

Mayor John McCorristin

2023 State of the Borough



Before we begin, a note of thanks.....

Our community remains eternally indebted to Marty Pagliughi, who's final term as Mayor ended on June 30, 2023. Marty retired after serving Avalon for 32 consecutive years as Mayor. He is directly responsible for countless improvements that has made Avalon the prime seashore community along the East Coast. Marty gave this address every year he was asked to do so by AHLOA.



Thank you Marty for your service and leadership!



...and thank you for your support!



On behalf of my entire family, thank you for the honor and privilege of serving on Borough Council for the past ten years, and now as your Mayor. The “team” approach is the right approach for responsive, transparent, and effective government. You have my guarantee this model will continue in Avalon



New Member of Borough Council – Chet Johnson



Borough Council appointed Greg “Chet” Johnson to fill my unexpired term when I was elected Mayor

Chet and his family have generations of service to the Avalon community and most recently, he served as Chairman of the Avalon Planning and Zoning Board

He brings extensive knowledge of our community to Council along with professional experience in budgeting and technology, and Avalon is proud to have Chet join our Borough Council



2023 Taxes in Avalon/Cape May County

- Your tax bill includes municipal, county, school, library, and open space taxes. Municipal government is only responsible for one tax: **Municipal**.
- Municipal tax bill is influenced by the tax rate, and if you had any added assessments (pool, expansion of house)
- In New Jersey, quarters 1 and 2 are estimates, always the previous year's tax rate. Quarters 3 and 4 reflect the actual current rate.
- The County is last to certify its tax rate. To assist, we have extended the grace period to August 21, 2023



2023 Avalon Municipal Budget



- Municipal tax rate is 20.7 cents, the lowest in the State of New Jersey
- This year, we required our first tax increase in eight years; over the past 13 years, our tax rate has increased by 1.2 cents
- Budget pressures include a 22% increase in the State Health Benefits Plan; Avalon was able to get that increase down to 4%, along with costs for equipment, salaries, capital improvement projects, fuel, and other items
- Avalon maintains an AAA bond rating from Standard and Poor's and we have no long-term general obligation debt



Return of Library Surplus Funds-\$1.8 million



Under state law (A-2911), free public libraries are required to return surplus dollars above 20 percent to host communities for property tax relief. This year, the Borough received the largest return in our five-star library's history: **\$1,879,020**



Avalon Beaches and Bays

- Hydraulic beach fill project concluded in early May; Avalon secured \$8 million in grant funding. The contractor returns in the fall for dune grass planting
- Avalon recently completed an emergency bay dredging project in Pennsylvania Harbor to clean up sediment that clogged the navigation channel
- New payment option of credit cards was created for beach tag payments
- By the end of the year, we will have secured a town-wide dredging permit. Property owners will be able to dredge their own slips without costly and time-consuming permitting processes



Water and Sewer Services



The Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) handles our region's wastewater and bills on a percentage of a town's use of the countywide system. Avalon has large homes with pools and irrigation, so our percentage of the county's use continues to increase.

A new rate structure has been approved by Borough Council. Avalon has not adjusted its water and sewer fee structure in five years. Information is available on avalonboro.net.





FEMA

Avalon's Coastal Resiliency



Avalon is the only community in the State of New Jersey and one of only 13 communities nationwide to earn a Class 3 flood insurance rating from the Community Rating System. This saves property owners over \$1.6 million annually on flood insurance premiums with 35% discounts.

Avalon will host a meeting with flood insurance experts on Tuesday, August 15th, at 5:00pm at Borough Hall where you can learn more about flood insurance so you can make best decisions for your property.



Avalon Fire House Expansion



The expansion of the fire house is complete. It includes new areas to house our land and water rescue equipment, facilities for decontamination and storage, overnight facilities for our Office of Emergency Management and first responders for overnight housing during significant storm events.

Avalon has a successful stipend program for volunteers who spend the night in the firehouse during peak periods for quicker, more efficient response to emergencies including fires, water and elevator rescues, motor vehicle accidents, etc.





Your Community Connection



August 12, 2023

Jeff Christopher

Chief of Police

ACCREDITATION



A.P.D. awarded 4th , three year accreditation status.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

- 110 standards

- 1. Team of assessors first reviews all policies and procedures to ensure compliance with national best practices and standards.
- 2. The team will then review operations reports from the previous three (3) years to further ensure that A.P.D. officers and administrators are following those polices.
- 3. The team will inspect A.P.D headquarters for the integrity of our holding cells, evidence room, records keeping, equipment, temporary detention facilities.
- 4. Chief of Police and accreditation manager, travel to North Jersey to participate in a hearing of ten (10) appointed officials to answer questions related to our operations.
- 5. The Panel will review the final assessor report and answers to hearing questions and vote on approval.

