



TOWN MANAGER POSITION AVAILABLE  
Apply by July 13, 2018

## Welcome to Highland Beach

Nestled between Delray Beach and Boca Raton, Highland Beach is a high-end beachside community located along the scenic A1A highway. It is almost entirely residential—the Delray Sands Resort and John P. O’Grady Realty are the only businesses in the town. Inhabitants live here because of its natural beauty, the outstanding quality of life, and the easy access to virtually anything they could possibly want or need. It is a quiet, peaceful and safe place. Crime is extremely low. The town does not have a single stoplight. The beaches are superb, quiet and relaxing. From March to October, the sands serve as critical nesting grounds for endangered sea turtles to safely lay their eggs. All in all, Highland Beach is laid-back, scenic, charming—a place to slow down, enjoy the beauty



of nature at work, and, on occasion, venture out into the hurly burly of nearby urban Florida.

Most noticeable in Highland Beach is, of course, the beach. Located on a barrier island on the Atlantic Ocean on Florida's southeast coast, Highland Beach sports, soft, welcoming sand, beautiful ocean views, and skies that seem to never end. The Delray Sands Resort capitalizes on that experience with its laid-back coastal elegance. Nearby one can enjoy charter excursions, deep-sea fishing, beachside restaurants, and entertainment venues.

The area has many stunning outdoor attractions, one of the more popular being the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens. This 188.5-acre center for Japanese arts and culture, located in Delray Beach, contains two museum buildings, the Roji-en Japanese Gardens (translated as the Garden of the Drops of Dew), library, gift shop, and a Japanese restaurant. Traditional Japanese festivals are celebrated there several times a year.

A more natural look at the outdoors can be found at the Wakodahatchee Wetlands, similarly located nearby in Delray Beach. This boardwalk is part of the Great Florida Birding Trail, with over 151 species of birds spotted inside, and has gazebos in which to rest and enjoy the view. Lucky visitors may also see turtles, alligators, rabbits, frogs, and racoons. Similarly, the Atlantic Dunes Park offers a boardwalk and a short trail through the dunes—though this path opens up to a serene, quiet beachfront.

For something more urban, ten minutes to the southwest and over a bridge lies the Mizner Park area. Located in downtown Boca Raton, it offers a variety of shopping,

restaurants, and cultural activities (including the Centre for the Arts at Mizner Park, its own amphitheater, and the Boca Raton Museum of Art and Carré d'artistes). To the northwest and over another bridge lies the Atlantic Avenue area of downtown Delray Beach. It is a busy thoroughfare—a hopping place—that offers antique shops, galleries, boutiques, jewelry selections, and many excellent restaurants and clubs. Thus, even if Highland Beach is a quiet, residential area, entertainment is never too far away.

Highland Beach is very safe to live in—it was recently ranked the second safest place in Florida—and the crime rate is far well below national average. Its neighborhoods are well-kept and a wide variety of housing is available, especially condominiums. Buying is not, however, inexpensive. The median price of homes in Highland Beach currently is \$625,000. Condos often sell for less but can be pricey (\$300,000 to \$1.6 million). Single family detached homes start at approximately \$1.2 million. It should be noted that the Town Manager is not required to live in the community and many very attractive and less costly alternatives lie a few minutes away on the mainland.

Education opportunities here are ample and high quality. Niche grades the Suncoast Community High School as the second best public high school in Florida, citing the school's rigorous courses and the AP, AICE, and Dual Enrollment courses offered. The Alexander W. Dreyfoos Jr. High School is ranked fourth and is considered one of the top public arts and academic high schools in the country. It has 100% AP participation rate and regularly appears on national 'top high schools' listings. Those are just two examples. The School District of Palm Beach County is the tenth largest public school district in the United States



with over 180 schools and all are held to high standards.

Nearby opportunities for higher education include, among others, Lynn University, Palm Beach State College, Broward College, Florida Atlantic University (FAU), Florida International University (FIU), Nova Southeastern University (NSU), and the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale. Both FAU and FIU rank among the nation's top 300 universities.

