

# Nags Head Lines

## NEWS FROM THE TOWN OF NAGS HEAD



 NagsHeadNC.gov

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## SUMMER 2023

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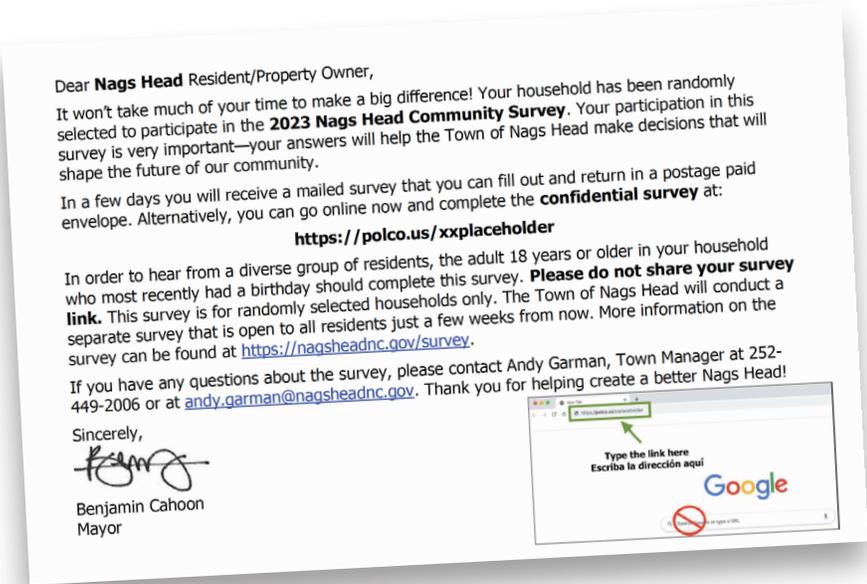
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# Tell Us What You Think



Remember the 2020 census and the push, despite the pandemic, for Americans to complete the survey? Did you ever wonder why there is always such a concerted effort to get people to fill out the census? One of the reasons is because census data informs how and where the federal government directs funding for critical services and infrastructure. Changes to concentrations in population could result in the gain, or loss, of significant revenue for an area.

Nags Head will soon release a community survey to residents and property owners. Much like the federal census, we will use this information to determine where we direct budgetary resources for infrastructure and services and how we shape the town's future from a policy perspective. We know it's hard to find the time to fill out a survey that is several pages long; however, the data it provides can be crucial to the town's future. With that said, we are encouraging you to take time this summer to complete the 2023 Nags Head Community Survey.

Redevelopment of our Public Services complex, expanded events at Dowdy Park, street repaving, beach access replacement, new sidewalks, waterlines, and drainage infrastructure; these are just a few of our recent initiatives. Even though we have been busy, we still want to make sure we align our efforts with your priorities. What is your perspective on what we're doing at the Town of Nags Head?

To garner community-wide representation, 3,000 randomly selected residents/property owners will receive mailed postcard invitations with URL access to an online survey. These postcards were mailed the week of July 24, 2023. This will be followed by a mailing of a paper survey to the random sample as a second round of outreach. A postage-paid reply envelope will be provided along with a cover letter that includes the option to complete the survey online if preferred. A survey reminder will be mailed to the sample households the week of August 7 as a final outreach effort.

Because we want to hear from everyone in the community, there will also be the opportunity for all residents and property owners to complete the survey online, even if you are not selected as part of the random sample. The week of August 21, a web link will be posted on the Town's website and publicized to encourage maximum participation. The survey for both the sample households and open participants will close on September 11.

The survey results will be analyzed and reported in the fall. We anticipate that our Board of Commissioners will use the survey results during their fall strategic planning retreat to develop an update to the Town's strategic plan. The board's desire is that the survey leads to more evidence-based decisions, budget priorities, and capital investments that improve the overall quality of life in Nags Head.

In addition to our survey news, we have many more initiatives we'd like to share with you, so please be sure to read through this entire newsletter.



## Town Budget Update

On June 21, 2023, the Town of Nags Head Board of Commissioners adopted the July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024 budget. Nags Head's budget process considers annual operating expenses, five-year capital needs, and long-term goals as outlined in the Town's strategic plan. In recent years, the Board has placed greater emphasis on maintenance of our assets and infrastructure as well as long-term capital planning.