POLICIES

- 1. Recruiting, hiring, training, and promoting practices
 - 2. Employee evaluation system
 - 3. Use of force practices
 - 4. Internal affairs: reports received, quality of investigations and outcome.
 - 5. Evidence collection and retention
 - 6. Compliance with Law and Attorney General directives.
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- The A.P.D received re-accreditation with 100% compliance in all areas
 - Only 5% of N.J. police departments are in this elite group.

ISSUES EFFECTING THE BOROUGH

- **Bicycle violations**
- **Juvenile issues**
- **Motor vehicle thefts**

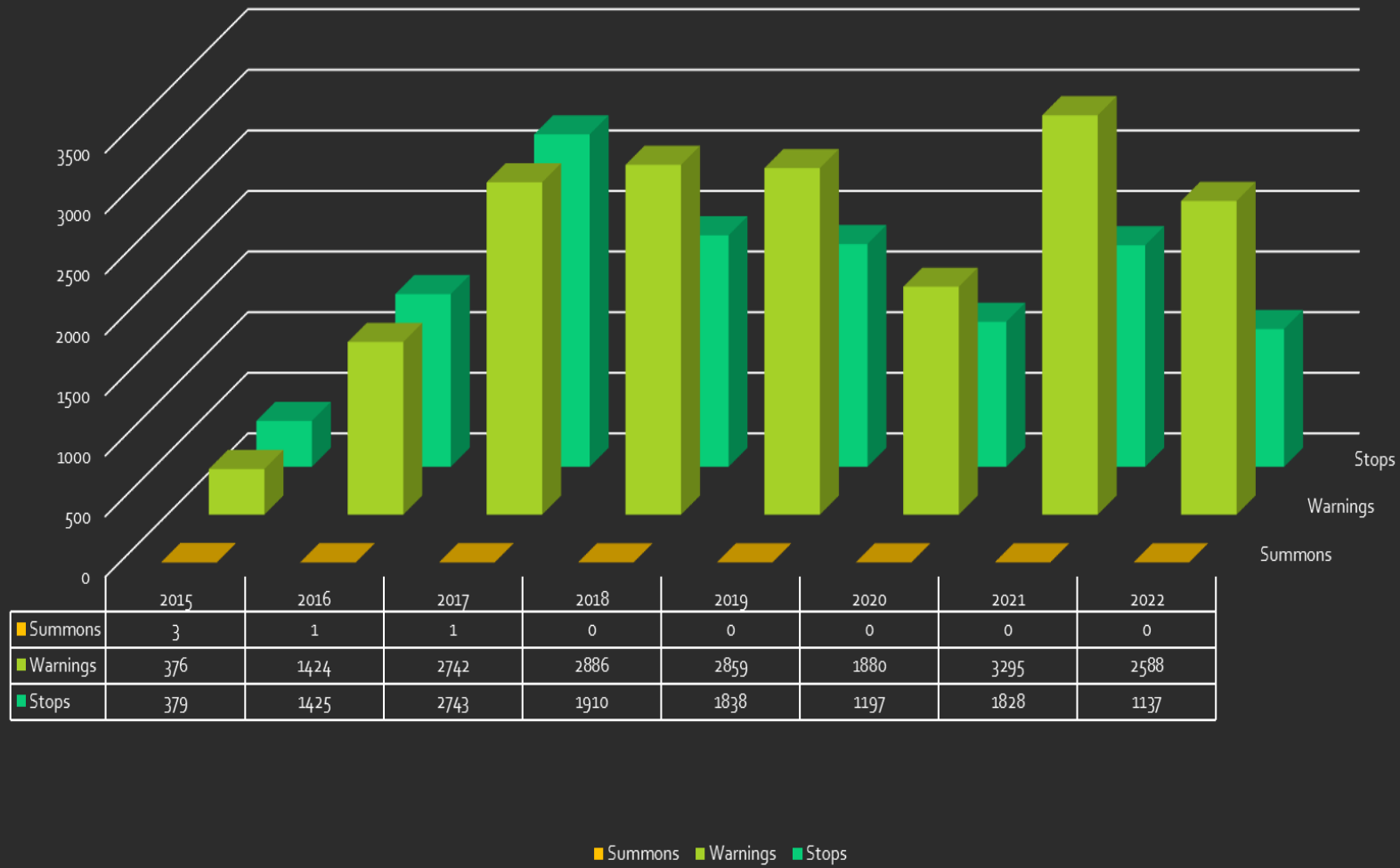
BICYCLE ENFORCEMENT

Avalon Police Officers are constantly enforcing various offenses such as:

