



TOWN OF OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND
REPORT TO CITIZENS
FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015



TO THE CITIZENS OF OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND,

When the Roland E. Powell Convention Center was renovated in 1995, it led to two decades of improved hotel and restaurant sales. The Performing Arts Center at the convention center, which opened in December 2014, is anticipated to similarly increase economic activity in the resort. It has greatly enhanced cultural and entertainment opportunities for both residents and visitors. While Ocean City has long been a successful and exciting summer resort, improvements such as the Performing Arts Center make it an even more attractive and lively year-round residential community. Other improvements, such as the above new headquarters for the Beach Patrol improve departmental functions and services to the public.

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, 2015 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, 2015, (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, or you may get a copy by contacting the Finance Department at 410-289-8858.

MAYOR

Richard W. Meehan

CITY COUNCIL

Lloyd Martin, President
Mary P. Knight, Secretary
Douglas S. Cymek
Dennis W. Dare

FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR

Martha J. Bennett, CPA

THE ECONOMY

The Town widely uses advertising, promotions, and social media to publicize the vacation and leisure opportunities in Ocean City, increasing from \$2.1 million a decade ago to \$6.5 million in 2015. For the year ended June 30, 2015, room sales were

3.58% above the prior year and food and beverage sales were up 4.53%. Over the past five years, room sales have increased an average of 4.67% per year.

There were 1,472 construction permits

issued in 2015, compared to 1,564 in 2014. However, the estimated value of construction in 2015 was \$57,999,098 compared to \$51,755,670 in 2014. A new hotel, the La Quinta at 32nd Street, opened in 2015 and is valued at \$10,235,300.

MAJOR INITIATIVES AND DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The Town proudly opened the Performing Arts Center (Arts Center) located at the Convention Center on 40th Street in December 2014 when it hosted the Texas Tenors as its first performance. The project was funded through a partnership with the Maryland Stadium Authority. The Town contributed \$8.3 million dollars through the sale of bonds in December 2013 and \$5.7 million was contributed by the Authority.

The construction of the Arts Center was completed in two phases. The first phase of the project insured that there was not a loss in exhibit space by the addition of the new center, with a new bayside exhibit hall replaced that exhibit hall C. The facility was designed by Becker Morgan/GWWO Architects and construction was managed by Whiting Turner. The Arts Center has 1,200 fixed seats, professionally designed

room acoustics with quality digital sound and light system with a full motorized fly gallery system with powered and standard line sets. In addition to the auditorium space and lobby, the project includes full "back of the house" infrastructure including dressing rooms, show docks, and storage areas. The Arts Center is an asset to the Convention Center and the community.

OCEAN CITY BEACH PATROL HEADQUARTERS

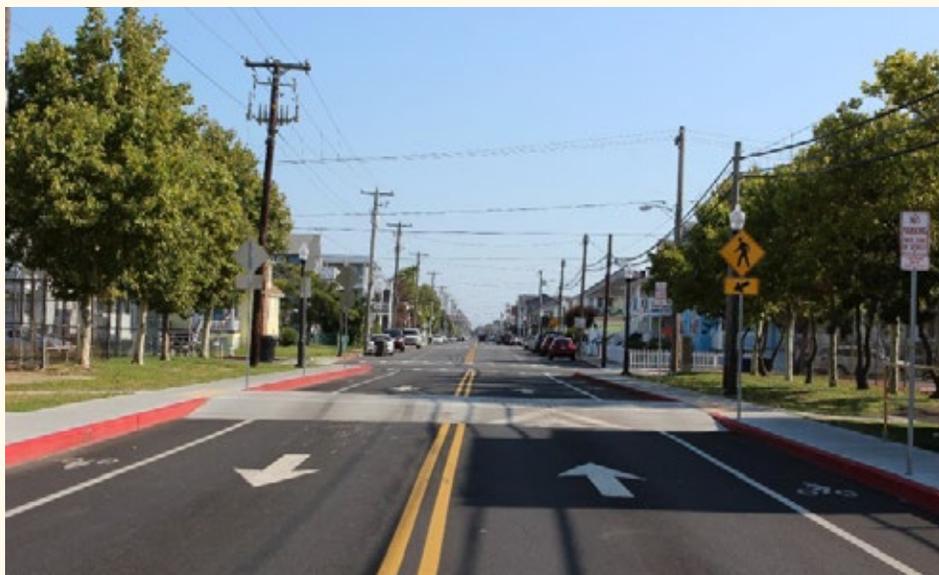


The Ocean City Beach Patrol (OCBP) is an elite team of men and women dedicated to ocean rescue and beach safety and is a year round operation as it takes months of preparation and time to recruit and train the over 200 seasonal beach patrol personnel. That task has become easier with the completion of the new Beach Patrol Headquarters building located on the corner of Talbot Street and Philadelphia Avenue, after many years occupying the former Police Department buildings on Dorchester Street.

The three-story Beach Patrol building, featured on the cover of this report, utilizes the first floor for the operations, the second floor for training and the third floor for the administrative offices. The building also has an area for the police bike patrol and a garage which is used for storage of jet skis and ATVs. Additionally, the building can be utilized for staging in the event of a major emergency in the south end of Town. The \$2.2 million dollar project was funded from bonds sold in 2013 and contributions from the Ocean City Development Corporation.

RECONSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS AVENUE

St. Louis Avenue was reconstructed in three phases funded by \$4.9 million in bonds sold in 2012. The final phase, completed in 2015, encompassed St. Louis Avenue from N. Division Street 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. The improvements included improved water and sewer lines, storm drains, raised pedestrian cross walks for better visibility, a bike lane, a wider street and improved lighting. Additionally, St. Louis Avenue was narrowed near the 3rd Street recreation areas to improve pedestrian safety.



FIRE STATION 4



The Ocean City Fire Department's Station 4, located at 129th Street and Coastal Highway was completed and occupied in mid-October 2014, within a year from the date of demolition of the old station. The \$3.3 million dollar project was funded by the sale of bonds in 2012. The building construction was awarded to Gillis

Gilkerson. The new station contains a total of 11,500-square feet which increased the capacity of the engine room by more than one third. It provides areas for both duty crews and the department's live-in program, an additional engine bay, an exercise room and a decontamination room.

