

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

APRIL 2019

A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Our April 23 meeting offers an opportunity to discuss, and learn, about the city's proposed beach dog leash proposal.

Will Fluharty
NVBCL president

DUE TO A RECENT proposal by the city to leash all dogs on the beach, the North Virginia Beach Civic League Board surveyed our members to gauge their opinions on the proposal.

In 2018, the Civic League had 803 members, of which 404 responded to the survey: 54 percent were against the proposed law, 46 percent were in favor. We had hundreds of comments on this very controversial topic, which I shared with the league membership in a previous email blast along with the city's data for dog-on-dog and dog-on-human incidents.

Thanks to everyone who took the survey and commented. Based on people's passionate response, the city has decided to pause the effort. Nevertheless, Lt. Jarvis Lynch, who oversees the Police Department's animal control

enforcement, has agreed to attend our membership meeting April 23 and give us an update on this initiative. We will provide members a 20-minute window for questions and answers after his presentation. Because the initial proposal has been postponed, the Civic League will not have a formal vote on the issue but might reconsider it when, and if, the city offers a final proposal.

As many of you undoubtedly have noticed, one northbound lane of Atlantic Avenue is closed to offer additional parking for the Cavalier oceanside hotel construction workers. As days gradually warm and traffic to the beach increases, we can expect longer traffic wait times at the stop light across from the old Cavalier.

The NVBCL Board opposed this proposal and notified the City Council of our position. Unfortunately, our advice went unheeded, so we can expect to have more traffic problems. I encourage you to consider getting more involved with both the Civic League and direct lobbying with our council.

We have been very active in some important issues, including short-term rentals, the Atlantic Avenue realignment's planned new traffic pattern, parking permits and, of course, the proposed leash law. There is no doubt that a roar from citizens forced the council to pause the leash law initiative. A similar roar from North End residents might help the council revisit its ill-fated parking solution, which is clearly inconveniencing the majority of North End residents.

Thank you for your involvement in the Civic League, and I look forward to seeing you at our April 23 meeting.

Another issue:
Temporary vehicle parking closes a northbound lane on Atlantic Avenue in front of the Cavalier hotel under construction on the Oceanfront. This view was taken April 8.



DON NADEN | NVBCL

BEACHES

To leash or not to leash is the question, and North End folks are split in their answers

As you probably have seen in the news and social media, the city proposes to extend dog leash requirements to the beach 24/7.

Rather than the City Council voting on it as scheduled May 7, city officials have decided to postpone a vote for 12 months and appoint an advisory commission to propose solutions.

Police cite 18 incidents last year and 17 the year before and say leashes are needed for public safety. After Petey, a toy poodle, was killed by another dog on the beach in December 2015, local dog owners researched the issue and

See **LEASH LAW**, Page 4



What are people saying?
See Page 4



Cape Henry Lighthouse has reopened. *Story, Page 3*

Upcoming civic league general meeting dates (Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m., at A.R.E.)

April 23, July 16

Speakers for the April 23 meeting

2nd Precinct Police **Capt. Shannon Wichtendahl** will give a brief update on Something in the Water festival road closures, parking, traffic and safety precautions. Also, **Lt. Jarvis Lynch**, who oversees the department's animal control enforcement, will follow with an update on the new process to determine the beach dog leash law.

Treasurer's report

As of mid-April, our league had 579 members, and our total assets were \$30,926.10.

I would like to thank all our members for mailing their dues in so promptly, and for those who are using our online service, a thank-you to you also.

For those who have not yet paid, please note that our dues are now \$20 per year.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the membership meeting Tuesday, April 23.

Only those who have paid their dues may vote; you may pay by check or cash at the meeting, but you also can pay online at our website, www.nvbcl.org.

NVBCL dues have allowed us to support landscaping, bus shelters, the neighborhood welcome signs and several organizations.

— Bonner Styles



Public safety phone numbers
Nonemergency police,
 385-5000, option 3
2nd Precinct, 385-2700

STREETS/UTILITIES
PUBLIC PARKING
IN PRIVATE HANDS
RISKS THE MEDIAN

Public parking spaces cannot be reduced no matter how nice folks think landscaping down to the street looks. It is both illegal to do it and costly to fix afterward.

