

A black silhouette of a lighthouse tower is positioned on the left side of the page. The tower features a prominent lantern room at the top with a glass-paned window and a small cupola on top. Below the lantern room is a balcony with a railing. The tower's body is thick and has a few small windows or openings. The background is a solid, bright yellow color.

# Highlands Business Partnership

**2015  
Annual  
Report**

# 2015 Officers of the Corporation

	Board Members	Business/ Affiliation	Resident/ CPO/BO	Board Assignment	Term
1.	Carla Cefalo-Braswell <b>President</b>	ShoreGrafx	Resident CPO	Executive Committee Chair – Events Co- Marketing/Comm	2014 - 2017
2.	Jay Cosgrove, <b>VP</b>	Bahrs Restaurant	CPO/BO	Executive Committee Chair – Events Co- Marketing/Comm Bridge – DOT Liaison	2015 - 2018
3.	Rafaella Lee, <b>Treasurer</b>	Beach House Apartments	Resident CPO	Executive Committee	2013-2016
4.	Kim Slate, <b>Secretary</b>	OffThe Hook	CPO/BO	Marketing & Events Committee	2014 - 2017
5.	Nancy Burton	In the Garden	Resident BO	Visual Improvement Committee	2013 - 2016
6.	Leo Cervantes	Chilangos Restaurant	Resident CPO/BO	Marketing & Events Committee	2013 - 2016
7.	Larry Colby	Colby Plumbing	Resident CPO/BO	Economic Development Committee	2014 - 2017
8.	Jack Bevins	Seastreak	BO	Co-Chair Economic Development Committee	2015 - 2018
9.	Douglas Lentz	Inlet Cafe	Resident CPO/BO	Marketing & Events Committee	2015 - 2018
10.	Ara Jamgochian	Claddagh	CPO/BO	Marketing & Events Committee	2015 - 2018
11.	Garrett Newcomb	Kranky Cycles	BO	Marketing & Events Committee	2014 - 2017
12.	Staci Gilchrist	Windansea	CPO/BO		2014 - 2017
13.	Councilwoman Rebecca Kane	Council Rep		Executive Committee	2015 - 2016
14.	Kevin Redmund	Planning Rep		Economic Development Committee	2015 - 2016
15.	Rosemary Ryan	Resident	Resident	Visual Improvement Committee	2015 - 2016
16.	Jeanne DeYoung	Monmouth County	Assoc.	Marketing	Tourism Rep

## **HBP Board of Directors**

The HBP Board of Directors provides leadership, oversight and financial control of the operations of the corporation, Highlands Business Partnership. The 16th year, 2015 assessment budget approved by the Board of Directors and submitted to the Council on January 21, 2015 was for \$60,000. The HBP by-laws are posted on [www.highlandsnj.com](http://www.highlandsnj.com). There are thirteen (13) voting members consisting of six (6) commercial property owners, six (6) business operators and one (1) voting resident that comprise the HBP Board of Directors. There are two (2) members appointed by the Mayor, one (1) Council Liaison and one (1) member of the Planning Board. Councilwoman Rebecca Kane was appointed as the Council Liaison and Kevin Redmond as the Planning Board Liaison for 2015.

## **2015 Officers of the Corporation**

Carla Cefalo-Braswell, President; Jay Cosgrove, Vice President; Rafaella Lee, Treasurer; Kim Slate, Secretary. The Officers serve according to the bylaws and form the Executive Committee of the corporation providing the overall management of the corporation and overseeing decision-making on behalf of the Board of Directors. These Executive Committee members also serve as Board members and answer to the Board of Directors.

Members of the district, according to the HBP By-Laws, elect HBP Board members that have expiring terms annually. Board seats that become vacant prior to the end of the expiration of the term are filled by Board action at regular or special meetings. The Mayor appoints two positions annually at the reorganization. Highlands has a unique situation, where a majority of the Board Members are residents. Resident stakeholders, who are also commercial investors, enhance the level of commitment to improve Highlands and bring a broader perspective to the decision-making process. These board members maintain residency in the community where they have invested in their commercial businesses.

## **Non-Voting Board Members:**

These members bring institutional and corporate private-sector talent and resources to the Board. These members should bring an added outside viewpoint to the board that assists in their decision-making process. The seat is vacant at present.

## **Committee Chairs**

Board Members Carla Cefalo-Braswell, Rafaella Lee, Jay Cosgrove, Ara Jamgochian and Nancy Burton took leadership roles to Chair and Co-Chair HBP Committees. Committee chairs, which also serve as Board members, direct HBP activities that promote the objectives of the Board.

