

# Topsail Beach Update from Mayor Smith - February 26, 2023



## Key Dates for Topsail Beach

1. **Town Celebration** – Our Town will be 60 years young during March 2023. Planning a small celebration at Assembly Building with Brunswick stew and cake on Friday, March 17, 2023. Will sell tickets (\$10) for Brunswick stew & drink. See Town Website for details.
2. **Town Budget Process has started** – Have held workshops looking at Long-term needs – Salaries, Fire Trucks, buildings for fire & police departments and staffing requirements. Buildings and Ladder Fire Truck cost estimates - \$13 to 17 million – will need to finalize plans so we can order fire truck in 2024/2025 and have building ready in 2027/28. We currently estimate we are about \$400,000 revenue short to balance our budget for FY 2024 needs at this time.
3. **Legislation & Rules to watch:** - NC Coastal Resource Commission is updating Inlet Hazard Area Rules, Development Line Rules, Land Use Plan Rule, Beach Mat Rules, & Dune Grass growth time for Dune Classification.
4. **Paid Parking** - Will be discussed at March's Board of Commissioners Meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>.
5. **Conditional Zoning Request for South-end** - The Application is not complete, waiting on required information from applicant. Town has started to receive feedback from state & federal agencies. This Conditional Zoning Request will not be on agenda for March 1 Planning Committee Meeting.
6. **Town's Land Use Plan Update** – The updated Town Land Use Plan is being reviewed by consultant for inconsistent areas and legal requirements. Hope to have ready for citizen review by middle of March.
7. **Shellfish Leases** – There are 2 requests to lease areas in Banks Channel and marsh area within the town limits of Topsail Beach. A public hearing is scheduled for March 15, 5:00 PM at Topsail Beach's Town Hall. This public hearing is coordinated by the NC Marine Fisheries Department.

- ❖ **March 1, 2023, 10:00 AM** – Planning Board Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall – Conditional Zoning is NOT on the agenda. Link to the agenda: [https://topsail.granicus.com/GeneratedAgendaView\\_er.php?view\\_id=2&event\\_id=876](https://topsail.granicus.com/GeneratedAgendaView_er.php?view_id=2&event_id=876)
- ❖ **March 7, 2023, 10:00 AM** – Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ **March 8, 2023, 6:00 PM** – Board of Commissioners Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ **March 11, 2023, 11:00 AM** – Year of Trails – Historic Walking Tour of Topsail Beach – starts at Assembly Building – approximately 1 mile tour. Link: <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/Topsail-BeachHistorical-Walking-Tour-of-Topsail-Beach-5221#tourname>
- ❖ **March 15, 2023, 8:00 AM** – Envision Penslow Meeting – Onslow Boat, Holly Ridge – Conference on economic growth in Pender & Onslow Counties
- ❖ **March 15, 2023, 5:00PM** – NC Marine Fisheries public hearing on shellfish leases in Pender County – Topsail Beach Town Hall. NC DMF Shellfish Leasing Map Link: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=de86f3bb9e634005b12f69a8a5947367&extent=8551979.8781%2C4121555.1994%2C8515290.1046%2C4140072.0696%2C102100>
- ❖ **March 16, 2023, 2:00 PM** – Beach, Inlet & Sound (BIS) Committee Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ **March 17, 2023, 5-7:00 PM** – Town to celebrate 60 years – Assembly Building – Tickets for Brunswick Stew & Cake
- ❖ **March 20-24, 2023** – Topsail Shoreline Protection Commission representatives in Washington, DC to meet with federal agencies and representatives
- ❖ **March 22, 2023, 10:00 AM** – Planning Committee Meeting – Location to be Determined

# Topsail Beach Update from Mayor Smith - February 26, 2023

8. **Vitex** – This plant is an invasive plant and does not add strength to our dune system as other plants and grasses. The island’s 3 Towns are coordinating efforts to remove Vitex. NAME: Beach vitex (*Vitex rotundifolia*). Native to Hawaii and the Pacific Rim. DESCRIPTION: Round green leaves are 1-2 inches long and have a spicy fragrance. Flowers are bluish-purple. SIZE: Coastal shrubs can grow up to 12 feet wide and 4 feet tall. HABITAT: Thrives in full sun, sandy soils and moderate temperatures. INTRODUCTION: Used as an ornamental plant for years. First used as a beach-stabilization plant in South Carolina in the 1980s. Labeled a ‘problem invasive’ around 2000. **THREAT: Prolific seed producer and fast grower; crowds out native beach plants; impedes sea turtle and shorebird nesting; doesn't stabilize dunes.**



9. **Beach Clean** – This program is coordinated by the Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Commission for the 3 island towns. We are seeing increasing amount of waste on our beaches with the impact of micro plastics. The 3 island towns have banned the use of non encapsulated polystyrene in floats for new docks and dock repairs. The polystyrene breaks down into beads, is difficult to cleanup and it enters into our food chain. With the increasing visitors, we need to educate the public about “leaving no trace” on our beach. We have also been asked to ban the release of balloons because of their impact on wildlife. The towns will need to consider what are the proper steps for balloons. Please help by reminding all to help protect our waterways. A micro plastics report can be found here: <https://www.nccoast.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Microplastics-and-Resilient-Docks-and-Piers-Report.pdf>

