HIGHLANDS OF CHESAPEAKE BEACH

OUR NEIGHBORS • OUR COMMUNITY • OUR FUTURE

FALL 2026 • NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS & UPDATES

highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com - www.thehighlandsofchesbeach.org - https://www.facebook.com/groups/1071905769619045

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matt Collins — President: 660-233-6600
George Murphy — VP / Grounds: 301-980-2418
Kim Jonas — Treasurer: 301-812-1448
Kristen Collins — Secretary
Jeremy Kochel — Architectural: 301-440-5298
Paula Dunlap — Events: 443-404-8942
Mike Hurlock — Director: 443-532-4091
Rob Campbell — Director: 843-696-1297
Darren Smith — Director
Surya Reynolds — Director

BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings every third Wednesday,

7:00 p.m., North East Community Center,

4075 Gordon Stinnett Ave., Chesapeake Beach.

Upcoming dates:

Oct. 21 2026

Nov. 18 2026

Dec. 16 2026.

CONTACT & DUES

General questions:

highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com

board@thehighlandsofchesbeach.org

Dues checks:

P.O. Box 235, Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732. Online/Venmo payment information: *https://thehighlandsofchesbeach.org/*.

For outstanding dues or payment arrangements, contact the Treasurer through the Board.

HOA COMMUNICATION

Board members are volunteers. Use the official Board email or attend a meeting rather than contacting directors at personal addresses. The official Highlands of Chesapeake Beach HOA Facebook page may carry announcements, but meetings and HOA communications remain primary channels.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLIDAY LIGHTS COMPETITION!

1st Place: No HOA dues for 2027
2nd Place: $45 off 2026 HOA dues
3rd Place: $25 off 2026 HOA dues
Judging information will be 11-15th of December.

PREPARE FOR WINTER

• Disconnect hoses; drain or winterize outdoor faucets.
• Insulate exposed pipes and know the water shutoff location.
• Replace HVAC filters and arrange heating maintenance.
• Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
• Clear gutters, downspouts and storm drains.
• Inspect weatherstripping, roof and overhanging limbs.
• Prepare flashlights, batteries, medications and storm supplies.

SAFETY AND PETS

Drive 25 mph; use extra caution at bus stops. Report speeding to the Sheriff's non-emergency line: 410-535-2800. Lock vehicles and remove valuables. Keep pets leashed where required and promptly dispose of pet waste in your own trash.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL

Board approval is required BEFORE exterior work such as fences, decks, garages and porches. Contact Jeremy Kochel for the Architectural Compliance form. Allow time for monthly review; HOA approval does not replace any required County permit.

WINTER YARD CHECKLIST

Store or secure loose outdoor furniture and decorations; check drainage around foundations; keep branches away from walkways and roofs; use ice melt suitable for your surfaces and pets; plan for safe snow and ice removal.

TRASH AND RECYCLING

Keep trash in secure, covered containers. Do not leave loose bags or overflow where animals or wind can scatter debris. Help keep streets, sidewalks and shared spaces clean.

SELLING OR REFINANCING?

Ask your title company or real-estate agent to contact the HOA early for required lot and resale paperwork: highlandshoa.inc@gmail.com. We ask for 30 days' notice for bylaws-package requests.

RENTAL PROPERTIES

Owners are responsible for informing tenants of community covenants and architectural rules. Review the governing documents for rental restrictions and contact the Board with questions.

PROPERTY UPKEEP

Keep lawns and lots maintained, remove debris, and keep grass clippings and leaves out of roadways. Trim vegetation near intersections to preserve visibility. Address damaged fencing, mailboxes and landscaping before winter weather.

PARKING AND ACCESS

Do not block sidewalks, fire hydrants, mailboxes or driveways; avoid parking within 25 feet of intersections as noted in prior HOA guidance. Park considerately and repair any damage to HOA-maintained grounds caused by vehicles or guests.

SEASONAL REMINDERS

The earlier spring newsletter covered the April yard sale, May dumpster day and June picnic; those events have passed and are not listed as upcoming fall events. Watch for newly announced HOA activities and dates.

Highlands Sewer Project — History & Fall 2026 Update

Why This Project Is Important

The Highlands community has faced ongoing challenges with aging and failing septic systems for many years. Many homeowners are already on their second septic system, while others have been required to use holding tanks. Due to limited available space and soil conditions, many properties cannot accommodate another replacement drain field. Without a long-term solution, septic failures could threaten the continued use and value of homes throughout our neighborhood.

Recognizing this community-wide concern, the HOA began working with Calvert County in 2019 to explore converting the neighborhood from individual septic systems to a public sewer system.

How We Got Here

August 21, 2019: The HOA held a special community meeting to discuss the septic system challenges and the possibility of pursuing a neighborhood-wide sewer project with County assistance.

2020–2022: Despite delays caused by COVID-19, discussions continued among the HOA, Calvert County Commissioners, Public Works, local municipalities, and legal representatives to identify a feasible solution.

June 14, 2022: Calvert County approved $313,873, plus a 10% contingency, in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for Phase 1 engineering and design. This funding covered preliminary studies, surveys, project planning, and cost development without a direct Phase 1 charge to Highlands homeowners.

November 29, 2022: Engineering firm Whitman, Requardt & Associates (WRA) notified homeowners that field verification and property surveys would begin as part of Phase 1.

February 24, 2025: Following several informational meetings, the HOA conducted a community vote on moving forward with the sewer project. The motion passed with approximately 74% support among votes cast (92 in favor and 32 opposed), with the results counted by the HOA's attorney.

February 10, 2026: Calvert County approved submission of a Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) grant application to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). This funding could help reduce the portion of construction costs ultimately borne by homeowners.

Fall 2026 — Where Things Stand

The project has made progress toward securing the necessary approvals and financing. Public Works also confirmed that the Board of County Commissioners authorized **$2.25 million in FY2026 bond financing associated with the Highlands sewer project**, as referenced in the County's August 18 bond-sale materials.

What Happens Next?

Several important steps remain before construction can begin:

1. Final approval of the County's updated Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan.
2. Confirmation of BRF grant funding and other financing.
3. Scheduling and holding a public hearing on the proposed Special Tax District (STD).
4. County consideration and potential approval of the STD, including the proposed homeowner financial obligations.
5. Final engineering, easements, construction bidding, and contractor selection.
6. Construction and eventual connection of participating properties to the new sewer system.

What does this mean for homeowners?

The project continues to advance, but the final cost to homeowners, financing terms, and construction timeline have not yet been established. The purpose of the Special Tax District would be to finance the portion of the project costs assigned to benefiting properties. The HOA's priority remains obtaining as much outside funding as possible to reduce that financial burden.

The Board will continue working with Calvert County and monitoring state funding decisions, County approvals, and upcoming public hearings. We will share verified updates as they become available and ensure homeowners have an opportunity to understand the proposed costs and provide input before major decisions are finalized.

The goal remains the same as it was in 2019: securing a reliable, long-term wastewater solution that protects our homes, property values, and the future of the Highlands community.