## **HBP Administration:**

Legal publication notices, as outlined in the state statute for BIDs, announced the HBP meeting schedule for four regular meetings and one annual meeting in 2015

State of New Jersey filing fee, Corporate Filings, dues for Memberships in various organizations, postage, stationery, educational conferences were administrative expense line items. As required by the state statute, the Churchin Group will complete a certified audit for 2015. The Audit was filed with the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, and Borough of Highlands and remains with HBP corporate records. Charitable Registration was completed for HBP 2015. HBP Liability and Worker Compensation Insurance is obtained the Monmouth JIF, Joint Insurance Fund. Diane Gunter worked from January 2015 through December 31, 2015, as a part time employee, working 30 hours per week. HBP Board President serves as the Manager on a volunteer basis with support from many volunteers.

The HBP phone # is (732) 291-4713 and Fax # is 732-872-1031. HBP has an account with Verizon for their Phone and fax#. HBP pays JCP&L for their electric meter usage. Checks are made payable directly to JCP&L from a detailed invoice. Carla Cefalo-Braswell and Ken Braswell provide HBP free use of office space, Internet and some computer equipment.

# Marketing & Communications

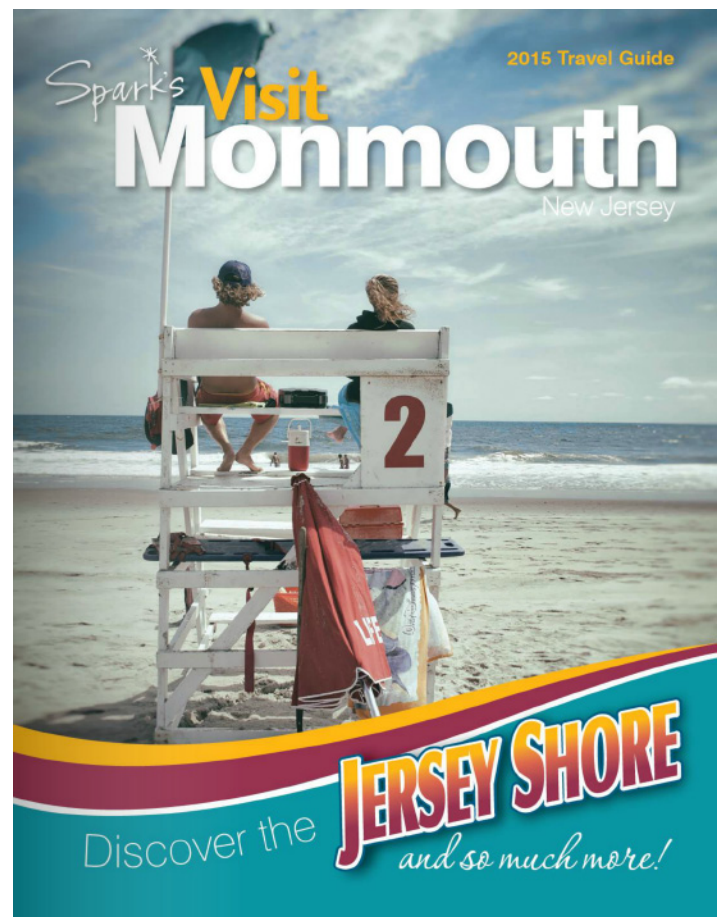
Co-Chaired by Carla Cefalo-Braswell, Jay Cosgrove

The Marketing committee continued to work diligently to promote any and all resources available to assist businesses. Summary of the 2015 activities includes the Jersey Shore Destination Marketing Organization; Monmouth County Tourism Guide, Highlands Visitor Guide, Jersey Shore Magazine, HBP Marketing/Advertising Media Buy opportunities. HBP purchased billboards, enhanced Public Service Announcements with WRAT Rat Radio, maintained and expanded sponsorship programs raising \$35,950.00 (\$10,000 in income and \$27,000 in barter) HBP was featured on News 12, as well as many newspaper articles and other forms of media.

Carla Cefalo served on the Monmouth County Tourism Council. Each town has a representative to promote their community on a county level. HBP remains active in serving as a partner with the County Tourism office. We had an opportunity to report on all activities and programs in Highlands at meetings held at the Passport office.

The Board's Minutes, reports, revised ordinance, 2015 budget, events, photo albums, and bylaws are accessible and printable from [www.highlandsnj.com](http://www.highlandsnj.com)

The Highlands Visitor's Guide was created and enhanced in full color for a 2015/16 version that includes information on Highlands such as history, biking and hiking trails, lighthouses, event information, ferry schedule, a map and a business directory. 2015/16 Visitor Guides were distributed at all HBP events, the Great 5-Boro Race, NJ Pride, the NJ Lighthouse Challenge, County Tourism Office, Historic Twin Lights Visitor Center, the Sandy Hook Visitor Center, as well as in our local businesses and Borough Hall. HBP produced 25,000 guides for distribution during 2015.





