


**TOWN OF OCEAN VIEW**  
**DELAWARE**

April 8, 2021

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

FROM: Carol S. Houck, Town Manager 

SUBJECT: Town Manager Report for the Council Meeting of April 13, 2021

It is my pleasure to provide you with information related to the activities of the Town and my engagements during the past month:

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021**

As you are aware, in recent weeks we were informed of the possibility that the Town of Ocean View and Towns and Cities across the County will be presented with access to funding via the ARPA. More specifically, Subtitle M – Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund provides detail regarding the appropriations, restrictions, possible uses, and planned timing associated with the funding. Currently, and this is subject to change, the Town of Ocean View is noted to be in the position to receive up to \$1.1 million.

Since being made aware of the possible funding, myself and Town Solicitor Schrader have communicated with Deputy Treasury Secretary Liza Davis and others to confirm certain aspects of the Act as originally presented/understood, and to better respond to questions of Council. While this effort provided some clarity, it also confirmed that at the time of writing, there was much more detail and understanding needed. First and foremost, there are restrictions for use that will need to be adhered to and subject to audit later, likely years later. Record keeping, exercising discretion, and making reasoned decisions for the use of the funds in accordance with the allowable uses/restrictions will be of great importance. The Treasury Dept. may be issuing additional guidance in relationship to our outreach in response to our encouragement to do so. Simply put, at this time I am not able to clearly advise you what Ocean View might use the funds for or to make any solid recommendations. We were also advised that greater clarity should be forthcoming and will be like that of the Cares Act which provided opportunities for Covid related expense reimbursements. Ocean View has benefited from Cares Act reimbursement in 2020.

I have submitted the requested information through the ARPA portal including our FY2021 Budget and contact information. Presumably, this information is being used to fine tune the level of funding available to each community.

## Ocean View Communication Improvements

We are getting ever closer to launching several improvements to our communication including an **updated website**, our new government access channel **OVTV** and a change from **.COM** to **.GOV** for our website address. All plans are to provide detailed information about these improvements in our annual community newsletter that is mailed to every property owner in May. We will also hope for a news article and likely place some ads sharing our good news.

**The Salt Air Gardeners**, noted on their website to be from Ocean View, with members from around our area have reached out with a proposal to install a Blue Star Memorial with accompanying landscaping in Ocean View. John West Park has initially been identified as a location however there may be other options. The Salt Air Gardeners would perform the installation of the plantings and memorial sign or plaque in full cooperation with the Town. Below please find information regarding the Blue Star Program:

*The Blue Star Program honors all men and women that serve in the United States Armed Services. This program began with the planting of 8,000 Dogwood trees by the New Jersey Council of Garden Clubs in 1944 as a living memorial to veterans of World War II. In 1945, the National Council of State Garden Clubs (now NGC, Inc.) adopted this program and began a Blue Star Highway system that covers thousands of miles across the Continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii.*

Below is photo of a typical memorial:



I wanted to share this opportunity with you in advance to engaging further and possibly determining a location, initial/ongoing costs associated with the project and feasibility. The Salt Air Gardeners have completed planting projects at the Quiet Resorts Chamber of Commerce facility and at the Indian River Lifeguard Station, among other areas. If this is of initial interest I will follow-up and bring more detailed information back to you.

## **OSHER – University of Delaware Lifelong Learning Program Update**

I am very happy to report that the UD Lifelong Learning program will resume in-person classes at our Town Hall in August. You will recall that in association with the pandemic restrictions all courses offered in Ocean View as well as other locations have been virtual or cancelled completely. The program coordinators were pleased to hear that we had made desired flooring updates in our Council Chamber/large meeting room that will allow for additional courses such as Yoga and others to be held in Ocean View. This engagement is a continuation of our lease agreement with UD, and I am glad to welcome the program back.

In addition, the program coordinators were made aware of the South Coastal Village Volunteers presence in the facility, and they are excited about the possibility of engagement.

**2021 Calendar of Community Sponsored Events in John West Park** (tentative until approval of the FY2022 Operating Budget):

The current line up of community events is as follows:

### **Summer Classic Movie Wednesday's – 7:30 p.m.**

June 9, 16 and 23

With themed activities.

### **Fall Concert Series – Friday's – 4:30 p.m.**

September 10, 17 and 24

### **Cops and Goblins – Saturday, October 20**

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Rain date Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>

### **Old Town Holiday Market, Tree Lighting and Trail of Lights**

Saturday, November 27 - Rain date Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>

I can also share that we have been approached by three other groups to hold one day or ongoing community events or activities in our park. One is the South Coastal Library (one day event), one is a Performance by the Army Band and the other relates to outdoor exercise classes. We will be vetting these opportunities and dates to provide access to new experiences in our community.

I have attended the following meetings/events representing the Town of Ocean View:

- I have met with Advantec regarding card access options for Town Hall
- Reviewed and ranked Exercise bids and met with evaluation committee to review.
- Reviewed and read the ARPA.

- Outreach and conversations with Delaware Deputy Treasury Secretary regarding ARPA.
- Participated in zoom meetings with Legislative Committee of the League of Local Governments.
- Participated in a meeting of the OV Historical Society.
- Participated in annual benefits training with the State.
- Participated in meeting with Website team - EVOGOV.
- Participated in training session for programming OVTV.
- Had cable installed in conference room and office associated with OVTV (FREE).
- Participated in UD Public Administration's Celebrating Women in Delaware Local Government: Conversations with City/Town Managers (student Question and Answer session).
- Participated in several Governors Calls re COVID.
- Participated in an interview focusing on Experiences of Women City Managers in the US by an Assistant Professor and Research Fellow from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government

**Public Works Monthly Report:**

1. Daily playground and park safety checks.
2. Empty trash and dog waste stations three times a week.
3. Weekly rounds through Town checking for trash and storm drains.
4. Putting up new solar speed signs on Central Avenue.
5. Completed Town water blow offs throughout Town.
6. Placed new dog and parking signs at north end of park,
7. Removed silt bags around drains on Woodland Avenue.
8. Meter pits installed at 18 Longview, Hickman Drive and Osprey.
9. Placed new plants and mulch around Town signs.
10. Cut back roses and bushes at John West Park and 201 Central.
11. Attended DFIT meeting on March 16.
12. Power washed sidewalks at 32 West building, the playground equipment, porch area, picnic area, picnic tables and completed wood treatment of picnic tables.
13. Mechanical room cleaned and straightened up at 201 Central.
14. Serviced lawn mowers.
15. Replaced speed limit signs and up graded posts to break away on West avenue.
16. Completed fertilizing of trees, roses and plants and put down weed control at John West Park and 201 central and at Town signs. Sprayed all cork joints and sidewalks at John West Park and 201 Central
17. Collins Lawncare edged beds and mulched 201 Central and John West Park.
18. Oversaw Hoopes Fire service with our yearly fire extinguisher test at 201 Central, Maintenance Building and 32 West, Town Hall.
19. Proworks replaced two HVAC units per capital plan and installed an air cleaning system in the Police Dept Evidence room.

20. Surefire replaced pipe for the fire sprinkler system and completed a pressure test per annual contract.
21. Picked up supplies for 201 Central and maintenance building.
22. Ordered water meter pits from Belair road supply and picked them up.
23. Power washed sidewalks and police shed at 201 Central.
24. Moved office furniture for Finance dept.
25. Reviewed and made recommendations regarding DPW inventory.
26. Reviewed Exercise Equipment Proposals and met with Town Manager and Ken C.

