

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

APRIL 2025

A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

CITY MANAGER TELLS IT LIKE HE SEES IT

Patrick Duhaney offered us his state-of-the-city assessment at our January meeting, in a Q&A session with members of this civic league that touched on rising project costs, the city's credit rating, sea-level rise and property taxes.

By Skip Gibson
NVBCL president



THE NORTH Virginia Beach Civic League, with an average year-end membership of approximately 850 people, is arguably the largest and most engaged civic league in the city. Our committees directly interact with city officials at multiple levels on a variety of specific interests and concerns to you, our members, to find solutions. It's our members who make the NVBCL strong and our voices heard within the city. I encourage each of you to continue to take a proactive interest in our civic league and to be involved.

City Manager Patrick Duhaney was the guest speaker for our January general membership meeting and was a hit. After brief opening remarks, he chose to take questions and provided direct answers to each person's questions.

The following are highlights of that Q&A session.

Keeping a great city great. Duhaney stated that Virginia Beach is well positioned today and for future success. We have a strong City Council supported by an experienced city staff that works well together.



Duhaney

He said his greatest challenges for Virginia Beach are how to meet the growing expectations of our citizens, keep essential services within budget and keep taxes within reason in a time of rising costs for projects and services.

For example, some capital improvement projects are experiencing cost increases of over 30 percent. The Flood Protection Program is very proactive to protect the city, he said, but costs are significant. The city might eventually revise the Atlantic Avenue Improvement Project to reduce its scope due to rising costs.

And maintaining services, such as public safety, is an area experiencing continuing cost increases. The city is trying to find ways to enhance support for equipment and provide direct support to the city's rescue squads. (One example: Ambulance service cost is rising from \$150,000 to \$350,000.) Another key focus for the city is affordable housing; Virginia Beach is rapidly growing, and providing affordable housing – particularly for teachers, police, nurses and others – is essential for the city's continued growth. In short, we need more housing for everyone.

Maintaining the city's credit rating. To afford our many city projects, the city maintains a Triple A credit rating by

Please see **PRESIDENT**, Page 3



Upcoming civic league general meeting dates (6:30 p.m., A.R.E.)

April 16, July 16, Oct. 8 – Remember, we've changed from Tuesdays to the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Speaker for our April 16 meeting

Mayor Bobby Dyer will speak



about a variety of city issues, followed by a Q&A session. This is a great opportunity for our members

to directly ask the mayor their questions – we encourage everyone to attend.

Treasurer's report

Thank you to all civic league members who have paid their 2025 dues. At the end of March our membership stood at 546, and our assets were \$48,157.88.

This newsletter includes envelopes for paying your 2025 member dues. Our annual dues are \$25, for the calendar year. You also can pay through PayPal on the NVBCL website, www.nvbcl.org. Please include your North End address, your primary resident address and your email address.

If you have a question of whether you have paid your dues, please contact Bonner or Linda Palluch via email.



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

– Bonner Styles

HOSPITALITY

The West Lawn behind the PACC was the site of our October 2023 Fall Social.



The civic league's **BIG** fall party!

Friday, Oct. 10, 6:30 p.m.
Princess Anne Country Club,
on the West Lawn.

Tickets go on sale Sept. 1. You must be an NVBCL member to purchase. An email blast will go out to all members with details.

So stay tuned -- it's going to be a great night!

INSIDE

Our Winter Social at Driftwood Kitchen was a blast – details on Page 3.



Public safety phone numbers

2nd Precinct Police, (757) 385-2700

Nonemergency police, (757) 385-5000, option 3

Fire/police emergency, 911

Don Redmond up for vice president

Donald Redmond has agreed to become NVBCL vice president, and we are scheduled to vote on his nomination at our April 16 general membership meeting. Don had chaired our Budget & Taxes Committee until President Skip Gibson accepted his offer to become vice president.

Don's parents moved their young family of six from Norfolk to Virginia Beach not long after the 1963 merger between the Town of Virginia Beach and Princess Anne County.



