

Highlands HOA Newsletter

Highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com

www.thehighlandsofchesbeach.org

Spring Edition 2025

Board of Directors

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****Vacancy****

HOA Meetings

April 16, 2025

May 21, 2025

June 18, 2025

July/August – Summer Break

September 17, 2025

October 15, 2025

November 19, 2025

December 17, 2025

Executive Board Meetings

Regularly scheduled Board Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month.

Meetings are held at the North East Community Center (Next to Water Park) located at 4075 Gordon Stinnett Ave., Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732 at 7:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.

Annual Meeting Date: 6/18/25

- Meetings are held at the North East Community Center located at 4075 Gordon Stinnett Ave., Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732 at 7:00 PM.
- All are welcome to attend

Board Vacancy! – New homeowner Board Members are needed, see section in newsletter. Several Directors are stepping down at the end of their term at the annual meeting.

Community Events:

Yard Sale & Vendor Day at the Park:

4/26/25 (Rain Date: 5/3/25)

Dumpster Day: **5/17/25**

****HOA Dues must be up to date to use dumpster****

Community Picnic:

6/7/25 (Rain Date: 6/8/25)

HOA Dues:

A big thank-you to everyone who has already paid your 2025 HOA dues! And if you're one of those who hasn't gotten around to it yet, if you would do so, we'd appreciate it. We aren't charging late fees yet, so get your checks to P.O.Box 235, Chesapeake Beach MD 20732, as soon as you can! Or if you want to pay via Venmo, go to <https://thehighlandshoainc.com/payment> and click on the Venmo link. Venmo ID is @Highlands-HOA. Dozens of Highlands homeowners have taken advantage of this option this year, so don't hesitate to join them!

Dumpster Day/Neighborhood Clean-up

ON MAY 17, 2025, from 7:30 am to 11:00 am, we will provide TWO, 30 cubic yard dumpsters in the parking lot of the ball fields for community use only. Once these dumpsters are full, they will be removed. If you don't make it in time, please do not dump unwanted items in the parking lot. We recommend that you try to come as early as possible as these dumpsters always fill quickly. *****Homeowners must have all dues paid up to date to participate. **Proof of residency is required.*** **REMINDER: NO HAZARDOUS OR FLAMMABLE MATERIALS, PAINT CANS, HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE OR TIRES WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Now that the weather is getting warmer and the days longer, this would be a good time for homeowner(s) to take a look around their property, inspect fences, landscaping, mailboxes, etc. for repairs. Spring "cleaning" includes removing unsightly debris, trash, junk cars, etc. which will greatly improve our neighborhood appeal and preserve our property values. The dumpsters are being provided as a service to help keep the community clean. The Board of Directors will be reviewing properties to ensure compliance with the Architectural Control Regulations as specified in the covenants. The Sheriff's Department will be notified of unlicensed vehicles, and they will act accordingly. If you have not received the bylaws and covenants in your settlement package, please contact the Board and we will provide a copy for you. **All** lots are subject to the terms of these documents.

School Bus Stop Safety

Please parents, for their own safety, ensure that your children are remaining out of the middle of the street when walking and waiting for the school bus.

Neighborhood Safety

School is back in session which means our children will be out at bus stops and walking along the streets of the neighborhood. Please consider their safety and be even more diligent in watching your speed during bus times. **THE SPEED LIMIT IN THE HIGHLANDS IS 25 MPH.** We have had a number of complaints and although we cannot enforce the speed limit – the Calvert County Sheriff Department can! Call their non-emergency number and report speeders. Their phone number is: 410-535-2800.

With some reports of vehicle being broken into, this is a good reminder to secure all vehicles (lock doors when not in use) and remove any personal items that might be appealing to theft.

Refinancing? – Selling?

This is just a reminder: If you are refinancing or selling please insure that your title company and/or realtor is reaching out to the HOA board (highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com) to get the requested lot paperwork information that you will need to complete the process or settlement.