West Palm Beach lies 30 minutes to north and offers the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, CityPlace (a mixed use development with many attractions) and a variety of other opportunities for entertainment. Fort Lauderdale lies about 30 minutes south and offers an array of entertainment for visitors—the Museum of Discovery and Science, the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, various state parks, the Riverwalk, and the Museum of Art.

Sports fans will find a lot to enjoy here. About an hour south is Miami and the home to the NFL's Dolphins, the NBA's Heat, and the MLB's Marlins. The NHL's Panthers are located an hour southwest in Sunrise.

Highland Beach is served by two major airports, making travel convenient and accessible. Palm Beach International Airport lies 20 miles to the north, and Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International 30 miles to the south. A little



further away is Miami International, which is a major gateway to Central and South America. Residents can also enjoy easy access to the world’s two busiest cruise ports—the Port of Miami and Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale.

What makes Highland Beach truly special, though, is the people here. For the most part, they are engaged in a positive way and live here because of the lifestyle and amenities.

All in all, it is not hard to see what makes Highland Beach so special. It is a relaxing place isolated from the hustle and bustle of urban life, yet with all the advantages in near reach. It is simply a great place to live, work, play, and relax.

**HISTORY**

Highland Beach’s early history can be traced to the 1200s and 1300s when the Caloosa Tribe inhabited the area. Later, in the 1500 and 1600s, pirates and buccaneers found safety from storms and pursuit here while searching for gold-laden galleons. The 1800s saw an entirely new guest: mailmen, carrying parcels from Palm Beach to Miami and resting in refuge houses along the way.

Progress truly began in 1896 when Henry Flagler completed the Florida East Coast Railway. People traveled in greater numbers and cut back the swamps and jungles. As civilization flourished, Highland Beach incorporated in 1949 so the community would have the ability to govern itself, protect its lifestyle, and build a water treatment plant—neighboring communities were not amenable to sharing their fresh water. “Highland Beach” was chosen as the new community’s name, because the land was 20 to 25 feet above high tide.

As time passed, Highland Beach continued to grow and flourish as the upscale residential area it is today.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

To understand Highland Beach, one must know five things. First, the Census Bureau estimated the median 2016 annual household income for the community at

Table 1: Highland Beach Demographics

Estimated Population: 3,800			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	95.3%	0 to 15	3.4%
African American	2.9%	15 to 25	4.9%
Asian	0.9%	25 to 45	7.3%
Native American	0.0%	45 to 65	31.4%
Two or More Races	0.9%	65 to 85	44.2%
Total	100%	Over 85	8.8%
Hispanic (all races)	4.4%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	96.8%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	57.9%

Other Statistics	
Median Age-Highland Beach	65.8
Median Age-U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

\$100,063. For the United States as a whole, it was \$57,617. Second, many of the residents (approximately 80%) are retirees and most of these are from Connecticut, New

York, and New Jersey. It should be noted, however, that the community is trending younger with more young families. Third, housing is dominated by condominiums (estimated at 80%). Fourth, the population is highly seasonal. While the Census Bureau estimates 3,800 permanent residents, the town also has over 4,000 seasonal residents who arrive for the winter months. Finally, approximately 87% of the occupied housing units are owner occupied. Other useful demographic data is contained in Table I on page 4.

## CLIMATE

Highland Beach's climate is considered to be that of a tropical rainforest. From June to September, rainfall is heavy and frequent, though typically relatively short in duration. The seasons are not markedly different in temperature, with highs of around 75°F degrees in the winter and 90°F in the summer. The low temperatures range from around 57°F degrees in the winter to the mid-70's in the summer.

Hurricanes do strike Florida from time to time, especially in August and September, though they are relatively rare and their impact is limited. If you are more than 50 miles from the hurricane's center, it will probably not materially impact you.