Traffic violations: Stop signs, traffic signals, right of way

Equipment violations: helmets, lights

Bicycle Violations



Juvenile activity



ENFORCEMENT ACTION

- 1. Created a juvenile unit that proactively addresses issues before complaints are received.
- 2. Consists of 2-6 officers. Enforce criminal law and borough ordinance violations
- 3. Created a station-house adjustment program to hold juveniles accountable which requires them to come in on a later date to perform community services such as: washing borough vehicles, cleaning trash and debris from dunes, and writing an essay explaining the consequences for their behavior.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFTS



PRIOR TO 2021

- Motor vehicle thefts were random or crimes of opportunity.
- Now, they are occurring more often. They are now intentional and targeting high end motor vehicles.
- Believed to be perpetrated by sophisticated, criminal gangs originating in Newark, NJ.

SINCE JULY 9, 2021

19 Total vehicles have been stolen

17 of these vehicles have been quickly driven to North Jersey.

11 vehicles were unlocked with key fobs inside

6 known instances where suspects entered residences to look for keys

THEFTS BY YEAR

▪ 2021 4

▪

▪ 2022 9

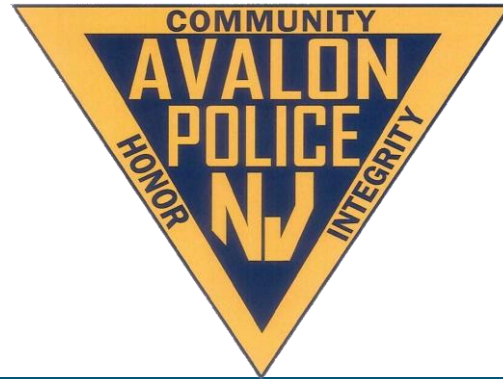
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Protect Yourself

Please keep your home and vehicle doors locked, with key fobs in secure place. Keep lights and security systems ON

Don't be a victim

THANK YOU!



Avalon Department of Public Works

The Avalon Department of Public Works does a fantastic job of keeping our town clean, building new facilities, keeping our residents and visitors safe

This year, Public Works constructed the very popular new 23rd Street Pier for waterfront access, assisted our beach fill contractors with dune crossovers and the placement of beach mats, assisted the Environmental Commission with the dune grass planting and Clean Ocean Action beach sweep events, and organized the roll out of our waste cart program.

Our men and women at Avalon Public Works thank you for the opportunity to serve our community



Avalon Trash Cart Program

- Trash and recycling carts are successful as recycling numbers have increased, solid waste tipping fees have decreased, and the town is cleaner with less debris distributed by wind and seabirds
- Avalon has recaptured the cost of the carts through a grant and by reduced solid waste trash hauling contract
- On Wednesday, Council advanced the 35-gallon cart swap program; solid waste carts and in, recycling carts are on backorder.



Avalon Beach Patrol



Led by Chief Matt Wolf and Captain Ryan Black, our Beach Patrol makes 100's of rescues each summer, including 139 contacts with swimmers in distress on one day in early July. Avalon recruits the very best individuals to serve our beach patrol each summer

Congratulations to the Patrol for again winning the Kerr Memorial Championships on "home sand" here in Avalon.

Avalon is proud of the Patrol's commitment to public safety



Avalon Department of Recreation

Our Recreation Department is responsible for most of our summertime special events, including the extremely popular Thursday night concerts at Surfside Park.

Recreation also coordinates our free Tuesday night beach movies, National Night Out, Friday evening children's events at Surfside Park, July 4th fireworks and concert, and our popular activities inside Avalon Community Hall for seniors.

In 2024, you will see updated playground equipment at select locations and other improvements to our recreational facilities.



Let's Talk About Pickleball!

Avalon will host the Sunmed New Jersey Open September 6-10th presented by the Association of Pickleball Professionals.

Avalon's tournament will be broadcast on CBS Sports Network. The APP has a distribution agreement with ESPN that now reaches England, Sweden, and China.

Millions of worldwide digital impressions will come to Avalon along with over \$1 million of direct and indirect tourism revenue, along with over 1,000 overnight stays in and near our community.



Let's Talk MORE Pickleball!



Avalon will expand it's hugely popular pickleball complex after the tournament with eight new pickleball courts and brand new tennis courts.

Avalon is committed towards keeping a tennis, pickleball, and basketball presence at our north end athletic complex.



Lastly, Many Thanks to AHLOA!

Many thanks to AHLOA for the opportunity make this presentation.

AHLOA's partnership and assistance with the Borough is valued as our neighbors and friends volunteer their time for AHLOA to inform, engage, and represent our residents and property owners.

Please consider active involvement in AHLOA as this organization represents you as a valued stakeholder in the best seashore community along the eastern seaboard