Everyone must understand the pressure put on the city for public parking access near the beach. The “escape valve” for city officials has always been the attraction of turning our Atlantic Avenue median into a parking area. We, your civic league, have done and will do everything we must to avoid that – and the primary action North Enders can do is *not* to infringe on available on-street, public parking.

Don't know how it is north of 68th or south of 64th, but it looks like more people are becoming good stewards of our beach and the feeder road. It is nice not to see a bunch of trash. I know, and you know, it is not going away on its own, so thanks to all! Everyone doing a little gets it done.

As readers of this newsletter know by now, we've tried to nail down what can/can't go into the blue bins. Recycling should be easier, but it isn't. There are two things I continue to see, but we can stop them: Styrofoam and plastic bags cannot be recycled. Please share that info with everyone you know because they mess up the recycling system.



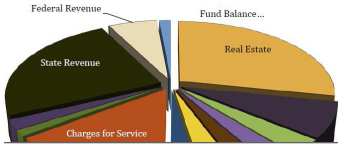
Also, we now can toss all our alkaline batteries into the black trash bin because the city has stopped collecting and recycling them. “Recycling” was sort of a misnomer anyway because the batteries were recycled as incinerator waste, according to Kristi Rines, the city's recycling coordinator. They were recycled in the sense that they were incinerated to produce energy, she said.

P.S. Rechargeable batteries can go to the city's Landfill and Resource Recovery Center, 1989 Jake Sears Road. Local retailers, such as Lowe's and Home Depot, also accept rechargeables.

– *Martin Waranch, Don Naden*



CITY BUDGET



2019-20 PROPOSAL WOULD INCREASE TAXES AND FEES

Major taxes and fee increases associated with storm water, water and solid waste have been included in the city's proposed fiscal 2019-20 operating budget.

The proposed budget totals \$2,076,077,330, an increase of 3.6 percent over the previous budget. The largest allocations of city resources are budgeted to education (45.3%), infrastructure (14%) and public safety (12.1%).

A 1.5-cent increase in the real estate tax rate and continuing annual increases in the ERU fee have been proposed to address storm water infrastructure operations and maintenance, flood control projects and water quality concerns. ERU stands for Equivalent Residential Unit, used to compute utility fees.

The City Council is scheduled to vote May 14 on whether to adopt the budget. Cut and paste this link to the city's budget website into your browser window to see everything you ever wanted to know about this year's and prior years' budgets: www.vbgov.com/government/departments/budget-office-management-services/budget-archives/Pages/default.aspx

– *Jake Denton*

HOSPITALITY

THE LAST SOCIAL We gathered at the Oceanfront for shuffling and mingling

The NVBCL Winter Social was highlighted by new and old neighbors meeting, greeting and playing shuffleboard!

The event was hosted at Beachside Social, 28th Street and Atlantic Avenue, which donated two shuffleboard courts for our entertainment and had a nice sign welcoming the NVBCL at the entrance. Several members used the opportunity

to update their memberships, while others joined or paid their initial dues.

Thanks to all the civic league members who turned out for Biscuits, Tangs, Shuffleboard and great civic league fun!

A spring/summer NVBCL Social is in the works, but details are not yet available. Stay tuned ...

– *Monica Stein, Kate Michaels*



MONICA STEIN PHOTOS | NVBCL

Say cheese! From left, **Kate Michaels, NVBCL hospitality co-chair,** with **Kellie, Conner and Ray Gessner.**



Kimberly Gooold and Jack Drescher – former NVBCL Executive Board members – stay connected and stay involved!



Beachside Social made us feel at home and welcome with this sign at the establishment's entrance. Thanks!

BEAUTIFICATION

CITY ADDS 40 MORE TREES TO FEEDER MEDIAN

On its own initiative, the city's Landscape Management Division has recently added 40 more small and medium trees of several varieties to the Atlantic Avenue median, averaging one per block.

Although the NVBCL has funded several previous median landscaping efforts, this one is “your local property tax dollars at work.”

As a reminder, the landscape division offers a beautification program to “coordinate and assist ... in enhancing the landscape plantings on public property” that also could be applied to beach entryways. This is often done (i.e. funded) collectively by each street's residents. Call the division at 757.385-4461 for more information.

