



BREAKWATER ESTATES Homeowners Association

NEWS

November 2023

HPS Phone: (302) 227-7878

Board Email: bwehoabod@gmail.com

Website: <https://bwehoa.com>

In This Issue

- Annual Community Meeting
- Mosquito Spraying
- Architectural Review Committee
- NEW Drop Box
- Email Authorization
- Wire Grass Violations
- Short Term Rentals Committee
- Summary of Real Estate Activity
- "FUN" Committee
- Friendly Reminders & Covenants

Board of Directors

- **President:** MJ Melah
- **Vice President:** Bill Bonn
- **Secretary:** Brian Eichenlaub
- **Treasurer:** Jeff Trigilio

Members at Large

- Lana Warfield
- Joanne McShalley
- Nancy Hewish

Board of Directors email
address:
bwehoabod@gmail.com



Our 2023 Annual Meeting on Oct. 7 was a huge success. It was great to meet our neighbors face to face instead of an online meeting. A record number of residents attended. The spokesmen from DelDot were very informative and answered many of the residents' questions. We covered many issues including the election of our Board Members. Residents decided unanimously that the seven current Board Members should continue representing the residents of Breakwater Estates.



Architectural Review Committee (ARC)

According to the Breakwater Estates Covenants Section 4.06, External Appearances, the Association must examine and approve or disapprove of plans, specifications, color schemes, block plans and grading plans for any building, garage, fence, wall, retaining wall, outbuilding, deck or other structure of any kind, that shall be erected, constructed, placed or maintained on said property, or any part thereof, and for any alteration, condition, changing, repairing, remodeling, or adding to the exterior thereof, and for such supervision of construction and inspection as may be required to insure compliance therewith, including the services of architects and other persons employed to examine and advise-upon such plans, specifications, color schemes, block plans and grading plans. The Board shall have the right to grant variances for approval on applications for additions, remodeling, installation of fences, sheds, garages, etc.



DeIDot presenters at the Annual Meeting explaining the minimal impact of the proposed bike trail on BWE. The bike path will be on the opposite side of Munchy Branch Road and will not be completed till 2024-2025.

Mosquito Spraying

During the Annual Meeting residents had an opportunity to vote on whether or not to continue with the DNREC Mosquito Spraying during the summer months. We received **28** votes. **19 votes FOR spraying** and **9 AGAINST spraying**. The community will continue with the mosquito spraying. As a reminder, it is impossible for the board to announce exactly when the spraying will take place, since the state informs us only a few hours before the trucks or helicopters arrive for street-side or aerial spraying.



If you are planning any external changes, Siding, Sheds, Fences, Garages, or Decks, you are required by our Covenants to submit an ARC to the Board for approval prior to beginning the project. If an ARC is not received and the project is completed, the board of directors is authorized to fine the resident for not submitting an ARC. Also, according to regulations, fines are doubled if the violation is not corrected within a reasonable amount of time. If the fines continue to accumulate and are not paid, the HOA is forced to attach a lien to the property (along with attorney's fees), an action that the Board tries very hard to avoid.



New Drop Box at Mail Boxes

For your convenience, the community has installed a Drop Box at the mailbox center. This drop box should NEVER be used for cash or checks. This box will be for you to deposit your Proxies, Amendment Votes, Board Nominations, E-mail Authorization Form and Suggestions. Using the drop box will eliminate having to mail back any community correspondence. It will save on return postage. The Take One box has moved.



Dead Trees at Entrance

The Board has decided to wait before making any decisions regarding replacement of the arbor vitae trees at the main entrance. For the time being, we will let the vines cover the brown as much as possible and then, after the roadwork surrounding the new bike path is completed, we'll revisit possible solutions.



For now, vines and hanging branches are covering the dead arbor vitae trees at our main entrance.

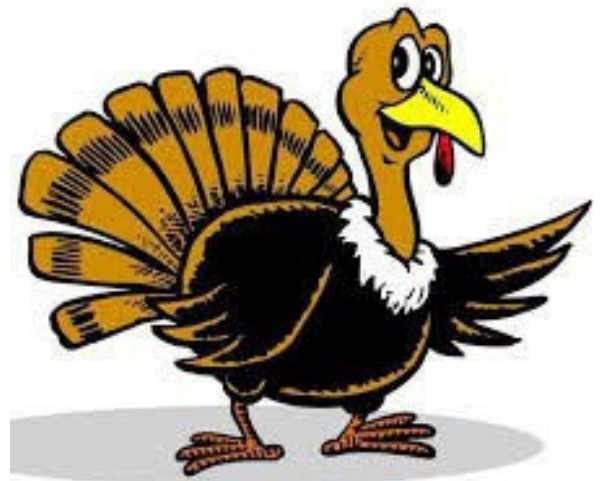
Email Authorization



The Board is required to notify all residents of the Annual Meeting. The State of Delaware mandates that the Annual Meeting packet, which contains several documents, be sent by regular mail, which is quite expensive. The State, however, has changed that mandate and now allows us to do this expensive annual mailing by email instead, but only if the resident authorizes us to do this.