It should also be noted that a Category I hurricane produces winds from 75 to 95 miles per hour—not much faster than we routinely drive our cars.

## GEOGRAPHY

Highland Beach is located on a barrier island that lies 4 miles south of Delray Beach and 6 miles east of Boca

Raton. The town has a total area of 1.1 square miles, of which 0.5 square miles is land and 0.6 square miles is water. On average, Highland Beach is 13 feet above sea level.

## COMMERCE

As noted, Highland Beach is primarily a residential community, with two businesses lying within the boundaries. The first is the Delray Sands Resort, formerly the Holiday Inn, and the second is John P. O'Grady Realty. Both businesses have been operating for decades among the residents. Inhabitants who work typically commute to other locations.

## THE GOVERNMENT

Highland Beach's government consists of a five-member Town Commission. Commissioners are elected at large and to staggered three-year terms. Commissioners can serve up to two terms. The next election will occur in 2019 when one commission seat will be considered. In 2020, the Mayor's and one other commissioner's seat will be up for election. The following year, in 2021, the Vice Mayor and the last commission seat will be voted on.

The Commission appoints the Town Manager, who oversees daily affairs and staff. They also appoint the Town Attorney, the Town Clerk, and the Police Chief. As a practical matter, the Clerk and Chief report to the Town Manager for day-to-day matters.

The Town provides most standard municipal services. General administration, finance, police, library, and water services are provided by in-house staff. Through contract,

the town provides fire/rescue (with Delray Beach), code enforcement and building inspection (with SAFEBuilt although that contract is ending), and solid waste (via contract with Waste Management, Inc.). The town does not have a parks and recreation function as it has no parks.

Highland Beach's 2018 adopted budget is \$17,840,497, with a general fund budget of \$13,675,400. It has a staff of 37 full-time employees, 12 part-time employees, and 5 elected officials. The town has two unions.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Highland Beach is a wonderful community, and financially sound. That does not, however, mean it does not have challenges. In fact, the next manager will be very busy.

The first and foremost challenge will be to conduct a thorough review of town operations. It has been a long time since the town had a professionally trained and experienced manager. The result is at least some of its practices are outdated and not as efficient as they could be. Part of the review will be to work with the Town Attorney to rewrite the Town's codes. For example, parking is addressed in 11 different places.

Second, an immediate concern is the town is replacing its building and code enforcement contract staff with in-house personnel. The effort is underway but may not be complete by the time the new manager starts work.

Third, the town is pursuing a number of infrastructure projects which are in various stages of development. Most important is State Road A1A which runs through the

center of the community and is its only access and egress. As a state highway, the town needs to work with the Florida Department of Transportation to address: beautification, drainage (it regularly floods), and crosswalk signalization (Highland Beach's residents are athletic at all ages and like to walk, run and bicycle. Protecting their safety is paramount.). It is likely any solution will require some town funding and a referendum because all town bonds require approval of the town's voters.

Fourth, the residents are passionate about their beach and concerned with its erosion. Consequently, the town is looking at opportunities to work with consultants and others to determine what can be done to reduce any further erosion and restore the beach to what it was. Again it is likely that a bond issue and a referendum will be required.

Fifth, the town is reviewing its contract with Delray Beach for fire/rescue services. Delray has requested an inordinately large increase in what Highland Beach pays it for the coming fiscal year and the town is reluctant to agree.

The sixth is civility. The general population wants it but it does not always exist at Commission meetings, particularly with some of the residents. Hopefully, the new Town Manager will be able to assist in bringing people together.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Highland Beach is seeking an outstanding leader and strong manager who is energetic, highly motivated, proactive, disciplined, open minded, well organized, confident and polished. The individual will be achievement oriented

with a “can do” attitude, but also friendly and approachable. The ideal candidate will work in tandem with the Town Commission to resolve issues and improve the town’s already outstanding quality of life. The individual will be someone who treats everyone the same, keeps the elected officials well informed, and presents them with a recommendation as well as options. He/she will earn their trust and be a valued advisor. The Manager will make his/her opinion known (in a polite and diplomatic way) and not be a “yes” person. The individual will be visionary yet down to earth and practical. He/she will politically astute with sound judgment and not politically involved. The individual will be open, honest, possess the utmost integrity, and believe strongly in transparency. A sense of humor is a plus.

