

Mayor's Report July 7th 2026

It was quite a month in the Village.

It is my pleasure to announce that Governor Kathy Hochul has put \$12,000,000 in the NYS budget to reconstruct the Asharoken seawall. I received a call from her on May 26th with the news, but I was asked not to report this until NYS issued a press release. It was a pleasure to speak directly with the Governor and express our thanks and gratitude.

Governor Hochul heard our concerns and understood what was at stake. She recognized that reconstructing the seawall is not simply about repairing failing infrastructure; it is about protecting people. It is about safeguarding neighborhoods, ensuring public safety, strengthening resilience against future storms, and preserving communities that mean so much to all who live there.

Because of Governor Hochul's leadership, vision, and support, this project can move forward. The investment she has made today will benefit not only current residents but future generations who will continue to enjoy and cherish this remarkable part of Long Island.

On behalf of the residents of the Village of Asharoken and Eaton's Neck, I want to thank Governor Hochul for believing in our communities and for standing with us in our time of need. Today, we celebrate more than funding. We celebrate partnership. We celebrate resilience. And we celebrate the promise that, working together, even small communities can accomplish great things. Governor Hochul's support will leave a lasting legacy on our shoreline and in the hearts of those who call the Village of Asharoken and Eaton's Neck home.

First and foremost, I want to thank everyone in Asharoken and Eaton's Neck who signed the petitions. The Governor told me that having almost 1000 signed petitions placed on her desk was a game-changer. Your engagement, support, and commitment to this effort were instrumental to our success and are deeply appreciated. Great job by all the signees!

Thanks to Village resident John Murn. He arranged a brief meeting in May 2025 with Governor Hochul, Deputy Mayor Pam Pierce, and me. That conversation introduced the Governor to the condition of the seawall and underscored how critical it is to protect Asharoken Avenue.

Thank you to Catherine Fee from Empire Government Strategies, whom the Village hired last December to advocate and lobby on our behalf. Catherine did an outstanding job, and I am convinced we would not have secured this funding without her extensive contacts, dedication, and expertise. Thanks to State Senator Mario Mattera and Assemblyman Keith Brown for their unwavering support of seawall reconstruction.

This is great news for the Village and for our friends in Eaton's Neck. As more information becomes available, I will let you know.

Yesterday, Governor Hochul presented a ceremonial \$12,000,000 check at Caleb Smith Park. Originally, this was going to happen several weeks ago, but it was postponed because of the parade celebrating the Knicks' NBA championship. Attending the presentation were Deputy Mayor Pam Pierce, Trustee Mel Ettinger, Emergency Manager Bill Raisch, Village Clerk Michelle Glennon, Officer in Charge Ray Mahdesian, my wife Linda and myself. Joining from Eaton's Neck were Fire Chief Mike Pinto and community advocate John Ballow. The Village presented Governor Hochul with a proclamation of thanks for supporting the Village. Please see photos below.

There is still a great deal of work to be done before a shovel can go into the ground to begin reconstruction of the seawall. We must gain a clear understanding of how project funds will be distributed, secure new easements from property owners, relocate utility lines, bid the project, and select a contractor. I am sure there will be additional hurdles along the way. The Village will do everything it can to move the project forward as quickly as possible, but this is a major public works undertaking that will take time to complete.

In an effort to get ahead of the utility relocation process, the Village met with PSEG, Verizon, and Altice this month and has another meeting scheduled later in July to continue coordinating this important work.

Unfortunately, our Fourth of July celebration was cut short by a severe thunderstorm that moved through at approximately 8:45 p.m. As a result, the fireworks display had to be canceled due to unsafe conditions. Given the poor weather forecast for Sunday and Monday, the potential damage to Grucci's fireworks inventory, and logistical issues involving the barge, rescheduling the display over the holiday weekend was not possible.

Furthermore, the strong winds that preceded the storm served as a stark reminder of the inherent hazards posed by beach bonfires, particularly under adverse weather conditions. Fortunately, no secondary fires were ignited by airborne embers. Over the coming months, the Village will conduct a thorough evaluation of the risks associated with these fires and consider measures that can be implemented to mitigate these risks. There is no doubt that the Fire Safety law the Village implemented three years ago and the ban on fires between 100-200 Asharoken Avenue helped make a bad situation less dangerous.

The Village also completed and submitted its annual MS4 Stormwater Report. I thank Village Clerk Michelle Glennon and our consultant, Jim Antonelli, for their hard work in preparing this detailed and complex document. The Village continues to make progress on its recodification project, and I also want to thank Trustee Laura Burke and Deputy Mayor Pam Pierce for their dedication and hard work on this important effort.

Lastly, I congratulate Mel Ettinger, Laura Burke and Village Justice Paul Boronow on their reelection. It has been both a pleasure and an honor to work alongside them for the past 14 years. They have served the Village with distinction, and I look forward to two more productive years together. Their guidance, support, dedication, and friendship have been invaluable to both the Village and me.