We already email many communications to the community, as you know, but this particular authorization concerns primarily the State-mandated annual meeting documents, the heavy packet we send out once a year. We therefore need your special authorization.

Stamps are \$0.66 each. Without your signature to authorize email mailing for the annual packet, we can incur several hundred dollars' expense both in postage and in printing. We have put the Email Authorization form in the Please Take One bin at the mailboxes -- we urge you to pick up one, sign it and put it in the new Drop Box. If you already have a copy of it, please sign it and put it in the Drop Box.



Short Term Rentals Committee

Wire Grass Violations

Many of us have forgotten that the Covenants require that the grass that touches the edge of our roads must be kept trimmed so it does not grow onto the asphalt. After an autumn inspection, it was found that we have 15 properties whose grass is growing onto the edge of the asphalt and in 10 cases is seriously damaging the integrity of our roads. The Covenants state:

“Grass must be trimmed at the street and driveway so that grass does not encroach onto the road at any point along homeowner’s property line. Owners are required to notify lawn service companies of this requirement.”

The Breakwater Estates Non-compliance Fee Schedule stipulates a \$25.00 fine for grass violations. This spring we will be notifying residents whose grass is in violation and will issue friendly warnings. After that we will be forced to apply fines. Repairs to the roads run into the thousands of dollars and it is unfair to the 80 other owners when and if we have to pay for these expensive repairs. Below are photos that demonstrate the damage that is being caused.



Wire grass breaking up the asphalt



Grass Overgrowth by several inches



We had a great discussion at the HOA Meeting in October regarding adding an amendment to our covenants about short term rentals. We live in a highly desirable community that is attractive to people looking for a peaceful, stable neighborhood, as well as those who would like an income-producing property. The number of institutional buyers (companies or individuals who purchase properties for rental purposes only) is on the rise and this is a concern among many in BWE. As would be expected, there are mixed feelings about short term rentals throughout the community. Because we currently do not have anything in our covenants restricting rentals, homeowners who are currently engaged in renting their properties will be grandfathered into any new amendment.

The **STR Committee** has determined that there are Four schools of thought:

1. Those who would like to prohibit all additional rentals.
2. Those in favor of allowing existing homeowners to do whatever they want -- rent at any time, for any length of time, without restrictions -- but impose some restrictions on new buyers. The restrictions may include a ban on rentals for 2 years after purchase and a minimum rental duration, such as 90 days.
3. Those in favor of allowing for current homeowners, who are not currently renting, to rent in the future, but for a minimum length of time. This proposal will include the restrictions on new buyers outlined above.
4. No Changes to Covenants

The Committee is in the process of drawing up the amendments, with all the specifics, to send out to the community by December 31st. We would like to proceed with a vote, as governed by our covenants, sometime after the first of the year. If you have any thoughts you'd like to share regarding this very important matter, please email us at bwehoabod@gmail.com

Real Estate Activity Summary



(This real estate report is prepared by Lana Warfield, who is a BWE board member and resident of the community since 2000. She is a full-time Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway PenFed Realty. All of this information has been obtained from the Sussex County Multiple List system and is up to date as of November 10, 2023.)

It's that time again and I am happy to say that there has been a bit of activity in our Munchy Branch/Wolfe Neck corridor, in the last 3 months.

In our own **BREAKWATER ESTATES**, we have had two homes sell. First, 5 Lighthouse Drive was listed at \$289,990. And it sold for \$355,000. It was in need of some love, and the new owner got right to it. In a very short time, the house looks clean, bright and yes ... loved.

Also, just a few days ago, 7 Breakwater Drive settled. It was listed for \$414,900. And it settled for \$475,000. This home on the corner of Lighthouse and Breakwater wasn't even a Class C (meaning it did not have a permanent foundation). The lot alone appraised for \$300,000.

Fieldwood

The home that sold there is a brand-new stick-built home, 2046 Ramblewood Dr. South. The lot was sold for \$240,000, and the new home was built and listed for \$579,990. And it sold for \$590,000. This is a 2 Br, 2 Bath, 1,310 sq. ft. home.