The planting season is November through March.

– *Jim Spruance*

fyi

The three-day festival is the weekend of April 26-28, along with the annual College Beach Weekend, in the resort area.

Word to the wise: Traffic will be, well, challenging.

RESORT AREA PROJECTS

DOMESITE'S SURF PARK IS STILL AFLOAT



RENDERING COURTESY OF VENTURE REALTY GROUP

VB Sports Center and Streetscape on 19th taking shape, as other initiatives and projects go their own way

Here are updates on several significant capital improvement projects and private initiatives in the Central Beach District:

- The next step in the proposed Dome site surf park is the Development Agreement, hopefully to be executed in late June. If it's approved, the project would move into the development phase with possible construction as early as 2020. The development team has continued with the fine tuning of the Wave Park technology, the advancement of the preliminary design for the live entertainment center, as well as experiential retail, residential units and parking strategies.

- The Virginia Beach Sports Center is well under construction across 19th Street from our Convention Center.

- The 19th Street Streetscape project continues under construction, with 18th and 17th streets to follow soon; 18th Street is to begin late this spring.

- The 17th Street Gateway Association, a newly formed association of property owners, has advanced several initiatives for that streetscape from Birdneck Road to the Boardwalk.

- The Pier submissions for 15th and 17th streets appear to be on hold.

- As we have reported this past year, property owners, tenants and other concerned citizens have formed the Atlantic Ave Association. AAA is very active and has



RENDERING COURTESY GOLD KEY | PHR; PHOTO BY DON NADEN | NVBCL

online

There's a cool video – called a fly-through – showing what the Virginia Beach Sports Center will be like. You can check it out on the Web at www.vimeo.com/303522100.

advanced several events and has new ideas for bringing Atlantic Avenue back to the destination venue it was in the past.

- The Resort Advisory Commission (RAC) and the city of Virginia Beach are undertaking a “refresh” of the 2008 Resort Area Strategic Action Plan, more commonly referred to as the RASA plan. A stakeholder group of RAC commissioners, representatives from the VB Hotel Association and the VB Restaurant Association, and other resort stakeholders are advancing the refresh process now. The hope is to have a revised RASA Plan completed by the end of this year.

- By now everyone knows

▲ **SETTLE DOWN, FOLKS!** Some people on local social media have been upset to see the tall, long and barren north wall (inset) of the oceanside Marriott hotel under construction across from the old Cavalier. The developer, Gold Key | PHR, says this is how it will look when the condos are added and it's finished. So relax.

about the Pharrell Williams-sponsored Something in the Water festival – it happens the weekend of April 26-28.

A tremendous amount of planning by the SITW + BWG production team as well as the city of Virginia Beach hopefully will result in a successful weekend of entertainment, innovation and inspiration.

This festival has put Virginia Beach on the minds of many internationally. It is patterned after the South by Southwest festival in Austin, Texas. You can read more about it online at www.somethinginthewater.com.

Recent news about these resort area projects can be found at the city website, www.vb.gov.com.

– *Billy Almond*

HISTORICAL

CAPE HENRY LIGHT REOPENS TO THE PUBLIC

The Cape Henry Lighthouse has reopened after the dune-restoration project that closed it in September, and Preservation Virginia, which owns it, plans a grand reopening celebration Sunday, May 4.

The free ceremony will include a ribbon-cutting at 11 a.m., according to Preservation Virginia.

“The ribbon-cutting will be followed by climbs up the tower, interactive Dune Talks led by historic interpreters on STEM-related topics, including geology and marine life, walking tours of the Cape Henry area, a bounce house and a Lego lighthouse competition hosted by the Hampton Roads LEGO User Group,” Preservation Virginia said in a news release April 15.

The \$1.1 million restoration project “was jointly funded by \$845,000 in federal grants, with additional financing from Preservation Virginia ... and the City of Virginia Beach,” the news release stated.

– *Don Naden*



DON NADEN | NVBCL

The dune restoration included brick pavers to provide a finished surface to the pedestrian plaza.

fyi

VB Home & Garden Tour
Wednesday, May 1

Find detailed information on Garden Week tours and tickets online at www.vagardenweek.org/main/tourdetails?id=417, then click on “Download Complete Tour Description”

BEACHES / WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

Dog-leash survey responses

This is just a sample of the many anonymous comments we received during the NVBCL's March survey of North End residents' opinions on the city's proposed ordinance that all dogs be leashed 24/7 on the beach.

