

## BHA Board Candidate for 2023

# Bob Keiger



**Profession and education:** Property Casualty Insurance; University of Delaware - BS Math

**Spouse name and background:** Bonnie; Bucknell University - BA Economics

**What is your history with Bald Head Island that has brought you to ownership and now a candidate for BHA?** Came to BHI 22 years ago on a Passport weekend and bought property. Purchased a home 15 years ago. The island was a refuge for slowing down, relaxing and enjoying the beach while at the same time respecting the environment and its wildlife. Now that I am retired, I can devote more volunteer time in service to BHI's future.

**What professional skills and life experiences do you feel would be most valued as a member of the BHA Board?** I have been fortunate to have some great mentors in my career who helped me create a framework for both my business and personal life. As a result, I have adopted 3 tenets that keep me focused and balanced on issues, challenges and goals - 1) It is always better to do the right thing than to do things

right, 2) Delay is anathema to excellence and 3) Don't fail to act on the truth. I have been active in citizen's associations and PTA's, served on the Vestry of several churches, managed the origination of GEICO's entry as the first insurance company to offer 24-hour service, served on the BHA post-Florence panel and currently on the BHA Community Wide Standards committee.

**As a BHI property owner, what aspect of Island life is most important to you as a key to BHI's future and, if elected, how would you help craft that future?** I see the most important aspect of BHI's future being focused on balancing the growth of both commercial and residential development to be more in sync with its infrastructure supporting any development. For example, transportation, public safety, utilities and services do not appear to be keeping pace with the increasing demands of renters, visitors and owners. The difficult question here is just how does the BHA play a role in helping the village manage this. I would work hard to create a more collaborative relationship with ALL "governing" groups and their constituencies to try to balance all future development with the original vision set out for the island.

**Platform/Philosophy/Positions — Address these real-world questions:**

***Property owners seem to want BHA to represent them in more than just land use issues. What new dimensions to their role should the BHA Board be considering and discussing? Why is this important?*** In looking over the history of the development of BHI, there were two important entities that have played a critical role in working with the Mitchell Family — BHA and the Village government. Having these two organizations form a more collaborative partnership is most important now that the Mitchell family is out of the picture. The developer's self interest in selling property served as the central focus for support and service and building out much of the island. With the transportation system the last of the family assets to be turned over to outside governance, we are now on our own. This is a good thing, but it presents different challenges as these two organizations must now try to meet their constituencies' needs and jointly work on the island's future.

***The trend toward a "resort-like" Island poses issues for the property owners who favor a culture of stewardship and conservancy. A fissure seems to be developing. What are some of the mechanisms BHA might encourage to ensure we strengthen our "community"?*** The idea of a "resort-like" island has certainly emerged as the island builds out and seemingly at the expense of the culture of stewardship and conservancy. It has pushed the use of the BHI and Shoals club to move increasingly away from a membership-only club and to enhance their revenues from temporary members. This has shifted back toward members in recent times. These two clubs need to also work closely with the Village and BHA to manage future growth. BHI and Shoals club are unique in that they must balance member needs with revenue requirements and desires of renters to have access to sports, restaurants and especially aquatics.

***Should BHA have any influence over commercial development on the Island? If so, in what areas?*** I do not think that BHA, being a homeowners association, should have any jurisdiction over commercial property. However, they should be able to have a seat at the table to influence the size and style of the development in those commercial areas. We seem to have no clear covenants regarding commercial development now.

***How could the BHA Board and the Village Council better work in tandem to ensure an alignment of goals for the Island and the means to implement?*** As a BHA Board member I would like to enjoin the Village Council to create a permanent, non-voting advisory position (attending all Village Council meetings) for a duly appointed BHA Board member. The Village Council is indeed the elected group to govern BHI, but a representative from BHA at all meetings could certainly add a level of input and discussion from the largest property owner group on the island. That could very likely lead to better working relationships and better choices for the residents and property owners and BHI's future.