Sponsors for 2015 include Comcast NBCUniversal, 95.9 WRAT, Frank Rahm Landscaping, Hufnagel Tree Experts, Sprinkler Master, Shore Point, T&M, Montecalvo-Bayshore Recycling, Seastreak, Eastern Civil Engineering, and Super Foodtown.



**Eastern Civil Engineering, LLC**



HBP Marketing served as the primary catalyst for attracting private funding to maximize the local assessment investment. Through efforts of the Executive Committee, a corporate sponsorship track record is being maintained and expanded, that will ensure our corporate sponsors are provided value in the marketing initiatives set forth through HBP.

Farmers Market Honey –HBP decided that since the honey being sold at the farmers market was in such demand, and the honey vendor cannot always attend, he offered to label Highlands Honey, which we was made available to sell at the market. It was sold for \$10 a jar, and we got a 40% profit on each jar.



January 27, 2015



### **Economic Development Committee Business Recruitment**

The HBP continued to promote the Monmouth County Economic Development - Grow Monmouth Façade Improvement Program. The Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders had established the program to provide businesses with funds to assist with the improvement of business facades and the replacement of deteriorated commercial signs, doors, paint, windows and awnings. Grants for the façade improvements are intended to fund 100% of the project cost up to a maximum of \$1,850.00 and are on a first come first serve basis.

### **Business Retention**

HBP contributed to small business inquiries and provides assistance to existing businesses. HBP helped businesses with problems that impact their businesses as well as met with potential investors to tour the town and vacant parcels.

### **Awards and Matching Grants**

Highlands Business Partnership applied for the NJ Division of Travel and Tourism FY16 Cooperative Marketing Grant and was not awarded.

**Hope for Highlands** - HBP maintained a separate bank account with fundraising proceeds and donations received in order to help Sandy victims in the community. The program was officially closed, but the website was still published for potential donations that can be used to revisit the denied material grant applications. This program was separate from the Robin Hood Grant Program which still has two houses grants open. Once these houses were finished remaining Hope for Highlands funds were used towards Veterans Park improvements.



**The Streetscape Phase I**, ground-breaking took place on September 24th and construction began September 28th. (NJEDA Grant Award \$1.5M)



**Highlands Bridge at Dusk - June 14, 2015**



**New Business**

The following new businesses received welcome packages and had ribbon cuttings.

AM Marina (declined ribbon cutting)





# Special Events Committee

*Chaired by Carla Cefalo Braswell*

Destination - Highlands is the objective of the HBP events. HBP promotes Highlands as a destination for visitors partially by hosting events to showcase the community. The 2015 event calendar and marketing plan reached nearly 90,000 visitors. HBP promotes Highlands at several regional events during the year. HBP Visitor Guides, event collateral materials, complimentary bags, marketing and promotional materials are distributed during the following regional events:

**Bike New York-Great Five Boro Race – 30,000 cyclists – Ft. Wadsworth, Staten Island, NY (1st Sunday in May)**

**NJ Pride – Asbury Park – 10,000 - 15,000 people (1st Sunday in June)**

Various trade shows – materials distributed by County Tourism and Jersey Shore DMO

## **HBP 2015 Special Events Calendar:**

**Saint Patrick's Day Parade March 21, 2015** was held with 10 pipe bands and local and regional floats, along with a host of local business participation. Grand Marshals Daniel Shields and Robert Higgins led the 13th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. HBP raised \$1,820.00 for the parade from the Beef & Brew and raised an additional \$2,020.00 at the 3rd Annual Chili Cook Off fundraisers, \$672.00 from Lucky Pot of Gold 50/50, and \$830.00 from the Guinness Run. The total parade income was \$5,560.00 and the expenses were \$12,864.18.

**Seaport Craft Show May 24, 2015 –** was held on Memorial Day weekend with 24 specialty vendors/crafters. The event income was \$2,715.00 and the expenses were \$777.50

**Taste of Highlands June 27, 2015 –** The 4th Annual Taste of Highlands showcased 19 Highlands restaurant and business establishments. The event spurred positive local recognition and media attention. The event income was \$7,470.00 and the expenses were \$6,741.46. Portions of the proceeds were earmarked for public improvements.





**Highlands Farmers Market 2015 July – October** - The 2015 season began in Huddy Park in July and continued through November 1st. Outside vendors were solicited for the market and there were various successes with adding vendors to the market. The event income was \$1,140.00 and expenses were \$324.64.