3/28

Need to have more effective enforcement of laws pertaining to dogs. Also, develop more putative punishments for violations including prohibition to own a dog for multiple violations. Laws are ineffective if violations aren't enforced. ...

I would agree to allow dogs off the leash before 10 AM and after 7PM from Memorial Day to Labor Day. For me the most pressing problem is dog poop left on the beach!!

3/26

ONE OF THE JOYS OF THE BEACH IS SEEING DOGS OF EVERY KIND enjoying THE BEACH and each other, and chasing balls or sticks in the surf. The regulations as to hours to be off leash seem to work. Nothing needs fixing.

I feel that there should be real repercussions for people with uncontrolled aggressive dogs on the beach. However, I don't think that a few bad apples should spoil the bunch for the large majority of friendly dogs who run and play under the supervision of their owners without incident.

3/25

I think the leash laws as they are provide the restrictions for safety in the summer but the flexibility for locals to have their dogs off leash during off-peak times and seasons. It's a special thing at va beach to

let the dogs be leash free (as long as they are still under owners command/control).

Dogs are out of control at the Northend. Not only do they attack other dogs, they bother us when sitting on the beach minding our own business. ... Without a leash they get too far away from their owners and defecate all over. Vote for the leash law!

We purchased our house on 80th Street largely so we could allow our dog to freely play on the beach. ...The proposed rule is overly broad ...

As a dog owner I always have my dog on a leash. ...

Dogs running loose threaten young children, defecate wherever they want, sometimes out of sight of their owner. Current leash laws and times are not enforced so maybe a 100% requirement will be easier to enforce.

3/24

I hate the idea that one would no longer be able to throw a ball for their dog, but a leash law is safer for everyone.

I think early mornings and late afternoons the dogs should be allowed to run. The owner needs to be with the dog with leash in hand in case it is needed.

Dog owners should be licensed, having demonstrated their ability to control their dogs off leash. Or we reestablish days and hours allowing off leash dogs.

I've noticed around 64th they are always on beach not particularly leashed. BUT I've never seen a patrol person ever!

We have a 22 month old son and have been "charged" by unleashed dogs several



MAINTODAY.COM

times. I now carry a 6' hardwood stick to defend ourselves. ...Let's not risk our children's safety on public property.

3/22

... I don't think dog owners understand that other people have no way of knowing if the dog is friendly. I just want to be able to take a relaxed walk on the beach without being terrified of a loose dog. ...

3/19

... The City provides dog parks. If a dog owner wants to exercise his/her dog take the dog to a dog park.

... I don't mind dogs off leash as long as owners can control their dogs. I also feel like it doesn't matter what the law is, it won't be enforced any more than the times dogs are allowed on the beach is enforced, or picking up after dogs. ...

3/18

For those of us who live close to the ocean this is the one place where the dogs can

exercise freely. I have no problem with time and/or day restrictions for running free, but would not like to see a leash required 24/7.

I believe dogs should not be allowed on the beach at all. Perhaps a designated "dog beach" should be adopted? However, all dogs that are in the public domain should remain on a leash.

Over the years I have been I knocked down, jumped on, peed on, cleaned up more poop than I care to think about. There are more and more dogs and people on our beaches than ever and dogs NEED TO BE LEASHED.

3/17

Arrogant people with aggressive dogs will probably disregard the leash law. I suggest raising fines, impounding aggressive dogs through animal control, and requiring owners to pay for vet bills or replacing a pet. ...

3/16

... There is a generally nice culture especially in the summer mornings when everyone is letting their dogs run, swim and chase balls. ... It is a shame that all of us (especially the dogs) would have to pay the price for a few bad dog owners!

I walk my dog every morning early on the beach. He is always on leash (long 50 ft one). He likes to chase birds and would probably follow them forever. And he likes to dig for crabs. Both things he can do on the long leash.

3/15

The fine (if any even now) for any owner who's dog causes a problem while off leash and owner unable to control should be raised VERY high.