Two years ago, the Town began preparing for the replacement of our aging Public Services complex. This is the operational hub of our largest department, providing the most visible daily services to our residents and visitors. Public Services manages our solid waste, public buildings, parks, beach accesses, streets, drainage infrastructure, and our water system. This year's budget includes funding for the development of this new facility, which represents the largest vertical construction project in the Town's history. The new complex is estimated to have a lifespan of 60 years.

Another major initiative included in this year's budget is the replacement of the town's analog water meters with an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. This system allows the meters to be read remotely through a wireless network, providing much more accurate water usage data and the ability to notify customers of leaks in real-time. Another article in this newsletter explains this system in greater detail.

The combined total for these two projects is \$19 million. Over the past two years, the Board acknowledged that a tax increase would be necessary to pay for two projects of this magnitude. The budget includes a 4.25 cent tax increase and a 12.3% water rate increase. These increases will raise the revenue needed to pay the debt service on these projects over a twenty-year amortization period. For the first time earlier this year, the Town received an Aa1 bond rating and sold limited obligation bonds to secure the best financing terms for these projects.

Another significant consideration of the budget is ensuring the Town can hire and retain our greatest asset, the Town's employees. This year's budget includes funding to maintain our competitiveness and to address the rising cost of living in this area. Specifically, we have included the following:

- A 6.5% cost of living adjustment tied to the January 2023 Consumer Price Index.
- An increase in career development and training funds and a 1% increase for the non-law enforcement officer 401k savings plan, bringing the Town's contribution to 5%.
- An increase in wages for ocean rescue staff from \$16/hour to \$18/hour and added incentives for guards to work later into August, including a \$600 end-of-season bonus for lifeguards and a \$1,000 end-of-season bonus for ocean rescue supervisors.

Other highlights of the July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 budget include:

- No changes to the municipal service district or town-wide beach nourishment taxes.
- Resurfacing of several sections of Town streets.
- Replacement of asbestos cement water lines.
- Replacement of the Loggerhead public access beach walkover.
- Applications for grants to assist with constructing new sidewalks, a new walkover at Governor Street, and replacement of the pier and gazebo at the causeway sound public access.
- Funding for the maintenance of the multi-use path on South Virginia Dare Trail. In addition, the Town received a \$650,000 grant that will also be used for repairs and improvements to this section of path.
- Funding for continued path maintenance is included, including bulkhead replacements along South Virginia Dare Trail and concrete path repairs in south Nags Head, adjacent to South Old Oregon Inlet Road.
- Funding in the amount of \$1,300,237, part of a \$2,957,961 North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality grant, will be used to mitigate flooding along South Old Oregon Inlet Road.
- Old Nags Head Place drainage infrastructure improvements are funded through a public-private partnership with additional grant assistance, at a cost of \$600,000.
- Replacement of the Epstein bathhouse.
- Replacement of several vehicles and rolling stock, including sanitation trucks.
- Two new police officer positions and funding for part-time firefighters.
- Funding is also included for eight lifeguards from Labor Day through September 30, as well as maintaining two to three guards on patrol through October 31.

The budget can be viewed at [NagsHeadNC.gov/Budget](https://NagsHeadNC.gov/Budget).

# Community Events Creating Neighbors

Whether you are a Nags Head resident, property owner, or visitor, attending one of our events is the best way to see what our community is about.

The Town’s Vision Statement has always noted that Nags Head needs to be a great place to live before it can be a great place to visit. So, what makes a town a great place to live and a great place to visit? For us it’s always been beautiful beaches and waterways: this is our lifeblood and our reason for being here. However, you can’t spend all your time at the beach!

One of the many ways we have been working to enhance our community is to provide not only great spaces to gather and recreate, but also activities that bring the community together. For the past few years, we’ve been expanding our menu of events, such as offering holiday markets and more varied fitness classes, such as Tai chi and Pilates.

It seems this year things are really catching on. At our first farmers market in July and also at one of our first concerts of the year we saw an unprecedented number of attendees. These activities are a great way to get out and see your neighbors, enjoy local businesses, and contribute to the positive Nags Head vibe. For small towns like Nags Head enhancing our quality of life with community spaces and events is our form of economic development.