CANAL DREDGING

Improving canals for boat navigation and access to the inland bays has been a major request from bayside property owners for the past decade. The difficulty of the complex State and Federal dredging permit process for property owners combined with the high cost of dredging has left the canal system in increasingly poor condition. This project shifted the burden of canal maintenance from the property owners to the Town. The State Department of Natural Resources collected survey data for the depths of all Ocean City canals. This data was then used to formulate an annual dredging program, prioritize dredging needs, and establish a regular canal maintenance program administered by the Town to dredge canals within the city limits of Ocean City to an average depth of 4' below mean low water, dredging approximately 6,000 cubic yards of material per year from canals. Permitting was obtained in 2014, and \$798,581 was spent in 2015 on canal dredging. The Town has committed additional funding in 2016 and intends to continue this program which enhances waterfront property values with annual General Fund contributions.



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.

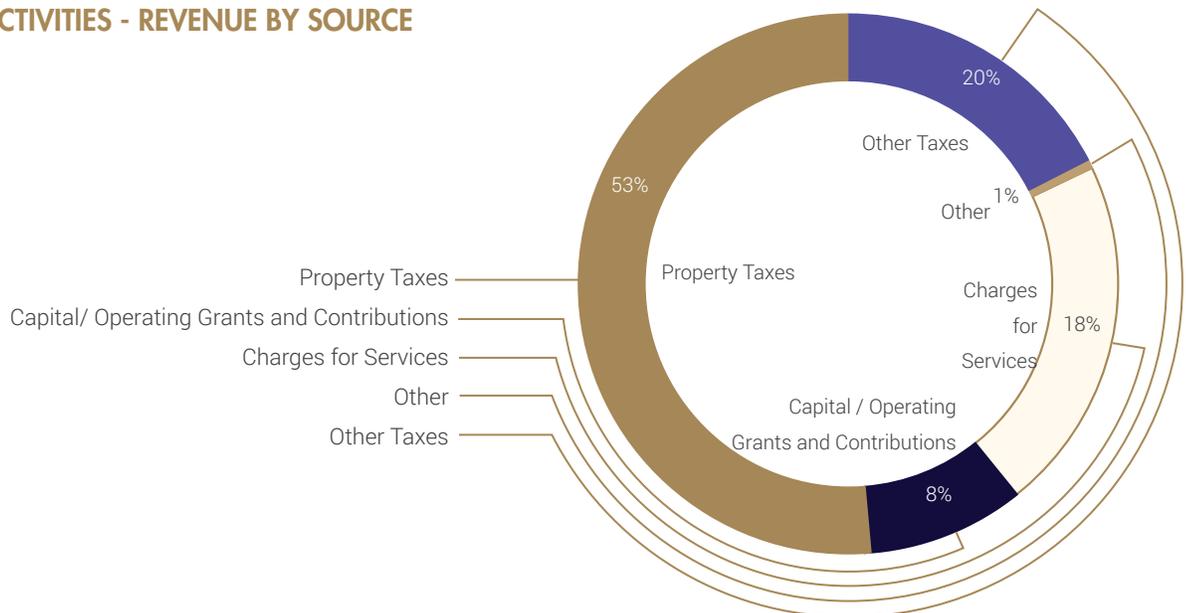
GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

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.

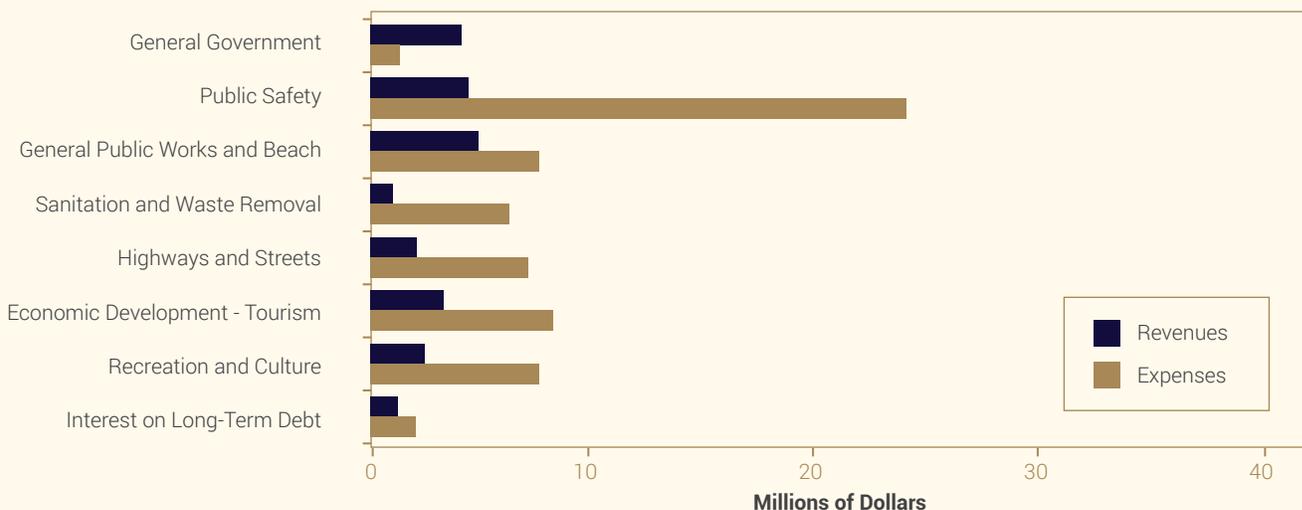
WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM		
Revenues	2015	2014
Program Revenues:		
Charges for current services	\$ 14,632,088	\$ 14,238,098
Operating grants and contributions	3,026,042	3,432,044
Capital grants and contributions	190,351	105,000
General revenues:		
Property taxes	42,444,386	42,199,671
Other taxes	16,454,632	16,042,019
Grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs	3,139,620	3,055,727
Other revenue	968,599	865,918
Total revenues	\$ 80,855,718	\$ 79,938,477

WHERE THE MONEY GOES		
Expenses	2015	2014
General government	\$ 852,529	\$ 1,314,758
Public safety	32,782,621	36,112,813
General public works and beach	7,240,368	6,329,540
Sanitation and waste removal	5,787,086	6,230,810
Highways and streets	7,102,511	7,787,410
Economic development - Tourism	8,139,166	7,998,815
Recreation and culture	7,479,558	7,654,518
Interest on long-term debt	1,335,105	1,462,237
Total expenses	70,718,944	74,890,901
Increase in net position before transfers	10,136,774	5,047,576
Transfers to other funds	(3,022,929)	(3,363,267)
Increase in net position	\$ 7,113,845	\$ 1,684,309

GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES - REVENUE 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 25.5% of governmental expenses in FY-2015.



