps are expected to be adopted by Ocean City in May of 2015; however, the date is subject to change. For help interpreting a FIRM, or any

question you may have relating to the newly proposed flood maps, please feel free to contact The Chief Building Official Kevin Brown & Town of Ocean City Building Department at 410-289-8855 or you may also telephone the FEMA Map Assistance Center (FMAC) at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).

**For additional flood hazard  
protection information, visit:  
[http://oceancitymd.gov/Planning\\_and\\_Zoning/fema-hazard.html](http://oceancitymd.gov/Planning_and_Zoning/fema-hazard.html) and  
[http://oceancitymd.gov/Emergency\\_Management/flood.html](http://oceancitymd.gov/Emergency_Management/flood.html).**

# Put a Freeze on Winter Fires!

## Winter Safety Tips from the OCFD

The Ocean City Fire Department is reminding citizens that home fires are more prevalent in winter months than any other season. Unsafe heat sources, holiday cooking and festive decorations create a greater risk for fires. The OCFD wants residents and visitors to put a freeze on winter fires by being mindful of the following safety tips during the upcoming season.

➤**Heating:** Heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fires during the winter months. In fact, half of all home heating fires occur in December, January, and February. Be sure your heater is in good working condition and keep all space heaters at least four feet away from combustible materials.

➤**Cooking:** The holidays are upon us and nothing is more festive than a great meal with family and friends. When cooking with a turkey fryer, follow the manufacturer's instructions, never use on a wooden deck or garage, and always cook outdoors, at least 25 ft. from buildings. Also, remember when cooking on a stove to never leave cooking unattended and turn pan handles inward to prevent spill injuries. Keep your ovens clean and if a fire occurs, keep the door closed.

➤**Holiday Decorations:** The winter holiday season should be a joyous time of year. However, certain types of fires and injuries associated with holiday decorating are much more common during this season. Always select a fresh tree and do not place the tree near heat sources. Use only UL approved holiday lights and do not connect more than three strands or use light strands that are damaged. Always use proper sized extension cords and never overload circuits.



➤**Carbon Monoxide:** Carbon monoxide incidents are more common during the winter months, and in residential properties. The Town of Ocean City requires the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in new and existing one and two family dwellings, as well as new and existing multifamily dwellings, where fuel-burning equipment is installed or operated. Fuel burning equipment could be gas water heaters, furnaces, dryers, fireplaces or wood stoves.

➤**Water Pipes:** A frozen water service, or a burst water pipe, is an inconvenience and expense that most people would like to avoid. To protect your water lines against the possibility of freezing this winter, consider repairing broken windows and ensure windows and vents are closed during the winter. Also, insulate water pipes in unheated areas of your home or business, including crawl spaces. Residents of mobile homes should check the condition of the heat tape on their

water service and water meter. An unheated indoor water meter should be protected with an insulated box and water pipes should be wrapped in insulation and heat tape. Outside water taps and underground sprinkler systems should have their water supply shut off inside the house at the isolation valve for the tap and sprinkler line. Lines should be drained or blown out. A very thin stream of water (as thick as a pencil lead) running continuously from at least one tap will help prevent a frozen water service. If you plan to be away from home over the winter period, close the main water isolation valve in your home. This is located next to your water meter.

➤**Candles:** Most candle fires are started by candles being too close to combustibles. Avoid using lighted candles and keep candles out of the reach of children and pets. Never leave a burning candle unattended.

➤**Smoke Alarms:** Another way to put the freeze on winter fires is to assure smoke alarms in your residence are working properly. Smoke alarms should be tested at least monthly and should have the batteries replaced twice a year. A simple way to remember to change your smoke alarm battery is to change the battery when you change your clocks. Any person needing a smoke alarm or battery can contact Fire Department Headquarters at 410-289-4346.

**JOIN OUR TEAM:** The Ocean City Fire Department offers exceptional and exciting opportunities for men and women seeking the benefit of helping others. For more information, please contact Ocean City Vol. Fire Company President, Cliff Christello at 410-289-4346.

