

2024 Year in Review

presented by

The Board of Trustees of the Harvey Cedars Taxpayers Association

Why is reflecting on the year important?

Reflecting on the past year helps organizations and individuals to recognize and celebrate successes, understand and learn from challenges, and plan more effectively for the future. By providing a clear framework for retrospection here, the Harvey Cedars Taxpayers Association (HCTA) Board of Trustees hopes to share and foster a mindset of continuous improvement and strategic thinking, which is crucial for our long-term success and growth.

Mission/Vision Overview (from HCTA bylaws)

The purpose of the HCTA is to enhance the quality of life for the residents and taxpayers of the Borough of Harvey Cedars, and to facilitate communication among the taxpayers and between the taxpayers and the government.

HCTA Structure

Committees collaboratively do the lion's share of the work within this all-volunteer organization, using teamwork and partnerships within and outside the group to yield the best overall result. Typically, a Board Trustee sits on at least two Committees and may chair one Committee. Committees are also home to non-board member volunteers. Here are the six key areas of focus and how your HCTA is organized:

Membership Committee

Charter: *Responsible for process, recruiting, and operations of both household and business Memberships to drive our main source of revenue.*

Committee Members: Brian McCann (Chair), Ann Pollack, Kathleen Ries, Jim Fritz

Events Committee

Charter: *Responsible for Events beyond Board and Annual meetings, including proposing, planning, and operating, to help build in-person social and activities engagement.*

Committee Members: Bruce Keyser(C), Irene Giordano, Peter Lisciotta

Beautification Committee

Charter: *Responsible for special projects specifically tied to public aesthetic improvements, including choosing, planning, and executing, to help make our community more attractive beyond the standard town support.*

Committee Members: Lynne Warshaw (C), Arlene Schragger, Irene Giordano

Marketing & Communications Committee

Charter: *The MarCom Committee is responsible for overseeing web management, signage and promotion including newsletters, Membership communications, and event support to help position HCTA as a valued community resource and engage with our Membership.*

Committee Members: Hilary Fiorella(C), Arlene Schragger, Brian McCann, Kathleen Ries

Finance Committee

Charter: *Manage the Association's financial resources, including budgeting, cash management, accounting, financial filings and funds disbursement to ensure financial accountability.*

Committee Members: Ann Pollack (Chair), Kathleen Ries, Brian McCann, Jerry Hanson

Governance Committee

Charter: *Responsible for process and oversight for Board accountability and Membership, including bylaws, insurance, minutes, performance expectations, and new member recruiting to ensure our Board compliance and continuous growth.*

Committee Members: Jerry Hanson(C), Ann Pollack, Kathleen Ries, Jim Fritz

What Your HCTA Delivered in 2024

Membership

HCTA offers two types of Memberships:

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIPS for taxpayers, residents and long-term tenants of Harvey Cedars. The household Membership year is August to July and the annual fee remains \$35. Membership entitles members to all e-newsletters, surveys, Events, prizes, and attendance at the Annual Meeting. An overview of household Membership benefits can be found here: <https://www.harveycedarstax.org/join-us>

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS for businesses that serve Harvey Cedars residents and their guests, vacationers and long-term tenants of Harvey Cedars. The business Membership year is May to April and there are three levels of Memberships that provide increased marketing services, promotion, and gift card purchases from HCTA. Business Membership details can be found here:

<https://www.harveycedarstax.org/business-Membership-form>

2024 Membership Achievements

The Committee covering Membership and Membership development works throughout the year to develop programs of engagement that will encourage Household and Business Membership growth and help enhance the existing Membership programs. With that, Membership has achieved success in 2024 on many levels.

Enabled secure online Membership payments and renewals via credit card with no extra member fees, saving time for members and saving printing and postal expenses for HCTA.

Improved our secure, cloud-based Membership management system in Bloomerang. This simplified Membership payments, renewal tracking, and multi-user access, as well as separate members-only communications, such as surveys and special meetings.

Expanded e-mail database to more than 727 recipients.

Increased Business Memberships by 38% to 16 businesses and Household Memberships by 5% to 381.