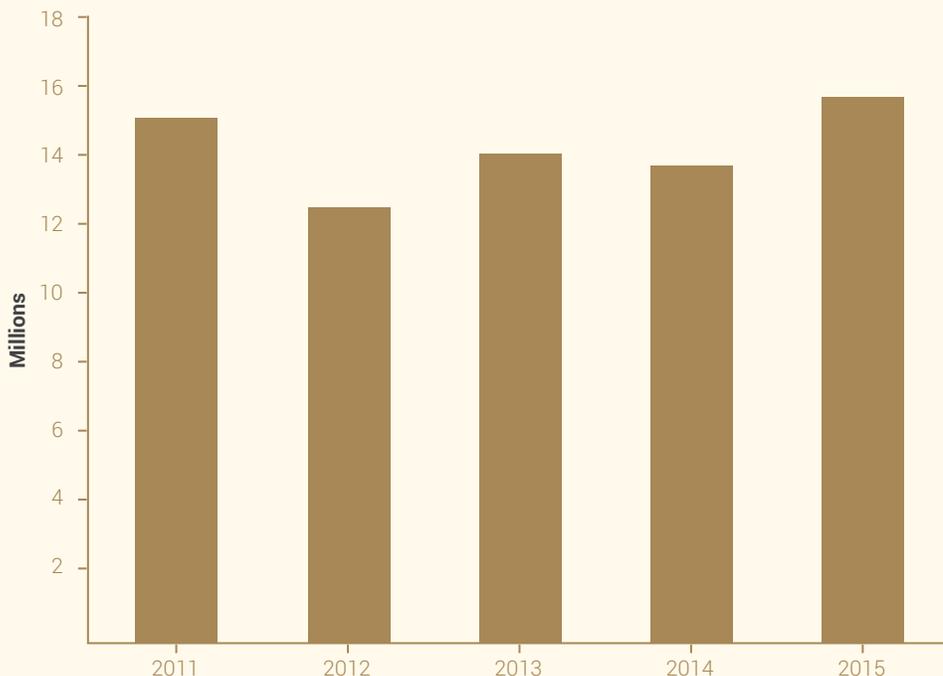
The Town implemented the Government Accounting Standards Board Statement 68 (GASB 68) and has recorded a net pension liability of \$20,055,020 and related deferred outflows of \$5,757,323 and deferred inflows of \$661,833 in the Statement of Net Position. This resulted in a decrease of \$14,959,530 in net position from 2014 related to the pension liability. Results from operations of governmental activities were a strong \$7,113,845. There were gains in business-type activities of \$319,550

before transfers of \$3,022,929 from the general fund resulting in an increase in net position of \$3,342,479. The total change in net position from 2014 after recognition of the pension liability and results from operations was a decrease of \$6,736,071.

Public Safety is the largest governmental function with expenses of \$32,782,621 in 2015, a 9.2% decrease from 2014, primarily due to a decrease in cost for pension and retiree health contributions. It is comprised

of the police department, \$19,232,587, 58.7%; emergency medical services, \$7,847,806, 23.9%; communications, \$1,666,478, 5.1%; fire department, \$1,277,471, 3.9%; fire marshal, \$1,073,280, 3.3%; construction inspection, \$634,285, 1.9%; emergency management, \$683,438, 2.1%; and electronics, \$367,276, 1%. With 24-hour operations, 213 of the Town's 534 full-time employees work in public safety. An additional 150 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, 2015, the percentage was 21.6%.