LEASH LAW

From the front

coordinated with many stakeholders to develop dog-etiquette rules we now see posted at every beach access in the North End.

Primarily, the etiquette rules require that off-leash dogs be under their owners' control at all times. Thus, there should be NO instance where a child, person or dog is approached by someone else's dog UNLESS INVITED. This would provide safety and prevent uncomfortable dog-dog and dog-human interactions – even from apparently friendly dogs.

The North Virginia Beach Civic League survey results, which closed April 1, have shown a strong minority, 46 percent, who said they favor a 24/7 leash requirement; 54 percent opposed it; 414 people responded. Many of those in favor said they are afraid to walk their dogs (even on a leash) due to uninvited dog-dog or dog-human interactions (friendly or not). Attempts to explain their unwillingness to be approached by an uninvited dog often are met with disdain, or worse, they said.

Those who favor the current rules cite the exercise, socialization and higher quality of life provided to their dogs by chasing



DON NADEN | NVBCL

These signs were posted at North End beach accesses after a toy poodle was killed by another dog in 2015.

balls, going into the water (problematic with a leash) and being around other dogs and humans. They also point out that many people bought homes in the area specifically so they could run with their dogs on the beach. They say restrictions could reduce home values as well as tourism.

Those who favor leaving the rules as they are say the city's Animal Control Division reported

1,080 "exposures" (dog-dog or dog-human bite or scratch that caused bleeding) in the city in 2017. Of the 17 total on-off leash incidents on our beaches, five were off-leash incidents on Bay beaches, one at the North End and two in the resort area. In 2018, there were 1,138 exposures in the city. Of the 18 total on-off leash incidents on all beaches, three were off-leash at the North End (two of the three were two dogs in same incident), three on Bay beaches and one at the resort beach.

Thus, supporters of the status quo say that the beach incidents are a very small problem in the overall scope of incidents and that the public safety risk is minimal. However, it is also true that of the total 17 citywide on-off leash incidents reported by the city in 2017, 13 were off-leash; of the 18 total last year, 14 were off-leash.

As you can see, there are strong opinions on each side of the issue and significant support for the city's position. Also, both sides agree there is a strong need for greater enforcement.

This will be the principal subject of our next general membership meeting, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 23, at the Center.

– Ron Pearson

TOO MUCH SAND, TOO LITTLE SAND

■ Crosswalks have been cleared of sand, but as the wind blows there is no place for it to go – so the sand blows back onto the crosswalks and stays there.

The city's Beach Operations Division says it will dig out both sides of the crosswalks about 12 inches soon to trap the sand.

■ The city has received at least one bid for a project that would replenish beach sand mostly in the resort area but would extend all the way to 72nd street depending upon need, according to Phillip Roehrs, water resources engineer in the Public Works Department.

The project could start as early as May if the contractor can start immediately, but Roehrs said in an April 16 email that probably won't be known before about May 12.

The city estimates it should take three months and will start on 15th Street and head north, but turtle protection rules prevent dredging during September/October. Thus, if the contractor is not ready for immediate start, the city might wait until November to begin.

Stay tuned – especially if you are planning a beach wedding!

– Ron Pearson

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

Post Office Box 1676
Virginia Beach, VA 23451
contact@nvbcl.org
www.nvbcl.org

Have you paid your \$20 dues for 2019?

You can pay online, at www.nvbcl.org, or send a check (payable to NVBCL) to P.O. Box 1676, Virginia Beach, VA 23451.

ZONING

NVBCL committee provides guidance for NEnders

We remind our neighbors that developers have three options for North End properties: a single-family house, duplex or two detached cottages on one parcel.

The detached-cottages option is an incentive-based design guideline, and a developer must comply with the design criteria in the overlay ordinance.

We also remind our neighbors that any opportunity to determine what type redevelopment happens on your street starts with the "Seller of the Parcel." Once a parcel has sold, it is in the hands of the buyer, who has the three by-right options listed above.

The NVBCL's Zoning Review Committee meets

at 6:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the A.R.E. Visitors Center unless there is no business before the committee that month. If you wish to attend the ZRC, please contact Billy Almond at 235-0731 or billy@wplsite.com for additional information before our meetings.

— *Billy Almond*

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