**Below are events at Dowdy Park that you may like to attend through the rest of 2023.**

**Free yoga Tuesdays** from 7:30 am – 8:30 am through October 31, 2023

**Friday night movies** in October

**Saturday holiday markets** November 11, November 25, and December 9 from 9 am – 12 pm and November 30 from 4 – 7 pm

**Tree lighting ceremony** November 25 (Santa will make an appearance)

We are still planning a few more events, such as a Christmas decorating contest and a candy cane hunt. In addition, we may also hold additional markets over the winter. So be sure to follow Dowdy Park’s Facebook page at [Facebook.com/DowdyPark](https://www.facebook.com/DowdyPark) or visit [NagsHeadNC.gov/DowdyParkEvents](https://www.NagsHeadNC.gov/DowdyParkEvents). For more information, you can subscribe to receive weekly updates from us at [NagsHeadNC.gov/Notifyme](https://www.NagsHeadNC.gov/Notifyme).

Keep an eye out, we plan to expand our event offerings even more in the future!

**OCTOBER 3, 2023**  
National Night Out Against Crime

**OCTOBER 12, 2023**  
Fire Prevention Week Youth Open House

**NOVEMBER 11, 2023**  
Veterans Day Observance

**MARCH 30, 2024**  
Easter Egg Hunt at Dowdy Park

**MAY 27, 2024**  
Memorial Day Remembrance

**JULY 4, 2024**  
Independence Day Fireworks Spectacular

# New Public Services Complex to Feature Redesigned Bulk Trash Disposal



After many months of planning, design, permitting and financing efforts, construction has begun on the new Public Services Complex.

Located on Lark Avenue, the current Public Services complex is home to six divisions, representing a third of the Town's personnel. Public Services provides sanitation, water, facilities maintenance, and streets and stormwater services. In addition, the department's administration and fleet maintenance divisions are also housed within the complex, while the Town's bulk item and brush collection yard, is located across Lark Avenue, directly east of the main Public Services operations.

Our original Public Services building, formerly public works, was constructed in 1986, with the facilities maintenance support building constructed in 1997 and a separate bulk item and brush collection yard developed in 2006. The growth in Public Services over the past several decades has facilitated the need for redevelopment to keep pace with expanded operations.

The project entails the construction of approximately 35,000 square feet of floor area divided into five new buildings. A 3,645 square foot administration building will be integrated into the bulk item and brush collection site and will serve as the main customer service center and public services operations hub. A separate 4,848 square foot water distribution building will be located on the existing water operations site to provide facilities for water related services. Fleet maintenance, facilities maintenance, and sanitation will co-locate within a 15,647 square foot building essentially doubling the work space area compared to the existing facilities. Lastly, a dedicated 8,318 square foot vehicle storage structure and 2,000 square foot equipment building will allow the Town to store front line vehicles and equipment out of the elements.

The project design considered the following specific goals for the facility: addressing the operational needs of the department well into the future, creating operationally efficient spaces that

optimize the use and function of the various divisions, enhancing the capacity to increase service levels, and utilizing durable materials to achieve an extended lifespan. Environmental goals were also established consisting of the following: creating a compact design to minimize potential environmental impacts, incorporating low-impact development techniques to address stormwater management, installing solar panels on each of the buildings to result in net zero energy usage, and constructing infrastructure for future electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

Project construction began in early April of 2023 with construction activities layered throughout the public services complex. Initial construction work has been focused on site grading and foundation work for multiple buildings to include the administration building, water distribution, combined fleet maintenance/facilities maintenance/sanitation building, and equipment building. Vertical construction has started with the wall component installation of the administration building, followed shortly thereafter with the water distribution building.

The Town will do its best to ensure operations continue without disruption during construction. People driving in the area should expect construction traffic along Lark Avenue and Pond Avenue over the next 18 months.

A.R. Chesson Construction, with offices in Manteo, is the general contractor for the project construction, with a lump sum contract amount of \$14,494,000.

To finance the project, the Town issued Limited Obligation Bonds. During this process, the Town demonstrated a strong financial position and creditworthiness, receiving an Aa1 issuer rating from Moody's Investor Service for its first bond rating. Issuing bonds for this project allows for extended financing terms and more competitive interest rates.

We would like to thank members of our staff who assisted in the planning process and our Board of Commissioners for their continued support of the Public Services Department.

# Water Meters: Out with the Analog, In with the Digital

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Receiving another bill in the mail is never fun and it is even harder when you get a water bill and realize you've had a leak because your water usage has increased, a lot.

Leaks going undetected for days will, we believe, be a thing of the past. Why? Because we're going smart. That is, your water meters will be going smart, i.e. digital.

Right now, meter readings are collected by our staff, who visit each meter to obtain a reading. Not only is this a time-consuming process, but old mechanical meters degrade over time and may fail to provide accurate measurement readings. Hard water, debris, age, lime deposits, and corrosion, can reduce the accuracy of the analog meters we have in place now.