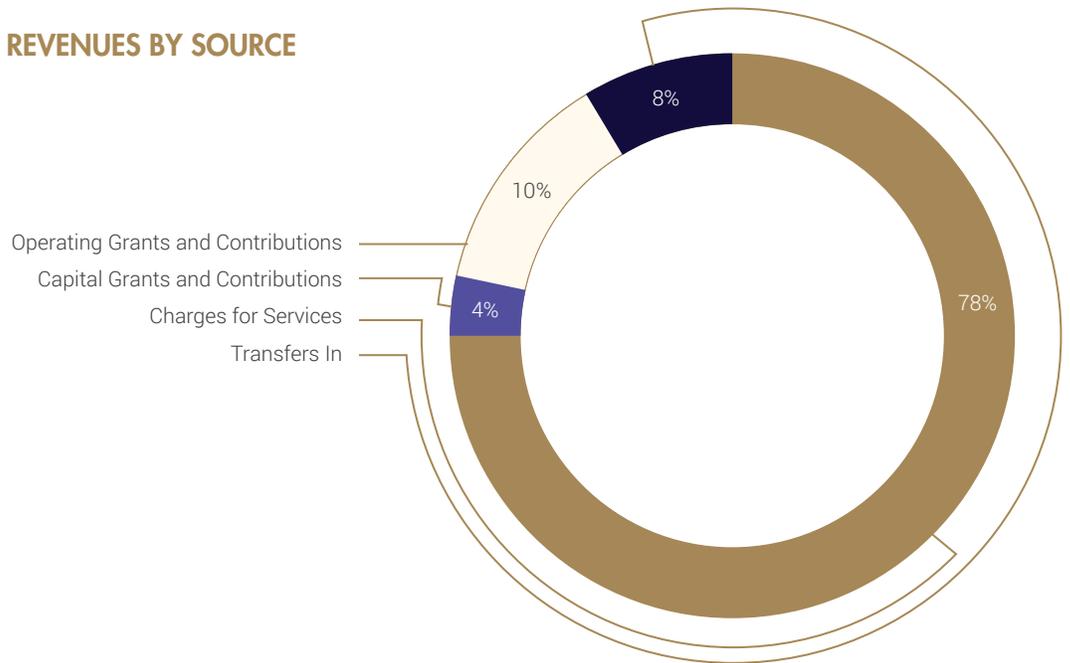
UTILITIES AND BUSINESS SERVICES

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

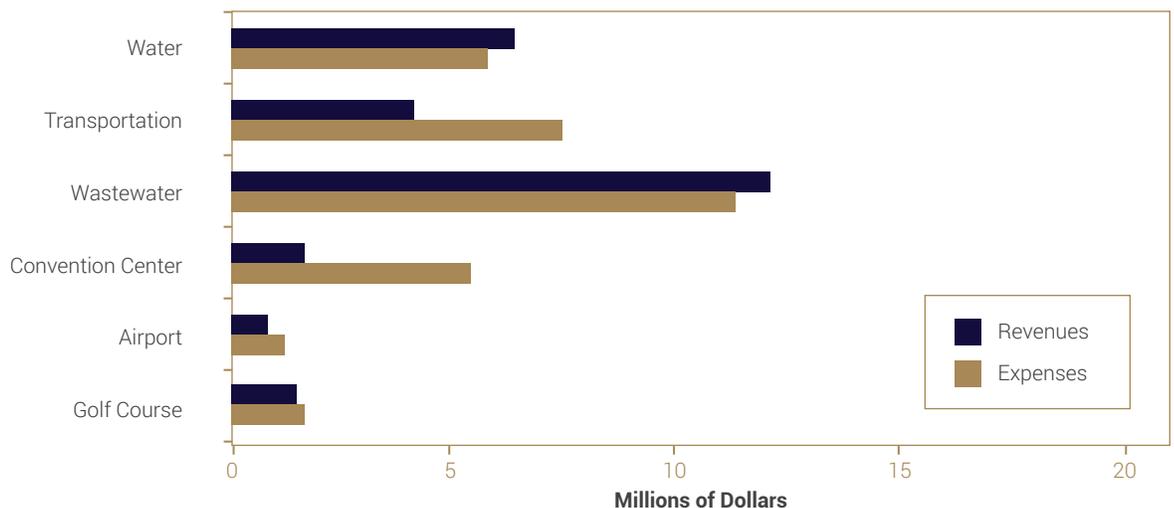
operates the sewage treatment plant, pumping stations and collection system; the Convention Center Fund accounts for the activities of the Roland E. Powell Convention Center; the Transportation Fund accounts for the operations of the Town's bus system and boardwalk trams; and the Airport Fund and Golf Course Fund

account for the operations of the Ocean City Municipal Airport and Eagle's Landing Golf Course. Fees and service charges are 78% of all revenues in 2015. There were no capital grants received for the purchase of buses in 2015.

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 48.2% of expenses from user charges.



WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM			WHERE THE MONEY GOES		
	2015	2014		2015	2014
Charges for current services	\$ 29,314,132	\$ 28,624,075	Water	\$ 5,532,561	\$ 6,251,720
Operating grants and contributions	3,680,145	3,593,254	Airport	1,832,178	1,615,099
Capital grants and contributions	1,530,415	6,501,328	Wastewater	11,299,812	11,966,765
Other revenue	64,038	49,366	Convention Center	5,341,279	5,438,689
			Transportation	8,213,299	8,036,903
			Golf Course	2,050,051	2,069,805
			Total expenses	34,269,180	35,378,981
			Increase in net position before transfers	319,550	3,389,042
			Transfers from other funds	3,022,929	3,363,267
Total revenues	\$ 34,588,730	\$ 38,768,023	Increase in net position	\$ 3,342,479	\$ 6,752,309

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 2015, the Town owed \$82,116,895 in debt. \$41,669,434 of the debt, or 51%, will be paid from service fees from business-type activities and the tax on food and beverages. At June 30, 2015, there was \$4,284,817 reserved from food tax receipts to pay principal and interest on bonds for the convention center included in the above amount. The

remaining \$40,447,461 in debt will be paid from general tax revenues.

The Town has several pension plans that its employees participate in and has made a commitment to the employees to fund their future pensions. Per the GASB 68 reporting requirements, the plans had assets of \$104,466,047 and an actuarial accrued liability of \$124,494,710 at June 30, 2015. This means that \$20,028,663 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 \$23,455,943 to fund retiree health benefits and an actuarial liability of \$48,305,000. The unfunded actuarial liability is being funded over twenty-four years.

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.

WHERE WE STOOD ON JUNE 30, 2015

The Town’s statement of net position provides a “snapshot” of where we stood financially on June 30th, 2015, the last day of the fiscal year with the changes due to GASB 68. Net position represents the Town’s spendable resources and ownership (equity) in the assets that make up the Town’s land, infrastructure, and buildings.

	Governmental 2015	Business-type 2015	Total 2015	Change from 2015
Cash and current assets	\$ 35,461,905	\$ 24,373,448	\$ 59,835,353	(9.9)%
Capital assets	96,579,348	115,639,287	212,218,635	2.6
Total assets (Owned)	132,041,253	140,012,735	272,053,988	(0.5)
Deferred outflows or resources	5,071,141	\$1,116,532	6,187,673	1023.5
Long-term liabilities outstanding	61,982,148	45,590,993	107,573,141	10.1
Other liabilities	11,136,288	4,138,083	15,274,371	3.6
Total liabilities (Debts)	73,118,436	49,729,076	122,847,512	9.3
Deferred outflows or resources	552,626	\$109,207	661,833	100.0
Excess of assets over debts:				
Invested in capital assets, net of debt	57,685,894	73,668,728	131,354,622	2.8
Restricted for loans and food tax receipts	-	4,284,817	4,284,817	(32.9)
Unrestricted	5,755,438	13,337,439	19,092,877	(30.1)
Total Excess of Assets over Debts	\$ 63,441,332	\$ 91,290,984	\$ 54,732,316	(4.2)%

FLOOD INSURANCE CHANGES

In 2015, FEMA released the Flood Insurance Study for Ocean City. The study resulted in significant changes to the flood maps. Furthermore, it meant that the oceanfront properties south of 143rd Street and most boardwalk front properties were completely out of the 1% flood zone. This was due to the Town's active beach replenishment efforts, the dune and the seawall. The flood map changes resulted in a decrease in their flood insurance costs for most Ocean City property owners. Despite these property's removal from the 1% flood zone, the Town encourages all property owners to maintain flood insurance.

EMERGENCY ADVISORY RADIO STATION

In August 2014, the Town's Emergency Services Department completed installation of an emergency advisory radio system, WPSB 99.5 FM from the 65th Street Radio Tower and WWOP 100.3 FM from the Race Track Road Ocean Pines Radio Tower. Funding of the \$54,019 project was provided by the FEMA sponsored Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) which provides grants to states and local

governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures, with a Federal Share of \$41,250, and a Town contribution of \$12,769.

A custom news station and studio was constructed in the Public Safety Building, located at 65th Street, by emergency services personnel under the direction of Electronics Services Manager, Robert

Dimaio and Emergency Services Director, Joseph Theobald. The quality channel provides Ocean City residents and visitors real time information, including public service announcements, evacuation traffic management, and alerts for weather and emergency alerts. In addition, the radio station has the ability to automatically broadcast live dispatching and emergency responders operations.

