

Topsail Beach Update from Mayor Smith – April 20, 2023



1. Town Facts:

- ❖ Full Time Residents: 461 +
- ❖ Median Age: 58.8
- ❖ Median Home Price: \$552,300
- ❖ Median Household Income: \$78,750
- ❖ Visitors: up to 10,000 + per week
- ❖ Number of Total Properties: 1,400 +
- ❖ Number of Rental properties: 1,119 +

2. Business Activity Update:

- ❖ Godwin's Market is now open. They are planning additional services for our community.
- ❖ BBQ Restaurant – Hopefully open by middle of May 2023. Also planning to have baked goods & ice cream deli.

3. Town Budget for FY 2024 – Have held workshops looking at Long-term needs – Salaries, Fire Truck, buildings for fire & police departments and other staffing requirements. Current town ad valorem tax rate: 34 cents per \$100 valuation. We are currently about \$400,000 from a draft balanced budget for FY 2024. Link to tax calculator: <https://topsailbeachnc.gov/Residents/Property-Tax-Calculator>

4. Fire Truck – Why is Town looking at a ladder truck? You do not put firefighters on a metal roof like you do with a conventional asphalt shingle roof for safety reasons and we now have homes with rescue needs from higher floors. The ability to put water above and down onto a fire also reduces the spreading of a fire. It is about your safety, safety of neighbors homes and about the safety for our firefighters. Current requirements also require the replacement of your first line truck at 20 years. Our first line fire truck turns 20 in 2030. There is a lead time of up to 3 years to build a fire truck. This says we have to be ordering a fire truck by 2026/27.

Key Dates for Topsail Beach

- ❖ April 20, 2023, 2:00 PM – Beach, Inlet & Sound (BIS) Committee Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ April 25, 2023, 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM – Budget Workshop – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ April 25-26, 2023 – NC Coastal Resources Commission Meeting – Manto, NC
- ❖ April 28, 2023, 2:00 PM – Topsail Shoreline Protection Commission Meeting – Surf City Town Hall
- ❖ April 29, 2023, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM – Islandwide Street Sweep (April 22 is Earth Day)
- ❖ May 2, 2023, 9:00 AM – Parks & Recreation Committee – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ May 3, 2023, 10:00 AM – Planning Committee Meeting – Assembly Building, 720 Channel Blvd.
- ❖ May 3, 2023, 2:00 PM – Budget Workshop – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ May 10, 2023, 6:00 PM – Regular Commissioners Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ May 11, 2023, 11:00 AM – Historical Society of Topsail Island Luncheon – Assembly Building
- ❖ May 11-12, 2023 - NC Beach, Inlet & Waterway Association(NCBIWA) Meeting – Emerald Isle, NC
- ❖ May 17, 2023, 9:00 AM – Budget Workshop – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ May 18, 2023, 2:00 PM – Beach, Inlet & Sound (BIS) Committee Meeting – Topsail Beach Town Hall
- ❖ May 23, 2023, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM – Music in Park – Topsail Beach Town Center Park
- ❖ May 24, 2023, 10:00 AM – Planning Committee Meeting – Assembly Building , 720 Channel Blvd.
- ❖ May 25, 2023, 9:00 AM – Topsail Beach Craft Fair on Thursday – 802 Anderson Blvd., Topsail Beach

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5. **Topsail Beach Logo License Plate** – Representative Carson Smith has submitted a local bill for our logo plate and we now wait for bill to move through the legislative process.
6. **Legislative & State Committee Activities to Follow:**
 - ❖ Coastal Resources Commission . – **Beach Access Mats:** <https://www.deq.nc.gov/coastal-management/rule-changes/crc-23-13-consideration-adoption-beach-mat-amendments> — **2019 Inlet Hazard Rules:** <https://www.deq.nc.gov/coastal-management/crc-23-08-science-panel-scope-work/download?attachment> — **Land use Plan Rules** under review with suggestion to tie LUP direction to specific legislation
 - ❖ NC State Legislation & Committees – Septic rules & Flood Plan Rules due Jan. 2024, & Property Flooding Potential Information
 - ❖ Federal Legislation – Water System Inventory, WOTUS Legislation & PFAS Legislation – Impact on Water & Sewer Systems
7. **Paid Parking** – We continue to obtain feedback from property owners. We expect a decision for a way forward during the May Commissioners’ Meeting on May 10. Over 75% of Topsail Beach’s streets are state maintained with 20 to 60 foot Right of Way (ROW). Many of our businesses including rentals use ROW for all of their parking needs. Link to a proposed Parking Plan: https://topsailbeach-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/dshipley_topsailbeachnc_gov/EVZMqMlLocxPq7rEC64BsNUBj8-H0lBx4ytljZe2n7jqVQ?e=eiaf8G
8. **Conditional Zoning Request for South-end** - The Application has been ruled complete. The Town has started to receive feedback from state & federal agencies. The Planning Committee will be seeking public comments at their April meeting. The Planning Committee has until May 30th to make their decision.
9. **Town’s Land Use Plan (LUP) Update** – We will continue to ask for public comments in May’s Commissioners Meeting. Public Hearing is scheduled. Link to draft 2022/23 LUP: <https://topsailbeachnc.gov/Portals/0/Topsail/News%20Articles/2022%20November%20Full%20LUP%20Draft.pdf?ver=UdtjFGMkdTpoK0zCIUFO9g%3d%3d>
10. **Topsail Beach Nudity Ordinance** – Our attorney has provided a draft ordinance he feels is enforceable and will be upheld in our courts. We expect a decision on this ordinance in our May Commissioner Meeting. Please provide feedback on how you believe we should proceed. Link to ordinance: https://topsail.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=1120&meta_id=37004
11. **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; it is expected this will be a 3 year project.** First used as a beach-stabilization plant in South Carolina in the 1980s. Labeled a problem invasive species around 2000. THREAT: Prolific seed producer and fast grower; crowds out native beach plants; impedes sea turtle and shorebird nesting; doesn't stabilize dunes. Link to Beach Vitex Flyer: https://topsailbeachnc.gov/Portals/0/Topsail/News%20Articles/Beach%20Vitex%20Flyer.jpg?ver=u6qiyIX_lw5u7ksH9RDOXQ%3d%3d
12. **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.. 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.pdfHas>
13. **Top 5 Public Input Priorities from Draft Land Use Plan**
 - ❖ Preserve the beach and sound for their recreational value and natural beauty, which provide Topsail Beach with its identity.
 - ❖ Encourage investment into the maintaining and enhancing the central business district, particularly through additional small-scale shops and food service options.
 - ❖ Maintain the Town’s small-town character, generally consisting of low density single family residential development.
 - ❖ Ensure the future resilience of the Town through coastal storm damage reduction and beach protection efforts.
 - ❖ Enhance bicycle and pedestrian facilities to provide safe options for non-motorized transportation and recreation