To increase our efficiency and ensure we are providing the best service possible, we will be replacing our analog water meters with a new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) digital metering system, a project we have been researching for several years. This system allows the meters to be read remotely through a wireless network, providing much more accurate water usage data and the ability to notify customers of leaks in real-time. With the installation of these meters, our employees will be able to spend valuable time in the field, addressing critical issues.

Advanced metering infrastructure is an integrated system of water meters, communication networks and data management systems that enable two-way communication between meter endpoints and utilities. The system automatically transmits data directly to the Town at predetermined intervals. Information such

as meter readings, leak and high consumption alerts, and other data that will help us in our daily operations will be communicated through the new system. Town staff will receive usage alarms for high consumption and leaks through a data management dashboard that receives collected data from the water meters.

Wondering what will happen if we have a storm and we lose cell service? If infrastructure is damaged during a storm, the meters will automatically revert to mobile collection. Then the reading can be collected by Town staff using a mobile collecting device, which requires the staff member to drive through the desired route to collect data. After the equipment is restored, the system will automatically reconnect.

All Nags Head water customers will receive a digital meter with a two-way communication transmitter. Online access to water usage data will be provided through a customer service portal called My Water Advisor. In addition to signing up for the portal, customers can also download a free app that will allow for usage monitoring and receipt of leak alarms.

What's next? When the data collection infrastructure is installed, a private contractor will begin replacing existing meters with the new metering equipment.

We understand how important it is for our water customers to know when someone may be on their property conducting this work, so we'll work closely with the installer to let you know when they will be working in your area.

Updates/more information about this project can be found at [NagsHeadNC.gov/WaterMeter](https://NagsHeadNC.gov/WaterMeter).



# Grants Enable Important Projects

One of our strategic goals is to actively pursue grants, which provide valuable resources to fund public services and projects that otherwise may not have been accomplished. They bridge the gap between resources and needs and can allow us to address issues more expediently.

Over the past year, Nags Head has been awarded over \$5 million in grants! We are grateful to the organizations that believe in our initiatives and understand how they can help our community. These grants assist with stormwater management, vegetative sprigging on our beaches, and planning, design, and construction of critical infrastructure, just to name a few! Be on the lookout for new initiatives, including:

Project	Grant Award
<b>South Old Oregon Inlet Road stormwater infrastructure improvements</b>	\$2,957,961
<b>South Virginia Dare Trail multi-use path improvements</b>	\$650,000
<b>Stormwater planning</b>	\$400,000
<b>Dune vegetation</b>	\$300,000
<b>Old Nags Head Place drainage improvements</b>	\$250,000
<b>Water Master Plan update</b>	\$244,000
<b>Whalebone Park restroom facility</b>	\$112,000
<b>Pier replacement at the public sound access (adjacent to existing kayak launch and public parking lot)</b>	\$98,000

We will continue to aggressively pursue grants to provide funding for initiatives and programs that contribute to the well-being of our town. We are always working on obtaining other grants, so we hope to have more good news for you in the future.

# Welcome Packet Provides Helpful Info for New and Seasoned Property Owners

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We've recently created a Welcome Packet to help new owners learn about our services and resources and to update seasoned owners with information they might need.

New Nags Head water account customers will receive a link to the packet via email, however the packet can also be found on our website at [NagsHeadNC.gov/WelcomePacket](https://NagsHeadNC.gov/WelcomePacket). Should owners prefer a printed copy, they can contact us at 252-441-5508 and we will forward a copy in the mail or have it available for pick up at town hall.

In the packet you'll first find the values, legacy, and goals that guide the decisions we make. We think this is important enough to include early in the materials because these principles form the basis for all we do here in Nags Head. We believe we've put into words how we see our community and what we hope for its future.

In addition to contact information for elected officials and Town staff, you'll find information on our amenities, such as our numerous public beach and sound accesses, our parks, the events we hold each year, ways you can get involved with your town, and how to get around Nags Head using our many miles of multi-use paths and trails. We've just listed some of the information here, so be sure to read through the entire packet.

We hope this information helps you better understand our town's goals, the services we provide, your rights and responsibilities as a property owner, and how you can get involved to help shape Nags Head's future.





# Neighbors Working Together to Keep Nags Head Safe

Effective partnerships between law enforcement officers and community stakeholders are essential to public safety. They build trust, educate, and create a better quality of life. One of Nags Head's most successful community partnerships is our Community Watch Association. Formed nearly thirty years ago, the goal of the CWA was to build strong relationships between the community and its police department and leverage community members. And, it has done that as residents and business owners, serving as an extra set of "eyes and ears" collaborate with Nags Head's law enforcement officers to prevent crime in our town.