**Clam Festival July 30 – August 2, 2015** - The 21st Annual Clam Festival proved to be successful and attracted nearly 26,000 visitors over a 4-day period. Efforts of over 50 volunteers, many which are local residents, were a huge asset to the success. Clam Fest had local restaurants and 39 vendors. Live entertainment, rides, contests and games were also included. The event income was \$70,478.20 and the expenses were \$46,400.63.

**2015 Twin Lights Ride - September 27** - The 14th Twin Lights Bike event was held in Highlands at the Huddy Park Area. Seastreak Ferry Company cooperated by bringing bike enthusiasts to Highlands for the multi-tour bike event. There were nearly 2,700 bike enthusiasts, many visiting Highlands establishments. Promotions with local businesses were advertised and announced. The event income was \$100.00 and the expenses were \$295.00.

**2015 Oktoberfest – October 17** – HBP purchased Bavarian food from Bahrs Restaurant. A German Band warmed the crowds with traditional German music and dancers. There were specialty vendors, lots of German beers, desserts and inflatable rides. The event attracted nearly 4000 visitors. The event income was \$11,293.00 and expenses were \$14,370.19.

**Holiday Lighting 2015 – December 4** - The event features local entertainers performing holiday programs. Local residents portrayed Santa and Mrs. Claus. Members of the Highlands Recreation Department and the HBP decorated the tree. HBP provided free horse & buggy rides.

**Holiday Lights Contest - December 20** – The 2nd Annual Holiday Lights contest, took place on December 19th. Contestants registered to compete in decorating their homes for the holidays. We had 30 contestants and cash prizes were awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.





# Visual Improvement Committee –VIC

*Chaired by Nancy Thomas*

This HBP Committee has a wide scope of objectives including Maintenance, Decorations and Design.

**Bay Avenue Maintenance Project** –A Contract was signed with Frank Rahm Landscaping for approximately \$6,750 to improve the overall appearance of downtown Highlands and to improve the Bay Avenue district from July to October. Frank Rahm provided weekly clean-up and maintenance services on Thursday or Friday mornings. Maintenance included blowing off the sidewalks and sweeping up debris at intersections. Debris was picked up and removed so as not to block the storm drains. Curbs and sidewalks were weeded as needed.

**Veterans Park Boardwalk** – In 2014 we began a three-phase project with TriBar to replace the Veteran’s Park Boardwalk. Phase I was to fix the drainage issue in Veterans Park in order to start construction of the Boardwalk, and this was completed by the end of 2014. TriBar donated all the labor for Phase I on barter. We gave them a sponsor package for 2014, for Phase I. In 2015, the construction phases were completed. Phase II was to fill the place where the concrete wall was broken. Councilman Doug Card got a quote from Builders General for \$70,000. There was a dismantling committee consisting of Councilman Card, Joe Burke, Charlie Wells, and several volunteers from the community. We chose composite boards, rather than wood, for easy maintenance. We went through Allied Building Supply in Toms River and were able to get the 2,550 square feet of composite for \$11,200.00. Phase III dealt with the construction of the Boardwalk, and was completed before the spring of 2015. We were able to use the remaining Hope For Highlands money to pay the balance. The Borough will do the electrical upgrade, which will cost approximately \$40,000.00. TriBar became a multi-year sponsor in exchange for the labor services.





**Miller Hill Mural** - A committee was formed by Councilwoman Rebecca Kane to oversee the Miller Hill Mural. HBP posted a request for Quotes and renderings and received four packages All muralist were interviewed by the sub-committee, Nancy Burton, Carla Cefalo, Diane Keaveny, Rafaella Lee and Tim Hill. Jim Kovic, a local artist, was chosen to paint the mural with a nautical theme chosen by the committee. The HBP Adopted-a-Bench in honor of Jim Kovic's father, who passed away in 2015, and placed it near the mural.



### **Clean Communities Program**

HBP partnered with the Clean Communities coordinator to facilitate the opening of the public spaces for the spring.

### **Adopt-A Bench**

The Adopt-A-Bench program continued in 2015. Benches were available to adopt for \$500.00 per bench that has the option of a personalized plaque.

### **Holiday Decorations**

HBP provided Holiday decorations for Highlands. In the Garden was hired to decorate the Bay Ave. containers and to decorate for the tree lighting.

### **Sign Projects Way Finding**

Business Owners pay \$50 per sign and HBP pays for the installation. This includes re-alphabetizing annually. Post Sandy, HBP purchased the new signs and paid for installation and maintained existing signs for Highlands Welcome areas. Forms are available online and HBP members with tourist related businesses are eligible.



**21st Clam Festival - July 31, 2015**