Tru-Vale Acres

One home will be coming on the market on November 17th – 516 South Drive, a 4 Br, 2.5 Bath is a manufactured home with stick-built additions for a total of almost 2,000 sq. ft. The list price is \$434,000. Another home already under contract is located at 607 2nd St., a 3 Br, 1.5 Bath manufactured home built in 1976. It is scheduled to settle on November 22nd.

In the last newsletter, 403 North Dr. was listed as a To Be Built home on a single lot (50x121). This home was first listed for \$484,000, then reduced to \$469,000, and then withdrawn from the market on 9/28. The owner also had the property listed as a lot for \$265,000. That listing was also withdrawn from the market.

Shady Ridge No Activity

Kyrie Estates

One home sold on October 6th. It is 36248 Field Lane, a 2 Br, 2 Bath single home of about 1,000 sq. ft., listed for \$375,000. And it sold for \$387,000 after only 5 days on the market.

Piney Glade

Fasten your seat belts! An old 1974 mobile home located on a 1/3 of an acre lot, with views of the Glade and state park lands, was recently listed for \$675,000. The address is 36357 Fir Dr. Basically, this is being offered as a lot on which to build. It is hard to say if it will sell close to that price – however, I will certainly keep an eye on that property.

McKinney's Grove

This new construction home community, built as a condominium community, is winding down. It looks like there are only 3 new homes available. They are priced between \$738,299 and \$798,930. One re-sale was also listed for \$799,900 and sold yesterday at \$750,000. Monthly fees are \$278.60.

AND, IN OUR GENERAL AREA – The farmhouse at 18663 Munchy Branch Rd. is listed for \$749,000. The original price was \$789,000. When I first saw it listed at that price, I mistakenly assumed it included a large parcel of land. It is actually, less than ½ acre. It includes the house and a detached garage that could be partially finished into additional living space.

35655 Wolfe Neck Rd also sold on 9/7. This is a 4 Br, 2 Bath single family stick-built home with a total of almost 2,500 sq. ft. The original cottage was built in 1962, with a large 2 story addition. It also has an in-ground pool. It was listed at \$474,900, and it sold for \$420,000.

Overall, when you see the activity and pricing in our area, have gratitude for the wonderful community of Breakwater Estates. It is a great location and it is nice to see homes being improved. The beautiful new home on Breakwater Drive is nearing completion. It will be another great addition to the community. If you are thinking about moving, think about improving your existing home, or like some neighbors have done instead, remove your old house and build new. As Mark Twain said, "Buy Land, they're not making it anymore." Thank yourself for making a great decision to buy here in Breakwater Estates. Our land is a precious and great asset.

Wishing you all a Happy Holiday Season and healthy 2024 !

Winter Reminders ...

- Don't forget to close your foundation vents for the winter, if that's your normal procedure.
- Be sure to clear the culverts and drains of leaves and debris.
- It's a good time to clear the berm and yard of fallen sticks and branches.
- In preparation for the spring, trim any live or dead wire grass that is encroaching on the asphalt.
- Empty water collecting in pots or containers to discourage any lingering mosquitoes.



Vent in closed position for winter

Keeping All of Us Secure

From time to time in the Munchy Branch area there are reports of car tampering or breaking into garages or sheds. Be sure to secure expensive equipment and keep car doors locked, especially overnight. If just a few of us are careless, it invites more and more vandals to test our vigilance.



FUN COMMITTEE

BWE hosted our 2nd Community Yard Sale in September after Labor Day. Thanks to everyone who participated. Our next one will be the Saturday before Memorial Day Weekend. It was great to see so many people at our HOA Meeting at the Lewes Library on October 7th. Despite Mother Nature messing with us, a nice group gathered later that day for a Block Party. Everyone had a great time and valuable prizes were awarded! Several people stopped by the BWE headquarters along the parade route during the Sea Witch Festival and good times were had by all.

There are tons of things happening at the beach during the most wonderful time of the year! See our Facebook page throughout the winter for ideas, but here are just a few:

Schellville is truly a magical place for all ages with something for everyone. There are shops, live music, skating, great food and bevs, a train, sled hill, Santa and Mrs. Claus and more. It's like being in our own Hallmark movie! Schellville is fun to visit and it's incredibly rewarding to volunteer. It takes hundreds of volunteers to put on such an incredible free event so please think about helping out for a couple of hours. <https://schellbrothers.com/promotions/schellville/>