Don hails from a family of prominent lawyers and followed the same career path. He

attended Virginia Beach public schools before Mary Washington College (now the University of Mary Washington) and law school at William & Mary. Most of his career has focused on business and corporate law, generally in the in-house role in private and publicly traded companies.

Don enjoys spending time at the beach, reading and gardening. He moved to the North End from another local neighborhood in 2017.

Skip intends to call for the April 16 vote after Mayor Dyer speaks.

Andy Cohen steps down from board

One of our most respected NVBCL members, Andy Cohen, has decided to step down from the Board of Directors and his role as co-chair of our Legislative Affairs Committee.

Andy has been one of our most effective leaders on the board, providing leadership and guidance on multiple issues, focusing on the state General Assembly and short-term rentals legislation. He approached the STR issue by listening, learning and focusing on finding common ground and workable solutions.

Andy has been an absolute stellar board member and civic league member. I look forward to getting him back on the board in the future.

— Skip Gibson

STREETS/UTILITIES/PUBLIC SAFETY



DON NADEN PHOTOS | NVBCL

A city crew installs one of the ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps at 48th Street on March 12. Crosswalk markings are to follow.

Ramping up North End pedestrian project under way

By John Weech
Streets/Utilities/Public Safety

The Atlantic Avenue Pedestrian Improvements Project is ongoing and will enhance 18 intersections along Atlantic Avenue in the North End.

All of these intersections will receive new or reconstructed ramps and crosswalk markings to comply with the Americans With Dis-



abilities Act standards.

Also, pedestrian LED warning

Please see **STREETS**, Page 4

Several high-volume intersections will eventually receive supplemental streetlights.



The two glass panels last year, at right, and as of March 24, above.

DON NADEN PHOTOS/TEXT | NVBCL

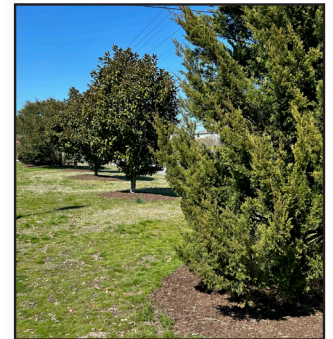
Shelter skelter

It's been quite a while — since August at least — since the two glass panes apparently were shot out at HRT's 57th Street bus shelter. As of press time, they still hadn't been replaced and hadn't been scheduled for repair, according to HRT. "Glass is being broken out at a rate that we are unable to keep up with," a March 19 email from HRT's Maintenance Department said. "... Panels will be replaced as inventory is replenished."

Hmmm. Watch this newsletter.

BEAUTIFICATION

NEW MULCH, LANDSCAPING FOR UTILITIES



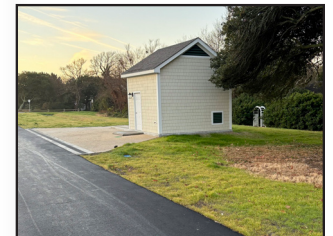
DON NADEN | NVBCL

Mulching between 66th and 67th streets

By Jim Spruance
Beautification

The city Landscaping Division recently completed its winter mulching of the Atlantic Avenue median.

Meanwhile, we were awaiting an announcement of specifics for landscaping to be completed at the pump stations in the 4800 and 5900 block of Atlantic.



The 48th Street pump station



JIM SPRUANCE PHOTOS | NVBCL

The 59th Street pump station

BEACHES

Hail spring! City works to get the beach into shape

By David McDaniel
Beaches & Recreation

What a winter we had this year!! Spring has finally come, and I am ready for it – the beach is, too.

In late March and into April, Beach Operations was scheduled to get our beaches ready for summer. As part of its normal spring preparation, Beach Ops was to scrape excess sand off both sides of our beachfront access walks after winter buildup. If the area on both sides of the walkway, 4 to 5 feet, is not higher than the boardwalk itself, they will not scrape any sand or cut vegetation back – some walkway areas might not need any maintenance.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions about this: (757) 348-3386, mcdanieldavid72@gmail.com.

The Army Corps of Engineers is performing beach replenishment in the Resort Area that is scheduled to be complete sometime in June. Some areas of beach might not



DON NADEN | NVBCL

An example of how BeachOps can clear blown sand from next to a beach walkway

be accessible during this process. The replenishment started near the fishing pier at 15th Street and will complete at 45th Street.

