



SALTAIRE NEWS

John A. Zaccaro Jr, Mayor

May 2022

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Since Saltaire's incorporation in 1917, our Village has been led by 20 Mayors and one President, who have all been concerned with safeguarding Saltaire for not only their current constituency but for the generations to follow. We have battled forces of Nature, with the Hurricane of 1938 and Super Storm Sandy being the major offenders. We have also battled man-made threats, like the Robert Moses proposed Ocean Parkway, and over-development of our Village. We continue to implement policies and procedures to safeguard our community during this COVID-19 pandemic, and we have undertaken measures to counteract the rising water levels due to global warming. Despite all of these challenges and more, our community remains resilient and strong.

Today we stand at approximately 415 private homes, and with a rebuilt infrastructure which we fortified to serve us well into the future. During my time in office, we have completed thirty million dollars of capital projects, which includes the rebuilding of all our walks, elevation of our ballfield, fortifying every municipal building against all risks, rebuilding the Bay Shore parking lot, replacing and enlarging key sections of our watermains, and rebuilding Village Hall and the Market. We installed backup generators for the Fire House and water system, we buried the overhead electrical lines on the bay in a public/private partnership. We renovated Brodtkin Park and our wagon and bike racks. We have completed a beach restoration project with new beach overpasses which will be maintained by the Army Corps well into the future.

Currently we are working with government officials and engineers on the removal of the Ocean Beach jetty and the restoration of Clam Pond Cove. These projects will provide the Village with much needed storm protection and will return the natural flow of sand. We are in the process of the removal of our old telephone lines and commenced a private public partnership to replace our playground with the help of the SCA.

Under my tenure we have worked on our online website, created an integrated Village wide activity schedule and designed and launched a recreation website. We implemented a four-poster deer program to prevent tick borne disease, a feral cat program, started a community beach chair program, and enacted operational modifications to the emergency siren. We also have purchased a new fire pumper and a new ambulance, both of which serve the community today.

We have hired new staff who have brought fresh perspectives and ideas as part of a gradual transition that allows us to retain and transfer the institutional knowledge within our ranks that has taken decades to accumulate. We have revised our local code to stay relevant with the changing environmental, economic and social environment, such as regulating home rentals, propane storage, smoking and open containers, home height and coverage, dog leash requirements and drone restrictions. Some modifications were in response to new developments, like the emergence of internet real estate sites like Airbnb and the redrawing of the flood maps. All the changes we have implemented have focused on safety and on protecting the quality of life in our Village.

Over recent years our Village has made many quality-of-life changes, including outdoor barbecuing, night bike riding and expanded cart use for those with mobility issues. As your Mayor, I have focused on reinforcing our sense of community. We have established a tradition of a fireworks display during the bay picnic and have a July 4th beach barbecue which have added to the fabric of our community. We oversaw a Centennial Celebration which culminated with a concert on the field and a Village historic exhibit in the Village Hall. These types of community-building activities enhance Saltaire as a special place for multi generations to enjoy.

Our Village has never been stronger financially. We have focused on Saltaire's long-term financial viability while being a proponent for fiscal responsibility, spending-control, and implementing financing alternatives for our capital projects. As a result, we now have a Triple A bond rating, and a debt service less than two percent of our Village's valuation. We currently have record reserves and just restructured our debt, resulting in a six million two hundred-thousand-dollar bond at a historically low rate of 1.87 percent.

We have worked hard to not let any of these actions impact Saltaire's uniqueness and charm. We must always keep sight of the fact that we are a barefoot community in a national park where bicycles are the norm and vehicles the exception. Living here is a privilege and one that needs to be remembered as we resist pressures to slide toward suburbanization.

As I write this email Saltaire is still a community where everyone knows and trusts their neighbors. It is a place to enjoy nature on one's own terms and where children can grow up free

from the noises, distractions and pressures of everyday city life. It is a community like nowhere else enjoyed by young and old, regardless of gender or ethnicity.

Our community has been run by volunteers who have donated their time for the benefit of all residents. This strong sense of community-service has served Saltaire well over the past century. I have followed in my mother's footsteps, who strongly believed that we all have a duty to make the world we live in a better place for our friends, family and fellow citizens. Many in our history have answered that call and I hope history will look back on us favorably in advancing that paradigm. I am proud of my work and what our Board has accomplished. We have worked hard to preserve the character and traditions of Saltaire while preparing it to effectively face the challenges of the future.

I write this as my last state of the Village Newsletter as your Mayor, having decided to not to run for reelection for another term. While I will stand ready to serve the community as needed, the time is ripe for me to spend more time with my family as we transition to the next stages of our lives.

The next Mayor will inherit a thriving, diverse and well-maintained community. I am confident that the new Mayor and the younger generation of leaders to come will continue to lead and safeguard this Village into the future.

I want to end by personally thanking the Village staff for their dedication and hard work during my time of service, and Scott Rosenblum for his unwavering support and guidance during my 22-year tenure. Most especially, I want to thank my wife Anne and my children Elizabeth, Samantha and John for their love and understanding over these many years. It has been a privilege to serve this community which has meant so much to me and my family.