As one of the faces of the town’s government, the Town Manager will have outstanding communications skills and will realize listening is a critical part of communicating. While Highland Beach is a small town, it is a high-end community and residents expect the best from their interactions with staff. Excellent customer service will be extremely important to the Manager. He/she will lead by example, know how to work with people, and how to resolve problems in a timely manner. Residents are not always right but they do deserve to have their concerns heard and for the town to make an effort to resolve them.

The Town Manager will be an exceptional manager. The ideal candidate will be someone who is fair and who will focus on creating a team, on building camaraderie, and on improving morale. He/she will delegate and empower while encouraging an environment that inspires growth and creativity. The individual will recognize talent, mentor

and coach that talent, and help people grow in their jobs. He/she will not be a micromanager, but will have high expectations, give assignments, set performance parameters, and expect results on time. The Manager will expect to be kept informed and will hold employees accountable. When a problem arises, he/she will resolve it quickly. Being that Highland Beach is a small government, the Manager should expect to be a working manager. He/she will have to roll their sleeves up and work hard, often shoulder to shoulder with staff.

The individual will be a strategic thinker and planner. Strong analytical skills will be important and the next manager will have a healthy sense of impatience with government processes. The individual will be relentless seeking for ways to improve operations and efficiency. He/she will be savvy technologically and realize the importance of incorporating modern business practices and information systems in the daily workflow.

The ideal candidate will be comfortable in the community and interact extremely well with the public. Outstanding people skills will be critical. The individual will not be someone who sits behind his/her desk all day and directs traffic. Rather he/she will spend time with residents listening to their concerns and actively working towards finding ways to make Highland Beach an even more sought after place to live.

The ideal candidate will have a proven track record in finance—particularly in budgeting and grants—and expense reduction. The Manager will understand the importance of intergovernmental relations and be good at working with other governments. He/she will also realize

that the environment is a key component of what makes Highland Beach the place it is and will work diligently to protect it. Experience in a coastal community with coastal issues such as emergency management and sea level rise is important, although not critical.

The ideal candidate will have at least five years' experience as a City or Town Manager. The individual is expected to have at least a bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, urban planning or a related field. While not an absolute requirement, a Master's Degree is strongly preferred as is being accredited as an ICMA Credentialed Manager.

#### COMPENSATION

Salary will depend on qualifications and experience although the Town expects to pay between \$130,000 and \$170,000. The Commission prefers to pay at the lower end of the salary range but will pay at the top end for a truly exceptional candidate. Benefits are and include free healthcare for the employee and family with a very good plan. Retirement is provided through the Florida Retirement System.

#### RECENT TOWN MANAGERS

The two most recent Town Managers were not formally trained professionals but internal candidates (namely the Town Clerk). Both were



very capable Clerks. The more recent had her employment terminated. The Town is committed to hiring and retaining a highly qualified and experienced Town Manager.

#### RESIDENCY

The Town Manager is not required to live within the Town's boundaries.

#### INTERNAL CANDIDATES

No internal or preferred candidates exist. The Town truly wants the best manager it can get!

#### HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to [Recruit29@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit29@cb-asso.com) by July 13th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or David Collier at (772) 220-4320.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Florida Public Records Act, all applicants are subject to disclosure upon receipt. As a practical matter, we do not expect extensive coverage until after semi-finalists are named on August 15th.

#### THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between July 14th and July 27th. Interviews and a reception will likely be held on July 31st with a selection very shortly thereafter.

#### OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Town of Highland Beach is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply. A veteran's preference will be awarded per Florida law.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the Town visit:

<http://highlandbeach.us/>