

SIESTA KEY ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 5, 2010

St Boniface Church, Parish Hall

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Ramirez called the meeting to order. A quorum was present: Ron Flynn, Deet Jonker, Ann Kaplan, Joyce Kouba, Catherine Luckner, Bob Tripp, Peter van Roekens, Joe Volpe, Bob Waechter, Gayle Wardner. Excused: Matthew Burnett, Paul van Deventer.

2. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The SKA Board voted unanimously to endorse Nora Patterson for County Commissioner. Joe Volpe, new Publicity Chair, will issue a press release.

3. MINUTES – Joyce Kouba

The July minutes were approved as amended.

4. LIFEGUARD REPORT – J. R. Ayers

- 8 major first aids in July
- 215,000 estimated visitors to Siesta Beach in July
- The Siesta Beach Junior Lifeguard Program completed with 38 participants. It was a huge success; 100 participants signed up for next year. Peter injected that the SK Chamber and Village Association contributed for the boards along with SKA. Commissioner Patterson reported that the now defunct County Sports Committee donated their remaining funds to purchase additional boards.

5. GUEST SPEAKER

- Commissioner Patterson provided an update on County beach projects. In the last couple of years, the County purchased two pieces of property specifically to provide beach parking. The first was the RV Park at Turtle Beach, which has remained an RV park. Second, two plots of land were purchased adjacent to Access 7. County purchases give public access all the way to the water. The latter site is a nesting site for endangered birds, so the public access will be closed during nesting season though parking will be open.
- Jessica Ritter, Sr. Planner with County Parks and Recreation, reported on the Beach Access 7 Concept Plan. After purchasing the property, the discovery that the property is a significant nesting site for snowy plovers has become a major factor in the Concept Plan. Key issues in developing the access include: preserving the dune nesting habitat, providing parking, preserving the Gulf view, and consideration of preservation of a historic cottage. Jessica has been meeting with Environmentally Sensitive Lands, Fish and Wildlife, Audubon, and neighboring property owners. Siesta Gulf View Condo Association has expressed concern for a restroom, limit of access hours, preservation of wildlife habitat, litter and moving existing public access. The

access has been closed since May 14th due to nesting birds. The Audubon Chick Checker program is monitoring the nests. Volunteers have removed invasive vegetation. Signage has been developed to educate the public about out nesting shore birds. Additions to the historical cottage will be removed to provide parking spaces. Jessica will meet with Environmentally Sensitive Lands and Parks on September 9th. Target is for the draft concept plan(available on the County web site) to be presented to the BOCC on September 29th.

- Curtis Smith, Project Manager with County Parks and Recreation, reported that a contract for design has been issued for the Siesta Beach improvement project. The design team has been meeting since May. Curtis is meeting with all service providers to ensure that the design meets their needs. One member of the design team is studying low impact development alternatives that could apply to the project. The team is also investigating a restroom design that will allow cleaning half of the facility while half is available for use. Target for presentation to the BOCC is December 8.
- A design firm has been selected for the Turtle Beach improvement project. The County is working on a budget. Permits are ready for dock improvement.
- Missing “Lights Out for Turtles” signs are being replaced. Gayle inquired about the possibility of a public service announcement regarding lights out.

6. PUBLIC/AUDIENCE COMMENT

- Bonnie Samuelson, on behalf of Audubon, provided an overview of newly acquired information about shore bird activity on Siesta Key. The Suncoast Shorebird Alliance was formed to survey what birds are doing on the beaches from Tampa to Cayo Costa and to consider management of the shoreline habitat. Data indicates that a tremendous amount of human disturbance has negatively impacted shore bird breeding. Insufficient offspring are surviving to fledgling state to sustain existence of several endangered species. Siesta Key provides habitat for endangered species including snowy plovers and red knots. Through monitoring and management of nesting birds, fledgling survival rate has increased significantly. Volunteers now monitor during beach nourishment projects and migration.
- Bob Hite, with the Committee for Jobs Now, provided information about the upcoming ballot initiative to give County Commissioners the option to grant tax exemptions for building and equipment taxes for businesses that move to or expand in Sarasota County. The purpose of the initiative is to increase jobs by being competitive with other areas in attracting new businesses. Businesses would continue to pay other taxes. The SKA Board voted to endorse the upcoming ballot initiative.
- Cheryl Gaddie, with the SK Chamber, reported that the Chamber was working on next year’s fireworks campaign. The Crystal Classic Sand Sculpture Contest has received necessary permits and will be held November 17th to 21st. The contest will benefit Mote Marine. The SK Village Association has signed a contract for Village maintenance.

7. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BEACHS – Ron Flynn

"No Parking" signs have been posted on both sides of Turtle Beach Road.