OPERATING INFORMATION FOR 2015

General Information:		Fire and Emergency Services:		
Year-round residents	7,092	Fire responses	1,278	
Registered voters	6,141	Ambulance responses	4,518	
Average summer population	242,611	Fire safety inspections/re-inspection	2,659	
General Government:		Fire investigations	65	
Construction permits issued	1,472	Volunteer Firemen, Life Honor, Gold Badge	231	
Value of construction	\$57,999,098	Classified Emergency Medical		
Solid Waste		Technicians/Fighters	41	
Trash processed & recycled (tons)	32,603	Seasonal Emergency Medical Technicians	65	
Transportation bus passengers		2,588,189	Public Safety – Police:	
Wastewater:		Total arrests	3,568	
Daily average treatment(gallons)	5,378,000	Parking violations	7,934	
Summer treatment average (gallons)	9,194,000	Classified officers	105	
Plants daily capacity (gallons)	14,000,000	Seasonal officers	100	
Water:		Tourism and Recreation:		
Daily average consumption (gallons)	4,156,608	Seasonal Beach Patrol personnel	186	
Plants daily capacity (gallons)	18,000,000			

WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR UTILITY BILL SENT TO YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

If so, please email the following to: 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





TOWN OF OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND FALL Newsletter

OCTOBER 2015 TO APRIL 2016



WHAT'S INSIDE:

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3 WHAT DOES YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL MEAN?

4 STAY SAFE THIS SEASON: WINTER SAFETY TIPS FROM THE OCFD

5 WINTER PROJECTS, UPDATES & REMINDERS

6 NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

7 WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER?



ARE YOU SIGNED UP FOR ENEWS?

The Town of Ocean City remains committed to providing you with information about programs, services, current news and events. In addition to this publication, the town continually updates residents and visitors through eNews and social media sites. Sign up for eNews at oceancitymd.gov/enews or find us on social media



ICYMI: IN CASE YOU MISSED IT!!

FACE IN THE HOLE

Did you see the Town of Ocean City's new photo opportunity signs this summer? Families waited in line along the Boardwalk and Northside Park to become a sea creature, a paddleboarder and an OC lifeguard! The signs will be taken

down for safe keeping this winter but be sure to check them out on 3rd Street, Dorchester Street & Northside Park next summer! Also, be sure to use #OCMD when sharing your pictures on Instagram!



BEACH PATROL HEADQUARTERS

Congratulations to the Ocean City Beach Patrol, who officially moved in to their new home on Talbot Street & South Philadelphia Avenue this summer season. The new three story Headquarters boasts 10,000 square feet of space and provides facilities vehicle and equipment storage,

training, roll call and administrative areas for beach patrol. 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.

OC GOES MOBILE

The Town of Ocean City has gone digital, joining the growing world of mobile users worldwide. With more residents and visitors turning to their smartphones and tablets to send and receive information, the Town of Ocean City is continuing to increase mobile efforts.

with contact information or provide information anonymously. **This app does not replace 911! If you are experiencing an emergency or want to report an in-progress crime/suspicious activity, please call 911.**

smartphones by downloading Parkmobile's mobile application for iPhone, Android, Windows, Blackberry, and Amazon Fire smartphones. Look for the GREEN logo when parking in OC & get the APP today!



• **311:** The 311 app allows users to report non-emergency issues, contact town employees and have direct access to social media links, events and the town's radio station. Users can choose to create an account



• **Park Mobile:** The Town of Ocean City has teamed up with Parkmobile to provide residents, businesses, and visitors the ability to conduct parking transactions by phone. Customers are able to pay for parking from their

• **Use Our ONLINE SERVICES:** Bill Pay, Building Permits & MORE! The Town of Ocean City is committed to provide online services that allow you to accomplish your needs more effectively from the comfort of your own home! Visit www.oceancitymd.gov and see what we can do for you online:

- Building Permit
- Bill Pay
- Online Records
- Download a Form
- Licensing

WINTER SCHEDULES:



WINTERFEST OF LIGHTS

Join Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus at Ocean City's Winterfest of Lights, November 19th through January 3rd. 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 23rd.

NOV. 19, 2015 – JAN. 3, 2016

Special tree lighting ceremony on Thursday, November 19, 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.

SUN. THROUGH THURS. FROM 5:30 P.M. – 9:30 P.M. FRI. & SAT. 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.



OCEAN BOWL SKATE PARK'S NOV. THROUGH MARCH HOURS:

OPEN AT 2 P.M. TO SUNSET DURING THE WEEK, CLOSED ON WEDNESDAYS, AND FROM 9:30 A.M. TO SUNSET ON THE WEEKENDS.

WHAT DOES YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL MEAN?

UNDERSTANDING MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAXES

Property Tax can be confusing! Every July, property owners in Ocean City receive their annual tax bill which supports a variety of local public services for the next fiscal year. Although nearly every property owner pays their tax bill, many misunderstand how their bill is calculated. Terms like constant yield, Homestead Property Tax Credit, property assessments and tax rates are words not used in everyday conversation. Here are some important terms to remember:

1. TAX BILL = (ASSESSMENT/100) X TAX RATE

a. Assessments: Assessments are determined by the State assessment office once every three years. Bills issued in July 2015 reflect the most recent assessment based on fair market value as required by State law. This means that current real estate market conditions and the sale of property of similar value within the community have been taken into consideration.

b. Tax Rate: Rate set by the Mayor & City Council to support the Adopted Budget for the next fiscal year. The tax rate could be set at the constant yield rate, or could be above or below the constant yield rate. The Constant Yield tax rate is the rate at which the Town collects the same amount of tax revenue as the previous year. With the exception of 2014, the Town's tax rate has been set at or below constant yield since 2010.

2. NON-RESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS:

These are property owners who do not live in Ocean City full-time. For non-resident property owners, assessment changes are handled as follows:

a. Increases in assessments: the value of the increase will be phased in over the three year cycle, with one-third of the increased value added to the assessment each year.

b. Decreases in assessments: the tax bill is calculated on the reduced assessment for all three years of the cycle.

3. RESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS:

These are property owners who live in Ocean City full-time. Assessments are determined by the State in the same way as for non-resident property owners, but resident property owners may qualify for Homestead Property Tax Credit.

a. Homestead Property Tax Credit is available for a homeowner's principal residence. In order to qualify, a homeowner must reside in the home for more than six months of the previous twelve month period including July 1 of the taxable year. Principal residence is further defined as the location designated by the owner for the purposes of voting, obtaining a driver's license and filing income tax returns.

b. Homestead Property Tax Credit limits the assessment increase used to calculate the tax bill

to a fixed percentage. Although an increase of as much as 10% per year is authorized by the State of Maryland, Ocean City's increase was set at 3% until November 2014, when the Council reduced the rate of increase to 0%. This means that the assessment portion of the tax bill for qualifying resident property owners is frozen and will not increase.

c. In general, the taxable assessments of resident property owners are lower than taxable assessments of non-resident property owners of similar property because the Homestead Property Tax Credit has limited the increase of taxable assessment.

Property taxes support services such as Public Safety, Public Works, and Recreation and contribute to the support of Transportation, the Airport and the Convention Center. Since 2009, assessments have decreased from \$12,105,325,297 to \$8,390,862,470. Although the tax rate has increased during that same time period from .38 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation to .478, the amount of revenue collected from real property taxes has decreased more than \$5,000,000.

For further information about the Maryland Property Tax system or the Homestead Property Tax Credit, please refer to the State of Maryland's website: www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/ real. For further information about the Town of Ocean City's Adopted budget, please refer to the Town's website: www.oceancitymd.gov.

COASTAL HIGHWAY "BEACH BUS": NOV. 2, 2105 – MAR. 31, 2016

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: OCT. 13, 2015 - MAY 10, 2016

RESIDENTIAL: (waste wheelers)

Monday
Oceanside (75th St. to 146th St.)
Bayside (75th Street to 135th Street)

Tuesday
All Areas (Inlet to 74th St.)
Bayside (136th St. to 146th St.)

COMMERCIAL: (Front-end and 300-gallon containers)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday – All Areas

Reminder: Bulk Pick-Up is Available: Bulk Pick-Up allows residential property owners within the corporate limits of Ocean City, to place household items, such as old appliances and furniture at curbside for pickup. (The Town DOES NOT GO ON PRIVATE PROPERTY). 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, \$30 for up to three items and \$5 for each additional item.

For more information,
please call 410-524-0318.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS FROM THE OCEAN CITY FIRE DEPT.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths. Usually, fires caused by heating appliances occur because the devices weren't cleaned regularly, were placed or installed too close to combustible materials, had design or operational flaws, or were fueled improperly. Remember to keep anything that can burn at least three feet from all heating devices and have heating equipment, including chimneys and flues, cleaned and inspected at least annually by a professional.

Also, residents should always use the right kind of fuel for your heating equipment, as specified by the manufacturer. Fireplaces should always be screened during use to keep embers and sparks from igniting floor coverings within your home.

HOLIDAY COOKING SAFETY TIPS

Did you know that the holiday season is the leading time of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment? While deep frying your Thanksgiving turkey has become an increasing trend, the Ocean City Fire Marshal strongly urges against it, while also advising to refrain from excessive alcohol consumption while cooking.

1. Always stay in the kitchen while cooking so you can keep an eye on the food.
2. Keep children away from the hot stove and oven. You should always create a safety zone of

at least 3 feet around cooking equipment.

3. Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children.
4. Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test yours monthly by pushing the test button.

CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY TIPS

1. If you have an artificial tree, be sure it's labeled, certified or identified by the manufacturer as fire-retardant.
2. If you choose a fresh tree, make sure the green needles don't fall off when touched; before placing it in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk. Add water to the tree stand, and be sure to water it daily.
3. Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit, and is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, space heaters, radiators, candles and heat vents or lights.



4. Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory, and make sure you know whether they are designed for indoor or outdoor use.
5. Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords, or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
6. Never use lit candles to decorate the tree and always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving the home or going to bed.

After Christmas, remember to get rid of your tree and bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer. Dried-out trees are a fire hazard and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside the home.

REMINDER: Christmas Tree Drop-Off Site Located at 100th St. Municipal Parking Lot. Once again, the Town of Ocean City will help you dispose of your Christmas tree. From December 26-January 15, trees can be placed in the northeast corner of the 100th Street lot. Please remove all tinsel, ornaments & any other non-wooden item from the tree. Trees collected at the site are taken to the county landfill where they are ground into mulch.

OCEAN CITY AWARDED FEMA GRANT

The Town of Ocean City recently received \$24,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to procure two new portable variable message signs. The purpose of the project is to support evacuation traffic management through provision of real-time road closure information to motorist traveling within Ocean City. This includes providing relevant information regarding road conditions and closures in the event of severe storms, tidal flooding, hurricanes, and special events.

The Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) administers the HMGP

program at the State level. Funds from the competitive grant process can be used to fund projects to protect either public or private property, as long as the projects fits within State and Local government mitigation strategies to address areas of risk and complies with the HMGP guidelines. These grants may be used to pay up to 75% of the eligible project costs.

Ocean City recently took receipt of two trailer mounted, solar powered message centers, and the units have been readied for deployment. The new Variable Message Signs will be another valuable asset in the City's attempt to heighten awareness during times of emergency.



WINTER PROJECTS & REMINDERS:

CANAL DREDGING – UPDATE:

Last fall the Engineering Department began a multi-year effort to dredge canals in Ocean City. Canals at 25th Street, Hitchens Ave, 52nd Street, 48th Street, Tern Drive and Plover Drive were completed in June 2014. Our next effort will be to dredge canals at Old Landing Road, Winter Harbor Rd, Channel Buoy Rd and Old Wharf Rd. Dredge work on these canals is expected to begin this winter and will take two years to complete. No work will take place during June, July, or August. The Engineering Department has inspected the entire shoreline of these canals and

issued repair notices to those properties that have leaking bulkheads. If you have received a repair notice and have not either initiated the process to repair your shoreline or scheduled a meeting with the City Engineer, you should do so as soon as possible. The City will not dredge a canal with a failing bulkhead.

Moving forward, the City will be resurveying, prioritizing and permitting the remaining canals in preparation for the next phase of dredging beginning in the fall of 2017. A current listing of all ca-

nals, their average depth and the current dredge priority is available at <http://oceancitymd.gov/oc/departments/engineering/canal-dredging/>. Canal channels are dredged to a depth of 4' at the city's expense. Private slips are dredged to 3' at the option of the property owner and the owner is responsible for that cost.

If you have any questions or feel that your canal needs to be evaluated, please contact the Engineering Department.

ROAD CLOSURE

Ocean City's Public Works Department recently closed 1st Street from Dayton Lane to St. Louis Avenue for the construction of the new water tower. A temporary construction fence will be installed around the perimeter of the existing Parking Lot; Wastewater Pumping Station; and 1st Street Roadway. This closure will be in effect for approximately 16 months. For questions, please contact the Public Works Department at 410.524.7716.