We know this will inconvenience some during spring and summer months, but we ask for your patience and understanding in support of our beach's health. There were equipment delays at the beginning of the project that have led to some delays.

HOSPITALITY



MONICA STEIN PHOTOS | NVBCL

NVBCL's socials have had good turnouts at Driftwood Kitchen, and the folks in these photos look like they were having a good time at our February gathering there.

Winter party was cool, summer is next

By Monica Stein
Hospitality

In February the civic league held its Winter Social at Driftwood Kitchen, a "Cheers" sort of neighborhood cafe open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Located down the street on Pacific Avenue at 37th Street, the charming bar/restaurant welcomed the NVBCL with open arms, lots of free apps and a variety of happy hour-priced beverages. Thanks to Troy and the folks at Driftwood Kitchen.

Our socials are yet another perk of being part of this community and our civic league. Our Summer Social will be sometime mid-June at the Wyndham Hotel's Surf Club Ocean Grille – stay tuned for info on that.



... and that's not all

We do not do our big fall party every year, but we are excited to get everyone together this year on Oct. 10! An email blast will go out to the membership.

PRESIDENT

From the front

exceeding all metrics and has sufficient capacity to do more – but it can't do everything, he said. Fifty percent of all debt is paid in 10 years vs. the 20-year standard, a key reason to maintaining our bond rating. He reminded us that the city budget includes the school budget, which has significant and growing requirements.

Taxes. Several questions focused on property taxes and how they could be reduced. Duhaney said that this is an area of intense focus and that he was actively evaluating alternatives. He said that there are some potential means to effect tax change but that he had to brief City Council first. Stay tuned on this issue – we hope to have more information in the coming months.

New activities. Duhaney discussed several of the economic engines that will provide increased revenue to support the city budget.

■ The new, private-venture \$350 million Atlantic Surf Park/Wave Pool is ahead of schedule and expected to be unveiled to the public this summer. The park is being built on the 10-acre site of the former Virginia Beach Dome Civic Center and will include the park, a live-entertainment venue, offices, residences, shopping and dining options.

■ The Virginia Beach Sports Center is under a new contractor and management team. Duhaney said that revenue has exceeded expectations and that the center is over performing in many other areas.

■ The city is making an investment to recapitalize the city pickleball facility on South Birdneck Road. The facility is leased to a contractor, and expectations are for increased availability to residents and improved financial performance.

Coastal Storm Management study. The Army Corps of Engineers, in conjunction with the city, is

conducting briefings throughout Virginia Beach regarding proposed engineering changes to protect the city. This is a major project to protect the city from a projected 5-foot increase in sea level in future years. We will learn much more about this project in the coming year.

In closing, I always want to thank the NVBCL Board of Directors and committee chairs for everything they do to support the civic league.



Souther

keep our neighborhood safe.



McDaniel

beaches and dunes are ready for the spring and summer.



Weech

multiple projects at the North End.



Stein

And Treasurer **Bonner Styles** and Secretary **Linda Palluch** are the backbone of our organization, ensuring everything is financially sound and administratively working well. My thanks to all of them.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

STAYING ON TOP OF THE ISSUES

By Parker Hannahs
Legislative Affairs Committee

The start of the 2025 legislative season has been rather quiet.

Various House and Senate bills pertaining to Short Term Rentals or Accessory Dwelling Units were proposed, but many did not make it out of their respective commit-

tees. Additionally, upon coordinating with the patrons and city officials, other bills had "mechanical problems," or technical conflicts, that kept them from proceeding.

Parker Hannahs continues to monitor and coordinate on these issues, and he will continue to keep you abreast and is happy to speak personally.

Also, the NVBCL will stay vigilant during the special session, scheduled to begin April 2.

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

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Lex McArthur, contact@nvbcl.org

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Find more information on our website, nvbcl.org.