Invested in over \$900 in gift cards purchased from HCTA member businesses, awarded to HCTA household members during event drawings.

Events

It's clear from our survey feedback received that Harvey Cedars loves its socializing, loves the outdoors and loves supporting the community and neighbors! HCTA hosts several events throughout the year. Here's how 2024 played out:

MAY: On Memorial Day weekend we hosted our annual Town-Wide Yard Sale. The yard sale is always well attended by both sellers and buyers. Recycling items you no longer need or want is a great way to reduce waste and repurpose your unwanted treasures.

JUNE: We kicked off the season with our Season Starter Social at Sunset Park. We welcomed about 100 taxpayers / residents for an informal get together with refreshments and great conversations.

JULY/AUGUST: HCTA attended Borough Concerts in the park to support the Harvey Cedars Activities Committee, answer questions about the association and gain valuable community feedback.

AUGUST: The HCTA holds its Annual Membership Meeting in August each year. Supported by our local businesses, we served breakfast treats and shared important information including Committee updates, community updates, information on local and county taxes, projects in town, offshore wind developments, and natural disasters. We also shared what

In 2025, HCTA will survey our citizens to gauge interest in volunteering for individual events and activities, including a person -- or team -- to help HCTA coordinate volunteers for the events of greatest interest.

our members said was important to them in supporting life in Harvey Cedars. During the course of the meeting, we held several drawings for gift cards and other prizes.

We will continue to support Harvey Cedars socializing activities and will continue to request member input about what kinds of activities our members would enjoy. As always, we welcome member participation in helping to run these events – just a few hours of time and a great attitude is all it takes!

Beautification

The Beautification Committee is HCTA's first committee chaired by a non-Board member, an extraordinary gardener and all-around great resource, Lynne Warshaw. Board member Arlene Schragger serves as the liaison from the Committee to the Board. 2024 delivered an expanded collaboration with the Borough in several areas:

Borough Hall: raised bed on the municipal side (76th Street)

- Weeding and pruning is complete for the winter season
- Planting will take place in the spring
- HCTA maintenance will be ongoing

Sunset Park Flagpole Area: a phased-in plan

New plants selected in 2024 for this area are salt and wind tolerant, are delightful to look at, and support our native pollinators. They may even help dissuade geese from making our park home! Look for them in the park later this year.

Irrigation lines have been installed by the Borough, which will support HCTA's future plantings there.

The Committee will price out and obtain plants, and work with Commissioner Gieger and the DPW team to identify the best layout and means of staying within budget.

Sunset Park Signage Areas:

HCTA's Beautification Committee continues its work on beautifying the park's welcoming signage, both the planted bed featuring the Borough's newly restored Sunset Park sign on the Blvd and the second sign area located at the entrance to the parking lot on W Salem Ave.

Volunteers

As spring unfolds, the Beautification Committee will be welcoming volunteers again. If your thumb is green, or you're simply enthusiastic about the beauty of the different areas of HC, there's plenty to do! Please reach out to harveycedarstax@gmail.com and find out more about the spring and summer timing of our beautification activities.

Marketing & Communications

The MarCom Committee is in charge of day-to-day outreach to our members, prospective members community leaders and the general public. This connection is forged in a number of ways.

Website

Design and maintenance of our website includes both content and functionality. The organization's website is harveycedarstax.org and is home to a robust calendar of Events in and around HC as well as a vast collection of Offshore Wind Farm Round Ups and countless links to additional important information at the Borough, county, state and federal level.

Website activity

Our members clicked on our website more than 5,000 times in 2024. Usage increases after each e-blast, during our Membership renewal period and around events like our Town Wide Garage Sale, Annual Meeting and Social.

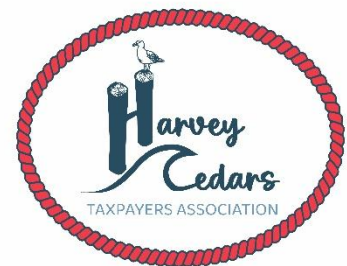
Our web visitors are viewing ~2 pages per session. Our homepage receives the most views, followed by Membership, the Offshore Wind Farm Round-Ups and then Events.