REMINDER FROM THE WATER DEPARTMENT: WINTERIZE YOUR HOME!

FROZEN SPRINKLER/FROZEN PIPE PREVENTION TIPS

As you ready your house for the colder months ahead, don't forget about your water system. When water freezes, it expands. So if the temperature of your pipes drops below 32 degrees, even for a short period, you run the risk of a pipe fracture or worse. Take the following precautions now to avoid a major headache later.

INSIDE YOUR HOME

Anywhere cold air blows on a pipe, it creates the potential for freezing. To make sure your pipes are well-insulated, close crawl space vents and

stuff insulation over the openings. Even a tiny hole can let a lot of cold air blow in; make sure you fill in all the cracks.

- A bathroom or laundry room located above or next to a garage can be particularly vulnerable, so keep the garage door closed to maintain maximum heat.

- If your bathroom pipes run along an outside exterior wall, try keeping the vanity door(s) open to allow heat inside. If you're anticipating a deep freeze, consider using a fan to help circulate the air near the pipes, or purchase a small space heater for some extra temporary heat.

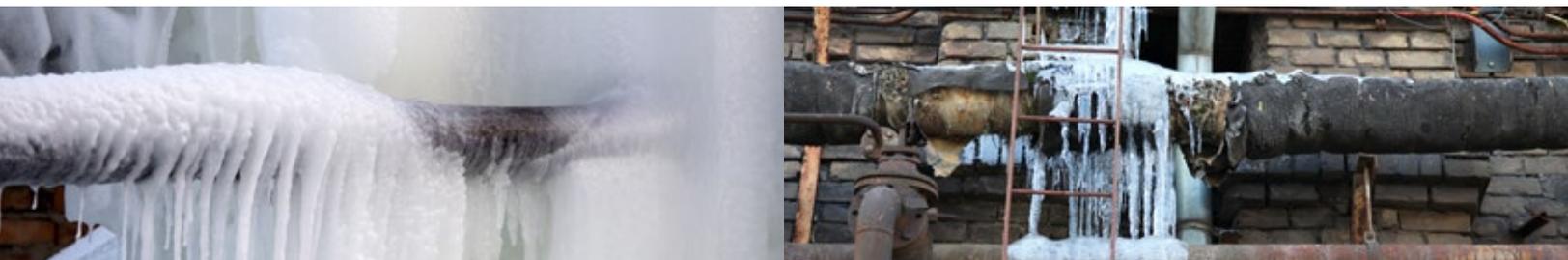
- Finally, never turn off the heat when you leave home during the winter. Instead, set the temperature to at least 55 degrees F (higher if you've had problems in the past or live in an area of extreme cold). If you have multiple heat zones, be sure to adjust all thermostats appropriately.

OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

Disconnect and store garden hoses. If your home has a separate shut-off for external faucets, turn it off and drain the water from those faucets.

- Turn off and drain sprinkler systems. You may want to call in a professional company to blow out any leftover water in the underground lines. A broken sprinkler pipe can do damage to the delicate components that make up the entire system, increasing the cost of repair.

- Know where your main waterline shut-off is before problems arise. Depending on the age of your house, it can be inside a garage, basement or laundry room, or underground in your yard. After turning the water off, turn on faucets to allow the water to drain and release the pressure in your pipes.



NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT!

After a strong 2015 summer season, this fall promises to be a busy time for our resort community's businesses and property owners. Planning and Zoning Director Bill Neville offers a reminder that all major repairs, building additions, site redevelopment and new construction require the OC Planning and Zoning Commission review a plan for site construction prior to obtaining a building permit. To learn more about the department and our contribution to a revitalized Ocean City, stop by City Hall or visit the website for important new information on how the planning and community development department is implementing Strategic Plan goals and priorities this year:

NEWS BRIEF FROM P & CD:

- The Town of Ocean City Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and updated over the next several months and will address land use concerns and new opportunities. To contribute your thoughts or share your ideas, please contact Planning Director, Bill Neville at bneville@oceancitymd.gov.
- New FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps went into effect on July 16, 2015 which may change your flood risk rating. For more information visit the Ocean City Map Gallery at www.oceancitymd.gov/oc/resident, or check out the great online map tool offered by the Maryland Department of Planning: <http://planning.maryland.gov/OurProducts/PropertyMapProducts/FinderOnlineProduct.shtml>
- International Building Codes have been updated in 2015, and when adopted by City Council

must be used in new design and construction. Check with Kevin Brown, Building Code Official, to discuss your development project.

- **Floating Docks** : Any construction (major or minor) on a shoreline and any unnatural alteration of the shoreline must first be approved by the Board of Port Wardens, MDE and the Army Corp of Engineers. Approval must be granted for any existing or newly proposed installation of any floating docks, such as jet ski docks, boat docks or floating platforms.

Applications for BOPW, TOC Building Permit, MDE and Army Corp are available in the Planning and Community Development Department which is located on the second floor of City Hall. Businesses and facilities that fail to obtain all approvals and required permits for any structure or construction on waterways may be subject to municipal, state and federal fines. For more

information, call the Planning and Community Development Department at 410.289.8855.

- Existing non-conforming signs within the Upper Downtown Design Overlay Zone District (generally between 3rd Street and 17th Street) will be reviewed for conformance with ordinance requirements prior to June 2016.
- New Single Family Rental License requirements have been adopted by City Council for all properties located in the R-1 zoned Single Family Residential neighborhoods. Information will be distributed by mail for renewals in 2016, and by contacting Michael Sherman, Licensing Inspector at City Hall. In addition, property owners are reminded that if you rent your property to anyone at any time, the law requires you to obtain an Ocean City rental license and a noise control permit.

"WALK SMART" CAMPAIGN EARNS NATIONAL AWARD

The Ocean City Police Department recently accepted an award on behalf of the Ocean City Pedestrian Safety Committee at the Governors Highway Safety Association's (GHSA) Annual Meeting. GHSA awarded the popular "Walk Smart" Campaign with the Peter K. O'Rourke Special Achievement Award, a nationwide award which recognizes notable achievements in the field of highway safety. The Peter K. O'Rourke Special Achievement Award is named after the

past GHSA chairman and highway safety leader who served to make highways safer through many roles.

