

Elizabeth (Betty) Robinson



Profession and education: Information Technology Executive, BS Mathematics – Duke, MBA – Fairleigh Dickinson.

What is your history with Bald Head Island that has brought you to ownership and now a candidate for BHA? I discovered Bald Head Island in my retirement, frequently visiting the island during my 14 years living on board my vessel, LiLi. Looking to transition back to land, the simplicity and natural beauty of Bald Head seemed like the perfect fit. I bought my home in 2014 and enjoyed the summer months on the island. In 2020, I took up permanent residence.

What professional skills and life experiences do you feel would be most valued as a member of the BHA Board? During the 70's explosion of information technology in the business world, I worked for a variety of companies on the East Coast, primarily responsible for large-scale business automation. I retired from Johnson & Johnson after a 30-year tenure and four

company positions as CIO and member of the Management Board. My work involved program management spanning multiple companies and staff working globally. Coordination, collaboration and accountability for results were my key responsibilities. I also have experience as board president of a non-profit agency, working with minimal resources trying to make a difference in the world ... a very different set of challenges.

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? For me, the most important aspect of Bald Head Island life is COMMUNITY ... the sense of belonging to a special group of folks who treasure the unique, natural beauty of where we live. Advocating for the interests of homeowners, full-time or part-time, to maintain our special style of island living is at the core of my interest in serving on the BHA Board.

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

The trend toward a “resort-like” Island poses issues for the property owners who favor a culture of stewardship and conservancy. What are some of the mechanisms BHA might use to address these issues? If we are to preserve what draws both new owners and visitors to the island, communicating the “Value of Life on Bald Head” needs to be a priority ... for BHA, Village Council, every customer interface on the island and all property owners. BHA, through its Covenants and practices, protects the island and owner interests for our collective future benefit. As a community, we must embrace that island stewardship is **everyone's** responsibility. I would like to see BHA expand its leadership role by spearheading an island wide messaging campaign that effectively addresses every visitor to the island. Starting with outreach to communities similar to BHI, what best practices might we adopt in our preservation efforts? Can we work directly with homeowners who rent their properties and their management companies to develop messaging that directly touches our visitors? Working with businesses and organizations on the island to support the stewardship message through their customer contacts is another potential. The BHI Club and the Shoals Club are a critical draw for tourists ... what can be done to include them in the program? What efforts could the Village undertake as the first point of contact for our tourists when they arrive at the Ferry landing? While marketing Bald Head as a destination for family and fun, we need an equally impactful message that we are a vulnerable environment that needs care.

Bottom line: When people come for the ‘resort experience,’ we are actually sharing our home with them. As an owner’s association, BHA is ideally suited to collaborate across all island organizations and lead our efforts to make stewardship practices the norm.

What are some ideas to help strengthen our “community” as a whole for all BHA members, without regard to how much time members spend on the Island? A community thrives on interaction and communications. I applaud BHA and Village Council for their programs to share information with owners through publications such as the *Island Report*, *Compass* emails, and the *Village's Voice*. I would like to see more opportunities on a regular basis to dialogue with homeowners. When folks have something on their mind, they seem to turn to FACEBOOK. Could the BHA provide for proactive owner involvement on issues of their immediate concern? Crazy as it sounds, could there be a community-focused “Ask the Association” vehicle? What could be done to engage more residents in meaningful conversations that can bring

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insight to the decision-makers? Could a partnership between the Village Council and the BHA fashion a monthly forum to field questions on topics of concern to residents, with plans for follow-up? Could we periodically solicit owners' ideas on what would enhance the community? Remote meeting technology can facilitate these interactions, such that the BHA can ensure that all owners have a voice.

In addition to giving the community a voice, it would be terrific to have more events involving the community as a whole. The BHA has done a good job of offering activities for people to join. A broader focus on community events would help bring us together. Finding ways to celebrate Bald Head can involve young and old, residents and visitors and all the island's organizations such as Old Baldy and the Conservancy. The annual island-wide community picnic and monthly HOWLS are wonderful examples of bringing folks together outside club activities. There is a lot to showcase and celebrate as elements of life on Bald Head. Let's do more of it and link it to our stewardship message.

If you are elected to the Board, what initiatives would you propose and lead to help ensure participation among property owners, especially among members who are on the Island part-time? Volunteerism (I would say involvement) has been a cornerstone of the culture on Bald Head since the earliest residents and remains the backbone of many island organizations and initiatives. People tend to defer participation because they are not 'full-time,' but presence on the island is not always necessary to take on a role. COVID showed us there are plenty of ways to include remote participation. Can BHA evaluate its initiatives and work with other island organizations as well to consider 'remote' opportunities for participation? With that in hand, can we reach out specifically to non-permanent residents and recruit for activities? Let's make it a practice that there is a role for non-permanent residents in most activities and on committees.

Can we better define the non-permanent resident's interest, issues and highlight areas where they want to contribute? When we speak of property owners, it often feels like we are talking solely about permanent residents. Have we tried an outreach to owners not living on the island to create the understanding and opportunity that addresses their availability and specifically their needs?

Lastly, we all have busy lives. Being asked to do one more thing seems a burden. Broadening the pool of people to contribute their thinking and energy needs a face-to-face personal appeal.

How could the BHA Board, the Village Council, BHI Limited and the BHI Clubs better work in tandem to ensure an alignment of respective organizational goals while also implementing collaborative plans for the Island? Yearly, every island organization meets with property owners to present their achievements along with plans for the future. At no point is there a collaborative, strategic view of the island's future growth, challenges, and priorities. Attempts to create such a collective vision have been undertaken three different times since 2005. The latest, most comprehensive view of island needs and wants from the property owners' perspective was delivered in 2017, Vision 2025. With no follow-up, the results of these visioning efforts remain dormant on the shelf.

However, the rationale for an island-wide owner- based planning effort still rings true today...

"The wishes of current property owners must guide how infrastructure, and therefore taxes and other community investments, are made. ... The results may provide a compass for decision making and future Island investments. The goal is to ensure that what attracted property owners to this magical place is preserved, while considering amenities that will contribute to our unique quality of life." (Vision 2025)

The process of capturing input from all property owners (a lot of smart people) has already taken place and been formulated into a vision for the island's future. I would challenge the leadership of all our island organizations to come together for a serious discussion of their views on the need for a strategic plan for the island. Can the recommendations of Vision 2025 serve as a starting point for that discussion? At the operational level, can we establish a periodic process for reviewing plans and collaboratively identifying opportunities for leverage and alignment? The dialogue has to start somewhere.

This is BHA's leadership opportunity.

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What other issues should the BHA Board be discussing and considering? Why are they important? Rather than characterize this as “another” issue, I would summarize my answers by saying that I believe BHA is essential to the continuation of a strong community focus on Bald Head. During the development of the island, BHA has brought order, consistency, and thoughtful preservation of natural habitat. It has become a key information resource to property owners on how to get things done and whom to call. And BHA advocates for property owners, whether full-time or part-time, by keeping them informed regularly of island activities and issues. I would like to see BHA take a leadership role in working with other island entities to craft a strategic vision for Bald Head Island, establishing Community as its core. A number of suggestions in line with this expanded mission have already been expressed above. Without a strong BHA presence, we lose the opportunity to have our collective voice heard.