INLET MANAGEMENT – Peter van Roekens

- The IMP was presented to the BCC on 7/27/10. It represents work that has been going on since 2005 and has cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The result is a request to spend another 400-600K to provide more information about the effects of the inlets on the beaches and to prepare for a request to the state for permitting which will take another 2-3 years and additional funding. As a result of the meeting the County Administrator was directed to proceed with the following:
 1. *Provide guidance to develop a scope for a Coastal Monitoring Program including a reference to Policy 1.2.3. of the Environmental Element of the Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan.* The cost of this would be ~ \$210K per year for between 2-3 years. Peter has several million-depth soundings in Big Pass with another several thousand in New Pass. The benefit of this additional monitoring in Big Pass is unclear.
 2. *Provide guidance for the expanded additional channel marking.* Here the benefit would not necessarily be more markers but quicker movement of existing markers in Big Pass. The Coast Guard appears to be responsible for New Pass markers. Unless New Pass is dredged again this would seem to be a difficult assignment.
 3. *Identify potential partnering for channel construction/maintenance with the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND), the City of Sarasota, the Town of Longboat Key, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), local Stakeholders, and Members of the Boating Community present this date; to provide a report at a future Board meeting on the timing and costs associated with each Step.* A good idea as we need to identify the cost/benefit tradeoffs.
 4. *Defer developing a scope for a future maintenance-dredging event.* Until funding sources are available, this is good to defer.
- Peter reported earlier that he thought that some dredging in the outer shoal and then depositing the sand on the northern part of Siesta Key might protect that part of the beach and run relatively low risk. What he learned at the meeting was that the presentation dealt with a scientific view of what could be done with little or no regard to the financing. It appears that there will be no money to dredge the outer shoal and deposit the sand on northern Siesta Key. This same sand if dumped on Lido could have some funding from County and State sources. Dredging in New Pass could have these same funds plus Federal money.
- The other element that was discussed was the potential limited use of certain types of coastal structures to help improve the stability of the placed material as well as to control and direct the natural bypassing. Specifically jetties were mentioned. Also there have been discussions of semi-permeable groins.
- NOAA did a report in the 90's about the shoreline changes induced by channel construction and maintenance. They specifically mention New Pass and the erosion caused to the south beaches on Longboat and Lido. Refer to:
<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/beachnourishment/html/geo/channels.htm>

MAGAZINE RACKS – Catherine Luckner

John Lally, Code Enforcement officer, will speak to questions regarding violations and current status of the magazine racks on the Key. This issue may present an opportunity to coordinate with SKVA and SK Chamber on a new ordinance. Sarasota Ordinance 98-10 will sunset March 1, 2011. Review of the County Ordinance on News Racks (Sec 98-10) showed conflicts regarding management of the news racks, including lack of oversight by specific vendors, placement/locations, and permitting. John has gathered input from the SK Chamber, SKVA, and the County Attorney. The opportunity to write a new ordinance for SKOD is optimal and timely. Primary issues will be:

1. Funding of standardized modular racks (high cost of capital expenditure) v. individualized racks
2. Agreement on fixed locations for such racks (rather than anywhere within current code)
3. Oversight needed by external vendors or maintenance contract. Currently, no one is managing the condition and placement of these racks. Many do not comply with the County regulations e.g., phone contacts of owner, physical placement and physical condition.
4. The County Attorney indicates current law does not cover content except as "free speech".
5. The ordinance does not currently provide a time limit 'turn-around' for court/hearing officer to determine legality of rack if the owner contests the citation.
6. Permitting regulation and monitoring of compliance.

CODE ENFORCEMENT – John Lally

- Code enforcement is now "Community Standards," and is managed by Andrea Lipstein.
- John felt that lack of complaints indicates that the sound control measures recently put in place seem to be working. However, Bob Waechter voiced some concerns.
- Illegal rentals are an increasing problem and are extremely time consuming. Currently, 14 cases are being prepared for special magistrate; 18 illegal rentals are under investigation.
- The newspaper rack ordinance sunsets March 1. Siesta groups would like to move to modular boxes. John is working on proposals that might include permits and rack zones. The ordinance must be changed to accommodate modular racks. The ordinance does not cover private property. Newspaper racks are not considered signs.
- Gilligan's noise citation has been continued to August 20th.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

NOMINATING/BOARD DEVELOPMENT – Gayle Wardner (No report)

ZONING – Lourdes Ramirez

- A Gulf Shores resident put posts and a gate on County property and was instructed to remove them.
- Nancy Burns was granted approval to build on her property.

MEMBERSHIP – Deet Jonker (No report)

9. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Deet reported that cars were being towed from the Wachovia parking area.

10. ADJOURN – President Ramirez adjourned the meeting. .

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Kouba
Secretary, Siesta Key Association