While the CWA, who are working to assist our mission, has proven to be an effective tool in our community policing toolbox, it requires active participation from our community members to remain productive. So, if you are community-minded and either know or want to get to know your neighbors and the law enforcement officers who are charged with protecting Nags Head, you need to think about joining our Community Watch Association.



Here are some of the responsibilities and expectations of membership.

- First, being a member is entirely voluntary. There are no contracts or mandatory activities. However, should a person agree to serve as a board member, or district captain (defined below) they must understand that certain responsibilities accompany those roles.
- The CWA meets monthly, usually on the second Tuesday of the month. Meeting topics usually include board business, crime prevention measures, information about Nags Head Police Department operations, recent crime trends, and other information.
- Membership is open to residents and business owners who operate in Nags Head.
- Members have the opportunity to assist with NHPD-sponsored events such as Coffee With a Cop, National Night Out, and our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Members can also offer suggestions for new events as well.
- The town is currently divided into 20 community watch districts. Each district is assigned an officer to serve as a liaison between the community and police department. We strive to have a captain in each district, who serves as a contact for people who wish to report issues in their community but may not feel comfortable reporting problems to the police department. The captain is also a good resource for helping spread information from the police department to the community.

If you are interested in joining, please email Senior Police Officer Shane Allen or contact the Nags Head Police Department at 252-441-6386.

# Create a Ripple of Change by Getting Your Feet Wet!

Want to get involved in your town, but aren't sure how to start? Get your feet wet by sitting on a Town board or committee.

- Nags Head's Board of Commissioners are elected to staggered four-year terms. Non-partisan elections are held on the first Tuesday in November in odd-numbered years. Candidates file for office through the Dare County Board of Elections. Visit [DareNC.com/Elections](http://DareNC.com/Elections) for more information.
- The Arts and Culture Committee assists Nags Head's Board of Commissioners in promoting, encouraging, and increasing support for the town's artistic and cultural assets as well as working to integrate arts and culture into community life. The Committee meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 12 pm on the second floor of Town Hall.
- The Board of Adjustment is a "quasi-judicial" board that hears and decides variance requests and interpretations of the Town's land use ordinances or zoning map. The Board meets on an as-needed basis at 9 am on the second Thursday of each month in the Board of Commissioners room.
- Community Watch, established in 1995 and sponsored by Nags Head's police department, is maintained by residents. Bringing police and residents together to increase safety, security, and improve quality of life, Community Watch plays a role in education, emergency preparedness, and crime reduction. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room.
- The Planning Board is an advisory board comprised of citizens of Nags Head appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The Board reviews site plans, subdivision plats, special use applications, and all amendments related to zoning. They then make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on their findings. The Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 9 am in the Board of Commissioners Room.
- The Personnel Grievance Panel provides an additional venue for the fair hearing and resolution of employee grievances and appeals in a procedure free of recrimination. The Panel may also suggest improvements in procedure or policy to the town manager. The Panel meets on an as-needed basis.

Nags Head's Board of Commissioners may, when the need arises, choose to establish an ad hoc committee, to provide Board support and participation in addressing specific issues facing the Town. The committee will be dissolved once its specific task has been completed.

For more information or an application, visit [NagsHeadNC.gov/BoardsandCommittees](http://NagsHeadNC.gov/BoardsandCommittees). A listing of each board and committee is available, along with its members.

## Town Meeting Calendar

### AUGUST 2023

#### Wednesday, August 2, 9 am

Board of Commissioners  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

#### Tuesday, August 8, 6 pm

Community Watch  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

#### Wednesday, August 9, 12 pm

Arts and Culture Committee  
2nd Floor of Town Hall

#### Tuesday, August 15, 9 am

Planning Board  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

#### Wednesday, August 16, 9 am (recessed session held as needed)

Board of Commissioners  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

### SEPTEMBER 2023

#### Wednesday, September 6, 9 am

Board of Commissioners  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

#### Tuesday, September 12, 6 pm

Community Watch  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

#### Wednesday, September 13, 12 pm

Arts and Culture Committee  
2nd Floor of Town Hall

#### Tuesday, September 19, 9 am

Planning Board  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

#### Wednesday, September 20, 9 am (recessed session held as needed)

Board of Commissioners  
Board of Commissioners Room, Town Hall Complex