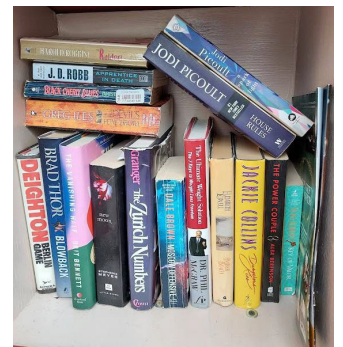
Rehoboth Beach Santa Pub Crawl for Toys for Tots Sat, Dec 2nd 1-7:30 pm. Starts at the bandstand with a group photo and ends with a party at Conch Island. Visit 17 participating locations in any order you want and drop off a new toy in the USMC collection bins. Last year, more than 700 merry makers in festive holiday wear participated and over 1300 toys were collected for the kids. Free to join the fun! Check out the details at www.rbsantabarcrawl.com



The Rehoboth Tree Lighting is Sat, Nov 25th at 6:30 pm <https://www.cityofrehoboth.com/events/tree-lighting-sing-along> and the Lewes Christmas Parade is Sat, Dec 2nd at 5 pm <https://www.leweschamber.com/news/chamber/91st-annual-lewes-christmas-parade-takes-place-december-2-2023-5-pm>

Wreaths Across America Sat, Dec 16th at 11:30 am Epworth Church Cemetery 143 Henlopen Ave. This year, take a moment to "remember, honor and teach". Remember the fallen. Honor those who serve. Teach the next generation the value of freedom. It's the mission of Wreaths Across America. You may have seen the beautiful photos of Christmas wreaths on every grave at Arlington Cemetery, but this is something that is done at 1000's of cemeteries across the US and around the globe. Join your fellow Americans in laying wreaths on soldiers' graves here in Rehoboth. <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>

If you'd like to join the Fun Committee or just have suggestions for 2024, please email jmcshalley@msn.com



BWE Lending Library

The Breakwater Lending Library, located at the mailboxes, has been a huge hit! Thank you to everyone who donated books or just checked out new authors and genres. We were busting at the seams at one point, but there's more space available in the library now. Please continue to share your spares. With the days getting shorter and the temperatures getting colder, it will be nice to curl up with a good book in your cozy home.



Facebook Page

Breakwater Estates - Rehoboth Beach



We currently have 52 members on our neighborhood Facebook page. This is a private group open only to the folks in Breakwater Estates. It's been a great place to share things happening in and around our neighborhood. With the holidays on our doorsteps, we encourage you to share your best recipes, gift ideas, suggestions for fun things to do, etc. We also want to recognize milestones in the neighborhood, so if you want to give a shout out to someone having a birthday, celebrating an anniversary, losing a tooth, whatever, please share the news. The sky is the limit.

To join please click the link. You'll recognize our neighborhood sign on the page. Once verified, the group admin will admit you to the group – usually within 24 hours. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/breakwaterestatesrehobothbeach>

Important Covenant Items & Amendments

- The board of directors is authorized to establish fines for covenant violations.
- Exterior satellite dishes must be placed in the least visible location from the street.
- Cars must be parked in the driveway, not on the lawn.
- Campers may not be stored in an open area but rather in a garage or shed.
- Fence height and composition are specifically defined by the Covenants and must be approved by the Board.
- Lawn tractors should be stored in a shed or garage or to the rear of the house, not visible from the street.
- Gas and oil tanks must be concealed with shrubbery or a wooden enclosure.
- Owners must clean up after pets, and all pets must be kept on a leash in the common areas.
- Extensive repairing or overhauling of cars on property is not permitted.
- Vehicles may not be parked on the berm.
- Residents must get Board approval for all exterior construction, including outbuildings, decks, fences and color schemes for buildings.
- Driveways must be paved, or covered with brick, stone, or shell.
- The number of tenants allowed for each property must not exceed twice the number of bedrooms.
- Trash Cans - If you do not live here full-time, please make arrangements with your neighbor(s) to pull your trash can from the street after pick up. The reasons are two-fold: Our restrictive covenants do not allow for trash cans to be left out more than 24 hours, and it advertises that you are not home, which can be an invitation to burglars. If you see a trash can left out after pick-up, please be a kind neighbor and put it back. It is little kindnesses like this that make BWE such a great neighborhood!
- Speed limit - We all need to remind one another to heed the 18 mph speed limit.
- Bulletins -The current newsletter is posted on the bulletin board by the mailboxes.
- If you wish to post an announcement, such as a garage sale or lost pet, please notify one of the board members, or email the board directly at bwehoabod@gmail.com
- Part-time residents - Remember it is a good idea to have a neighbor keep an eye on things for you when you are away.
- Landlords - If you are renting out your home, please remember you are responsible for what your renters do. Please make sure your tenant receives and accepts the community HOA documents, before or when the lease is signed. If your home is vacant, please inform either HPS or the board in order to keep an eye out for any unwanted activity.