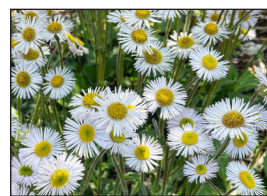
Lynnhaven Carpet A local treasure makes a great ground cover

By Mary Reid Barrow
Nature Notes

Many years ago, Lynnhaven Carpet, a sweet little fleabane daisy, was hot news in the Virginia Beach plant world.

The daisy was growing on the historic Adam Keeling House property, which had been undisturbed for centuries, along the Lynnhaven River. It caught the attention of the late Dale Henderson, an avid, knowledgeable gardener here.

Dale sent the plant off to nationally known plantsman Charles Cressman, who deemed it a wild



TRISTA IMRICH

hybrid and named it Lynnhaven Carpet.

Today Lynnhaven Carpet, with its white, purple-tinged flowers growing from handsome, mossy green rosettes of leaves, has become a local treasure. Trista Imrich, owner of Southern Branch Nursery and Wild Works

of Whimsy, in Chesapeake, recommended Lynnhaven Carpet as a native ground cover at an LRNow workshop recently. She called it a “locally found cultivar.”

The workshop, Designing With Native Plants, was the first of LRNow’s Plant for the Future workshop series this year.

Besides its pretty spring flowers, Lynnhaven Carpet lives up to its name, carpeting the ground year round in a nice mat, Trista said.

Natives are often overlooked as ground covers, but they can be a big help in the garden.

Reprinted with permission from LRNow Nature Notes, March 17, 2020; edited for length.

2ND PRECINCT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chief says city's 2024 crime stats were down

By Mary Souther
NVBCL Citizens Advisory Representative

Violent crime in the City of Virginia Beach was reported down last year, and several other categories of crime and police operations were as well, according to Police Chief Paul Neudigate.

He reported in February that for 2024, violent crime was down 22.3 percent compared to 2023. Other statistics he presented Feb. 11 to the 2nd Precinct Citizens Advisory Committee were:

- Homicides fell 46 percent, from 24 to 13, with 100 percent positively cleared.

- Property crime was down 4.3 percent as larcenies from motor vehicles continued to drop.

- Fatal vehicle crashes dropped 31 percent, and total crashes were down 4 percent.

Chief Neudigate attributed these declines to “several factors, including a prioritized focus on the small numbers of individuals willing to engage in gun violence; increased use of technology, to include camera expansion (both closed circuit and license plate reader); excellent work by our Detective Bureau, resulting in quick arrests; the dedication of the VB Commonwealth Attorney’s Office to successfully prosecute homicide, shooting, robbery offenses, etc., resulting in convic-

tions; and our courts, that ensure sentencing is commensurate with the offense.”

The North End has a new Community Liaison Program officer: Kishon Roberts works to reduce and prevent crime in the community by forming cooperative relationships with community groups and by implementing programs designed to combat crime trends and specific neighborhood problems.

To this end, Officer Roberts plans to attend our civic league meetings. Please introduce yourself at our next meeting, April 16.

Virginia Beach continues to recover from the recent loss of two city police officers and appreciates the overwhelming response from the community, Chief Neudigate said. While the officers’ GoFundMe sites remain active, a recommended way for our civic league to demonstrate ongoing support is the Adopt-a-Muster program. NVBCL is sponsoring Saturday, May 10, and seeking volunteers, individuals and businesses, to donate food and paper goods, and also to sign up for a shift to distribute items and interact with the officers – children are encouraged to participate. Please contact me at marysouther@gmail.com if you would like to contribute.

Lastly, the spring brings events to the Oceanfront. The Vibe Check Festival replaces the Something in the Water festival and is scheduled for April 25-26 at 24th Street. The planners of these free concerts are not planning any road closures.

STREETS

From Page 2

signs will be added at 42nd, 49th, 56th, 57 and 63rd streets. A Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon (RRFB, photo, at right) will be added at the mid-block bicycle trail crossing between 80th and 81st streets.



The work is being split into two contracts to allow ADA-compliant ramps and crosswalks to be installed

now. The remaining improvements, including poles and other equipment, have long lead times for delivery, pushing the start date for those items to September. According to David Jarman, Public Works Transportation Division manager, “All of the work is scheduled to be complete in spring 2026.”