Top TEN most used HCTA links in 2024 (website & email combined):

- HCTA Home Page
- HCTA logo voting
- 2024 HCTA Membership Survey (Nov)
- HCTA Household Membership web page
- 2024 HCTA Membership Survey (Aug)
- 2024 Season Starter Social RSVP
- Offshore Wind Farm Round-Ups
- 2024 Annual Membership Meeting RSVP
- HCTA Hot Topics web page
- 2024 Annual Meeting slide deck

New Logo

HCTA's successful logo design contest included 12 design submissions, nearly 600 member votes over 40 weeks of narrowing the field bracket-style and finally delivered us a winner, as seen here, designed and submitted by Brittany Purdy.



Website Feedback

Most of our messages via the website are members offering to volunteer as Block Captains. We ask Block Captains to take the lead for their street or neighborhood and make sure their neighbors are up to date on Harvey Cedars issues and activities. Please reach out to any trustee or harveycedarstax@gmail.com and find out more about volunteering in town.

Behind the Scenes Support

MarCom serves HCTA with support and signage for events, promotional materials and membership communications. We welcome input and feedback about improving communications.

Eblasts

DELIVERY: The HCTA MarCom team sent 20 eblasts in 2024 to members and nonmembers covering a variety of purposes from updates & announcements to surveys & invitations. HCTA eblasts enjoy an average open rate of 80% among members.

ENGAGEMENT: Member and non-member recipients of eblasts not only read but also interacted with HCTA emails... 11,777 times in 2024. This includes 1,529 individuals who clicked *one or more* informational resource links, surveys and HCTA business member links.

Top TEN Business Member links clicked (in emails):

Healthy 4 Life
B&B Department Stores
Harvey Cedars Shellfish Co.
Neptune Market
Harvey Cedars Marina
Birdy's Café & Artisan Market
Ziman Development
Neptune Wines and Liquors
The Red Chair
Azzurri

SURVEYS: Members offer the HCTA Board direction in sharing their feedback with us. Surveys conducted in Aug, Oct and Nov of 2024 revealed an enlightening look into the interests and concerns of our residents and taxpayers. In all, 2,709 surveys were emailed with 2,132 opened and 636 unique responses, offering useful insights.

HCTA in the News

Harvey Cedars Taxpayers Holding Membership Meeting

August 19, 2024

<https://www.thesandpaper.net/articles/harvey-cedars-taxpayers-holding-Membership-meeting/>

Taxpayers Association Honors Former Mayor Oldham

August 28, 2024

<https://www.thesandpaper.net/articles/taxpayers-association-honors-former-mayor-oldham/>

Harvey Cedars Has Sit-Down With State Legislators School Tax Formula Is Top Complaint

October 02, 2024

<https://www.thesandpaper.net/articles/harvey-cedars-has-sit-down-with-state-legislators/>

Commissioners Thank Volunteers and 'Heart of Harvey Cedars'

December 19, 2024

<https://www.thesandpaper.net/articles/commissioners-thank-volunteers-and-heart-of-harvey-cedars/>

Finance

Revenue

The HCTA collects Membership fees as its sole source of outside revenue. HCTA funds are housed in a checking account and an interest-bearing money market account; management of those funds is the charter of the Finance Committee and Treasurer. Together, they maintain all financial records and execute all required government filings.

The Board establishes a budget which is balanced to our projected Membership revenue; the Board manages to that budget and the Finance Committee disburses funds throughout the year.

At the Annual Membership meeting, the Treasurer offers a report on the financial condition of the organization.

HCTA total revenue in 2024 was \$20,053 which included business and household Memberships paid during the calendar year plus money market interest income. HCTA revenue is recorded in the year received, while Memberships are tracked for the year paid, which can include prepayments. In 2024, revenue sources were:

- 74% household member revenue
- 21% business member revenue
- 5% interest income

Expenses

Total budgeted expenses in 2024 were \$21,334. Expense items included were:

Community Support

(aerator, HPVFC, BLFAS, HCBC, toy boxes, Dog Day Race sponsorship)

\$8,600 [plus unanticipated \$7,000 aerator contribution]

Annual Operating Expenses

(website maintenance, database management, insurance, printing/postage, etc.)

