

5/29/2026

From the Mayor's Desk

Our Surfside Beach community's heart is heavy this week. As many of you know, our Memorial Day weekend was marked by a devastating tragedy. We are profoundly sorry for the loss of 11-year-old Joshua, who was swept away by the strong currents on Sunday evening. To Joshua's family, his friends, and the youth football teammates who visited our beach with him from Richmond, please know that our entire town mourns with you. There are no words that can truly ease a loss like this, but you have our deepest, most heartfelt sympathies.

In the midst of such heartbreak, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible dedication of our local first responders. Chief Phillip Hester led an exhaustive, round-the-clock search effort alongside Texas EquuSearch, the Coast Guard, and multiple other agencies. From the moment the call came in, Chief Hester promised that his teams would stay out every single night until we brought this young man home. His unwavering leadership and effort in guiding this massive search is a true testament to the character of our police force.

I also want to publicly praise Officer Christopher Redmond for his extraordinary bravery. When a wade fisherman reported a heartbreaking discovery offshore on Tuesday, Officer Redmond didn't hesitate. He immediately jumped into those rough waters himself to recover Joshua and bring him ashore. His selfless actions gave a devastated family the closure they so desperately needed, and we are incredibly proud to have him protecting our community.

As we look toward the rest of the summer, I want to echo Chief Hester's reminder that Mother Nature is unforgiving. The Gulf is beautiful, but conditions can change in an instant. Rip currents form quickly, and losing your footing off a sandbar happens far too easily, even for experienced swimmers. Please, stay mindful of the tides. Keep a constant, close eye on your children, respect the water, and always check the flag warnings before getting in. Your safety — and your family's — must always come first.

Please hold Joshua's loved ones in your thoughts and prayers this week.

Stay safe,

Mayor Marsha

CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMUNITY UPDATE:

True public service isn't about the individual; it's about the collective momentum of the crew. This week, I am proud to report that our department heads have been pulling together in the same direction, executing real, tangible projects that keep us moving forward.

Here's a look at what we've been up to this week:

- Following in-house mechanical repairs, the city's main tractor is working again, but we're not sure for how long. The Beach Director is moving through the procurement process to purchase a new tractor, which was previously authorized under the approved budget cycle.
- The Village officially signed an Award agreement with the Sea Tow Foundation to launch a Life Jacket Loaner Program. The Life Vest will be strategically positioned along our beach for public use at no charge. A special thank you goes to our dedicated Beach Advisory Committee for their proactive work in submitting this grant and getting this program off the ground just as the busy summer begins.
- Tourism is launching a targeted public-facing message on Facebook explaining the ecological role of sargassum in shoreline erosion control. The educational post has recorded over 23,000 views, with 87% of the traffic coming from non-followers and making it the highest-engagement post in the history of the city's social media footprint.
- Administration and Tourism have established a firm, non-negotiable go-live deadline of July 1st for the new Rentalscape platform. Cross-departmental coordination meetings between Finance, Tourism, and Customer Service Representatives (CSR) remain active to ensure all data tracking is seamlessly aligned before launch.
- Secondary exit stairs have been installed at the Public Safety building, and structural electrical work is scheduled to begin this week. Additionally, the Building Official has gathered competitive contractor bids to construct a new dedicated police department access road extending from Monument Drive.
- Final documentation has been submitted to the Texas General Land Office (GLO) for necessary pedestrian walkover permitting. Construction proposals are currently being vetted, with physical repairs scheduled to begin consecutively at the Sandpiper walkover, followed by Belanger and Driftwood.
- Following a formal notice of violation issued by Code Enforcement regarding an abandoned septic system on an empty lot, the property owner has actively begun the abatement process to safely remedy the hazard.
- In response to the recent seasonal rain and stormwater, utility crews have been placed on standby to protect the water and wastewater treatment plants. Crews are continually monitoring drainage lines and clearing blockages from ditches and culverts to mitigate street flooding. If you see these hardworking employees, let them know how much you appreciate them!
- The vacuum sewer crew continues their standard community rounds utilizing the vacuum trailer assets. Concurrently, monthly water meter reads have been successfully gathered and transmitted to the Finance Department to initiate the standard utility billing cycle.

-William Cox