Community Picnic

6/7/25 with a rain date of 6/8/25 12pm- 5pm

- Open to HOA Residents and their families
- Tables and Chairs under a big tent for sitting and eating
- Food Available – HOA is providing food
- Sodas and Waters will be available
- Dessert Ice & Water will be provided by the HOA
- Lawn Games (Bring one if you have a favorite)
- One bouncy for everyone to have a fun time.
- Restroom facility will be onsite

HOA Board Communication

Please be aware that the Board of Directors are volunteers; members have full time jobs and are not always accessible for immediate communication. The best way to contact the board with questions or concerns is to come to monthly meetings or send a message to the HOA email address, highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com. Official communication from the board will come via the monthly meetings or the bi-annual newsletter.

Special events or circumstances may be also posted to the official Highlands Facebook page (The Highlands of Chesapeake Beach HOA – any other page is not administered by the board and the posts cannot be verified as accurate) but that will not be the primary mode of communication. Please be respectful of board members personal information and refrain from contact through the member's personal email.

Pets

As a reminder, Calvert County and The Highlands adhere to a strict "leash law"; all pets [Cats & Dogs] not within a fenced yard must be on a leash for the safety of the pet and neighbors. Pets found wandering outside may be reported to Animal Control.

As a pet owner--**Cleaning up after your pet is YOUR responsibility!!** Several complaints have arisen about dog feces and trash bags with dog feces left in the walkways, driveways and lawns.

Dogs are not aware of human boundaries or when they have crossed those boundaries, but their owners should be.

The most responsible thing that a dog owner should practice for their community, home and environment is to pick up after their pets and disposing of the feces in your own trash cans. We love dogs except for the dealing with the waste they leave behind which may contain parasites and bacteria that are harmful to human health.

Architectural Control

Any home or property improvements (fences, decks, garages, porches, etc.) will need approval by the Board of Directors PRIOR to any work. Please contact Jeremy Kochel for the ACC form which is required to be completed and submitted to the Board. Keep in mind that the Board meets just once a month to review these projects so be sure to allow time for that process. We do not meet during the summer months so please be mindful of that if you have plans to do any improvements this summer. Also, board approval is not related to the county building permit process. Be sure to contact the permits office to comply with any requirements the county may have with regards to your improvements prior to beginning construction.

Board Vacancy

New **HELP WANTED!** Any homeowner interested in volunteering to be a Director, please contact a Board Member or attend an upcoming meeting. We do have a vacancy, and several board members have requested to step down this Summer at the Annual Meeting. One term is only a 3-year commitment. We meet once a month which is generally ten times a year. (Summer months are break time ☺) The Board is always looking for any homeowner interested in volunteering their services. Our goal is to take care of our neighborhood *and avoid having to employ a management company which would increase our dues substantially.* Your new ideas and your enthusiasm are always welcome! Join us!

Mosquito Control

We are once again registered with the county for mosquito control.

Homeowners are reminded that the Board of Directors has NO CONTROL over the schedule for this as it is provided by the County and they dictate the days and times for spraying.

Homeowners can help eliminate breeding grounds for mosquitos by removing containers which hold stagnant water.

Parking

Just a reminder that **vehicles should not be parked in the sidewalk, should not block Fire Hydrants, Mailboxes, and should not park within 25' of an intersection** to ensure adequate sight distance in the intersection area.

Please be considerate of your neighbors and refrain from parking in an area that would prohibit them free access to their driveway. There have been issues with too many cars parked along the road and property owner(s) being unable to get out of their driveways – especially if they have a large vehicle or are towing a boat or trailer. We understand that parking areas are sometimes limited, but please be considerate of your neighbors. If you or a guest parks along the road in the grass area, please be prepared to repair any damages, ruts, etc. caused by this action. If the damages are extensive and are incurred on HOA maintained property by you or your guests, you may be charged for repairs to the area.