The "Walk Smart Campaign" began in the winter of 2013 after the Ocean City area experienced a significant increase in pedestrian collisions in 2012. Since the campaign went into effect, there has been no fatalities as a result of a pedestrian collision. Two years later, the Pedestrian Safety

Committee continues to see dramatic decreases in the number of pedestrian collisions and have experienced 50 percent less year-to-date in 2015 than in 2014.



SUMMER IS DONE BUT THE FUN HAS JUST BEGUN!

Just because summer is over doesn't mean the fun has ended! Ocean City Recreation and Parks offers more than one hundred classes, programs, activities and events for both residents and visitors all year-round.

Children of all ages can enjoy a variety of activities from basketball to dodgeball, indoor soccer, cheerleading, dance classes, martial arts, and programs to express creativity while developing motor skills.

Adults and seniors are not left out of the fun with aerobics, an assortment of dance classes, yoga, hockey, indoor lacrosse and soccer, flag football and volleyball scheduled throughout the off-sea-

son. As well as bingo, bowling, and fine art classes and line dance classes.

Come to Northside Park to register or drop-in as your schedule sees fit. A complete guide can be found at: www.oceancitymd.gov, under Recreation and Parks/Recreation Programs or pick up a copy of Splash! Magazine. Call Recreation and Parks at 410-250-0125 for more information.

As the holiday nears, Ocean City Recreation & Parks has plenty of fun being offered for your family throughout the remainder of the year!

- **Pizza Party with Santa** on Wednesday, December 2, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Northside Park Complex. Activities include arts

and crafts, a ride throughout the spectacular Winterfest of Lights, cookie-decorating, refreshments, visits with Santa and more!

- **Christmas Luncheon**, an annual affair sponsored by the Recreation Department in cooperation with the Senior Center of Ocean City, is being held on Wednesday, December 9, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Clarion Grand Ballroom on 101st Street and Coastal Hwy.

- **Soccer Winterfest Camp** for boys and girls ages 6 to 16 is being held on December 28-30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Northside Park Complex. Sign up for the holiday camp and receive a soccer ball, t-shirt and lots of giveaways!

Campers will also receive a 4x6 photo with their coaches, a certificate of completion, and a pizza party on the last day.

Ocean City Recreation and Parks is now offering party services for your special events. Party themes include Soccer, Gladiator Dodge Ball, Basketball, Volleyball, Pre-School Fun, and Floor Hockey. Prices vary depending on the number of participants, and for residents and non-residents. Call Recreation and Parks for more information at 410-250-0125.

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.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER? WHY NOT WORK AT THE BEACH?

Life's a Beach and at the Town of Ocean City each "work" day is another opportunity to soak in the sun, sand and salt air! With hundreds of seasonal positions to be filled, our Human Resources Department wants to know....WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER?



SEASONAL JOB OPENINGS:

Bus Drivers & Tram Drivers: Do you love the sounds and sights of Ocean City? Spend your summer days taking in the beach and Boardwalk views as an employee of the Ocean City Transportation Division. Don't worry, we offer paid training to get you the qualifications you need! Learn more at oceancitymd.gov.

Ocean City Police Officers, Dispatchers & Public Safety Aids:

Seasonal Officers, Dispatchers and Public Safety Aids are temporary employees who supplement the year round police force in its mission to the community. This assignment gives college-level criminal justice and other qualified and interested persons the chance to experience first-hand the duties and responsibilities of a law enforcement. Learn more at <http://joinocpd.com>



Lifeguards (SRT's): Be our next beach ambassador by applying as a 2016 Surf Rescue Technician. To get information on testing dates or to learn more about the job, email ocbp@ococean.com or visit oceancitymd.gov.



Our seasonal employees are vital to ensuring Ocean City residents and visitors enjoy their OC experience. With hundreds of positions to fill, including day camp counselors, golf course maintenance employees, Boardwalk maintenance workers and comfort station attendants, the Town of Ocean City may have just the right position for you! If you are interested in a great job with a competitive pay, apply today! For more information or for a list of our currently openings, visit: www.oceancitymd.gov.

OCEAN CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE LIVE-IN PROGRAM:

Don't just work at the beach, LIVE at the beach!! The Ocean City Fire Department Live-In Program, available at three out of five fire houses in Ocean City, provides excellent learning and firefighting experience while giving you the opportunity to have free housing for the summer season or year-round.

The Live-In Program is open to any person that is at least 18 years old with previous firefighting experience. Those participating in the program must maintain employment and/or post-secondary student status and dedicate 48 hours a week to answering calls. Seasonal Town of Ocean City employees (Beach Patrol, Police,

Communications etc...) are strongly encouraged to apply. Many of our previous live-in personnel have moved on to become successful ranking officers in the Ocean City Fire Department as well as regional departments.

KNOW YOUR ADDRESS. KNOW YOUR ZONE & DIVISION:

Emergency Managers are counting on you to be prepared & do the right thing to keep yourself and your family out of dangerous situations. KNOW YOUR ZONE & DIVISION and have a plan for where you will go should something happen during hurricane season and beyond. Also remember to have your address clearly marked (inside and outside) for emergency responders and family members, renters or guests of your home.

OCEAN CITY DIVISIONS			OCEAN CITY FLOOD INUNDATION ZONE	
1	RED	Islet to 33 rd Street	A	4' FLOOD INUNDATION ZONE
2	YELLOW	33 rd Street to 62 nd Street	B	5' FLOOD INUNDATION ZONE
3	BLUE	62 nd Street to 100 th Street	C	6' FLOOD INUNDATION ZONE
4	ORANGE	100 th Street to DE Line		

KNOW YOUR ZONE & DIVISION:

In case of an emergency, my property is located in:

KNOW YOUR ADDRESS:

In case of an emergency, first responders can come to:

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OCMD UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV. 7
WICOMICO STREET
WINTER FESTIVAL
Wicomico Street
near Boardwalk

NOV. 19 – JAN. 3
WINTERFEST OF LIGHTS
Northside Park,
125th Street

NOV. 21
TURKEY TROT
GOLF TOURNAMENT
Eagle's Landing Golf Course,
West OC

NOV. 27-29
HOLIDAY SHOPPER'S FAIR
Convention Center, 40th Street

NOV. 28
THE TEXAS TENORS –
DEEP IN THE HEART OF
CHRISTMAS
Performing Arts Center,
40th Street

DEC. 4
LIGHT UP DOWNTOWN
Sunset Park,
S. Division St. on the bay

DEC. 5
OC CHRISTMAS PARADE
Coastal Hwy from 100th St. to
115th St.

DEC. 31
NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS
Northside Park, 125th Street