## Town of Ocean City Finds Beauty and Benefits in Landscaping

The Town of Ocean City's landscaping requirements protect, preserve and promote the aesthetic appeal, scenic beauty, character and value of the resort community. They improve the appearance of parking areas and property, as well as provide a buffer between non-compatible land uses. Most importantly, the landscaping promotes public health and safety through the reduction of noise pollution, storm water runoff, air pollution, visual pollution and artificial light glare.

Landscaping requirements have been in place since 1972 and enhanced in 2003 when the Town was included into Maryland's Critical Area law. "Rule of thumb is one tree for every 35' of perimeter and five shrubs for every one tree," commented Gail Blazer, Environmental Engineer for the Town of Ocean City.

"The beauty and environmental health of the Town is enhanced by trees. However, many of the trees have reached maturity and some that are too big for the location and have to be removed. For this reason, town code includes a maintenance provision." It is important to note that they are required to be replaced unless a waiver is received. A Tree Removal form must be completed and submitted for approval.

The Town developed a number of grant and rebate programs to offer incentives to encourage landscaping efforts including the BayScape Plant, Beach District Plant and Rain Garden Incentive programs. A \$25 tree rebate program is offered in combination with a \$25 State coupon.



Landscaping located on Town property is protected. Please notify Parks Maintenance Department at 410-524-0125 to address any issue with the vegetation in public right-of-ways or other Town property. To learn more programs and the criteria for residential and commercial landscaping, contact Environmental Engineer Gail Blazer at 410-289-8825.

## Report to Citizens and Fall Newsletter

For additional information or questions, contact:

Town of Ocean City  
Finance Department  
City Hall  
301 Baltimore Avenue  
PO Box 158  
Ocean City, MD 21843  
  
(410) 289-8858

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## Upcoming Events to Add to Your Community Calendar

### November 1

#### SWING FOR YOUTH GOLF

Eagle's Landing Golf Course,  
10:00 a.m. Shotgun

### November 3

#### SAFE SITTER

#### 1-DAY BABYSITTING CLASS

Northside Park Recreation Complex

### November 8

#### OCEAN CITY LIFE SAVING STATION MUSEUM

#### STORM WARRIORS RUN/WALK

Boardwalk

### November 18

#### LINE DANCE GALORE

Northside Park Complex

### November 20

#### WINTERFEST OF LIGHTS TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY – FREE

Northside Park

### November 22

#### TURKEY TROT GOLF TOURNAMENT

Eagles Landing Golf Course

### November 28-29

#### HOLIDAY SHOPPERS FAIR

Ocean City Convention Center

### December 3

#### PIZZA PARTY WITH SANTA

Northside Park Recreation Complex

### December 6

#### OCEAN CITY CHRISTMAS PARADE

Gold Coast Mall, 100<sup>th</sup> Street Coastal Highway

### December 7

#### OCEAN CITY LIFE SAVING STATION MUSEUM

#### OPEN HOUSE

Ocean City Life Saving Station Museum

### December 31

#### NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

Northside Park

• Learn more at [www.ococean.com](http://www.ococean.com)

### January 17, 2015

#### PERFORMING ARTS RIBBON CUTTING

*Julien Benichou and the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra will be performing along with a few other surprises.*

Convention Center

### April 4, 2015

#### EASTER BUNNY FUNSHOP

Northside Park

### April 12, 2015

#### ANNUAL SPRING CLEANUP

City Wide: For more information, please call 410.524.0318

Visit [ococean.com](http://ococean.com) for more events and updates.

## WINTER & SPRING PROGRAMS

Ocean City Recreation and Parks offers more than one hundred classes, programs, activities and events for both residents and visitors. A complete guide can be found at: [www.oceancitymd.gov](http://www.oceancitymd.gov), under Recreation and Parks/Recreation Programs.

## EAGLES LANDING TALON CLUB

Eagle's Landing is the home of the Talon Club, the Best Frequent Golfers' Deal in town. Talon Club members enjoy discounted green fees all year, guest discounts, discounts on clothing and merchandise and use of U.S.G.A. handicap service.

Also available and free to Town of Ocean City property owners is our Local Rewards program. Play golf at a discounted rate and earn rewards dollars that can be redeemed for free golf and merchandise from our pro shop.

Call the pro shop at 410-213-7277 to get all of the details on these two great programs. Eagle's Landing was named a "Best in State" golf course by Golf Digest for 2013-2014.