Trash

Let's be honest, trash stinks. And while it is perfectly normal to see garbage bins lining the driveways on trash day, no one likes to look at overflowing bins every day.

Improper trash disposal can lead to unnecessary messes and problems for members of your community. Trash that's starts to pile up on someone's property, whether it's from overflowing trash not fully enclosed, with lid, in the garbage can or trash in bags scattered around outside the bins, this attracts hungry critters who view garbage as a great food source. Unsecure trash blows all over the streets and even into your neighbors' yards, also with the hot summer the stink is not pleasant.

Please keep our community beautiful and see that it remains clean and free from unnecessary debris; place your overflow trash in another trash bin and secure it with a cover.

Rental Properties

If you are the owner/landlord of a rental home in The Highlands, please be advised that the covenants apply to your tenants and that they are required to adhere to all covenants and bylaws of our community. We ask that you please be respectful of our community and do thorough background checks to ensure that your tenant will make a good neighbor.

NOTE: Homeowners may **NOT** rent out rooms to individuals. The HOA laws pertaining to rental property can be found in the HOA Bylaws Package in *Article I, Section X of the Highlands Homeowners Association, Inc. - Architectural Control Regulations*.

HOA Bylaws Package

New residents of the Highlands are given HOA bylaws packets, if homeowners do not keep them to be transferred at closing when homes are sold, they can be provided by the board at a charge to be paid by the seller. Requests require 30 days' notice and must be sent in

writing to the HOA Board email (highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com); if that notice is not given, an additional rush fee will be charged.

Sewer Update/History

The community has a problem with septic systems failing, almost everyone is on their 2nd system, if they were permitted to install it, or are now on holding tanks. Most lots in the community cannot have a 3rd septic field installed. Since this is a community problem and it was brought to our attention in early 2019, that is what led the HOA, 6 years ago, to start figuring out a solution with Calvert County's help to move forward for the longevity of the neighborhood.

Back on Aug 21, 2019, the HOA had a special meeting to discuss the sewer project and the option of moving forward with a neighborhood project with help from the county.

COVID happened, which had its delays. During that time meetings with the County Commissioners with their Lawyers, Public Works, Town councils, and the HOA and our HOA Lawyer all took place which ultimately got us to June 14, 2022.

On June 14, 2022, the motion was put forth and approved to use \$313,873.00 plus 10% contingency out of the ARPA funding to pay for the design and engineering of the Highlands HOA Community's sewer system. This is to pay for the engineering studies (Phase 1) which will define the scope of work, design, and figure out the costs associated with moving forward with the Phase 2, the next step of this project. ***(The Phase 1 process will be at NO cost to the homeowners in the community and it will not be a cost to the county taxpayers. It will be coming out of the ARPA funding available to the county.)****

On Nov 29, 2022, all HOA homeowners received an engineering letter from WRA, that they will be moving forward with their 'Field Verification & Survey' for Phase 1.

On Feb 24, 2025 after several Sewer information meetings were held and proper notification was given to homeowners following bi-laws, the HOA held a Sewer Motion and it passed with a 74% majority vote, which was counted by our HOA attorney. (92 Yes vote, and a 32 vote No)

Now in the Spring of 2025 the Special Tax District is working to be created and ratified with the HOA & County Lawyers for the Phase 2 work. This will then be approved by the commissioners. Then the county is hopeful to get the project out to bid this fall into Spring of next year- this is the best case currently.

Property Maintenance

Residents of The Highlands are responsible for maintaining their properties in a manner that prevents an unsafe environment for the community. Please keep clippings and leaves out of the roadway as that makes for a dangerous slippery condition for motorists. Please ensure that properties are kept clean cut, especially near intersections, so that other community members can see any and all oncoming traffic. Should there become a situation where a property has not been maintained and communication by the HOA has not been responded to, the HOA will step in, and the homeowner will be charged any associated fees of the required maintenance.