\$7,738

Event/Activity Expenses

(social & community events, concert support, annual meeting, gift cards, signage, etc.)

\$4,996

The COVID period produced a funds surplus since it was impossible to schedule events or activities during that restricted time. As a result, the Finance Committee and the rest of the Board have worked together over the past few years to allocate those funds to special needs within our community which our ordinary operating budget would not allow us to support. That effort is ongoing.

Cash

HCTA closed the year with a cash balance of \$20,481. HCTA follows the customary practice of carrying at least one year of operating budget in reserve.

Note that the 2024 ending balance is higher than normal due to:

- Remaining COVID period surplus

Most recently, HCTA provided a \$7,000 contribution to the Borough of Harvey Cedars to help offset the unanticipated cost of aeration equipment meant to reduce the likelihood of future fishkills in our coves.

- Special programs prioritized in our member surveys which are still waiting to be funded (beautification projects, beach toy boxes, etc.)

Governance

In 2024 HCTA's Governance Committee revised our bylaws to update Board member roles and responsibilities to align with our structure and operating methods.

The committee is investigating the pros and cons of converting from a 501(c)4 to a 501(c)3 nonprofit in order to facilitate additional local fundraising efforts to benefit the Harvey Cedars community even more.

What the Future Holds

Collaboration

Working with the Borough and Commissioners of Harvey Cedars, HCTA continued the effort to create a beautiful **area of reflection at the point in Sunset Park**. In 2024 we sold 159 engraved bricks (including those intended for installation, full sized donor replica bricks and souvenir mini-bricks). Total bricks ordered, since the 2022 program inception, now stands at **614 bricks** with 466 bricks in the ground as of the end of 2024.

The engraved brick program continues, and you can purchase your brick [HERE](#).

HCTA worked with the Borough's Dept of Public Works to place the first **toy box** handcrafted by HCTA Board member volunteer, Walt Naisby. Toys are available and free for beach goers to use and return at the end of their beach day. A popular addition to the beach-going experience and another resident & visitor-friendly aspect of the community of Harvey Cedars, additional toy boxes are planned for 2025 once the beach replenishment project is completed.

Working with taxpayer associations across Long Beach Island as a part of the **Joint Council of Taxpayer Associations (JCTA)** for many years, HCTA efforts don't stop at the edge of town.

In spring/summer of 2024, the HCTA and local businesses throughout the island participated in the **Vacation Food Collection** initiative to benefit St. Francis Food Pantry. This operation gave vacationers and residents an opportunity to drop off unopened nonperishables at local real estate offices which were then transferred to St Francis Food Pantry.

In the fall of 2024, JCTA members representing eleven taxpayer organizations across the island met with **Ocean County tax officials** to gain a better understanding of how county taxes are calculated and allocated. To continue in our mission of informing and educating, HCTA will host an education session in partnership with government and administrative members of the borough of Harvey Cedars in spring 2025

Ongoing JCTA efforts across the island support **volunteer first responder organizations** that serve HC and beyond with mutual aid in fire and emergency medical services.

Growth

The HCTA has an option to expand our Board and we welcome new members to help us better serve our taxpayers and our mission! Please email harveycedarstax@gmail.com or reach out to any Board member to chat about what talents are needed on the Board.

Board of Trustees *(alphabetical)*:

Hilary Fiorella, Marketing/Communications Chair
Jim Fritz, Vice President
Irene Giordano
Gerard Hanson, Governance Committee Chair
Bruce Keyser, Events Committee Chair
Brian McCann, Membership Committee Chair
Walt Naisby
Ann Pollack, Treasurer
Kathleen Ries, President
Arlene Schragger; Beautification Committee Liaison
VACANT, Secretary

Board members and non-Board members serve on Committees and serve as volunteers. If you're interested in learning more about the organization, membership opportunities, or how you might fit in with our current volunteer needs on special projects, committees or the Board of Trustees, please reach out.

HCTA Contact Details:

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