

# **SIESTA KEY ASSOCIATION MEETING**

**Thursday, February 2, 2017**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Harold Ashby called the meeting to order. A quorum was present: Harold Ashby, Joyce Kouba, Catherine Luckner, Bob Miller and Joe Volpe.

## **MINUTES**

Joyce Kouba

January minutes were unanimously approved.

Harold introduced newly-elected SKA Director Gene Kusekoski.

## **ANNUAL BREAKFAST MEETING**

Harold announced the SKA Annual Breakfast Meeting on Saturday, March 4 at 8 a.m. in the St. Boniface Community Center. Members receive two free tickets to the breakfast, but must reserve seats by sending email to [info@siestaKeyAssociation.com](mailto:info@siestaKeyAssociation.com) or calling 941 364-4880 with name and number of people in party. Cost to non-members is \$20. Join SKA at the breakfast for \$30.

## **COMMUNITY REPORTS**

### **Sheriff's Office**

Sgt. Jason Mruczek

Sgt. Mruczek reported that the Sheriff's office is preparing for spring break. Extra officers will be on duty and the mounted patrol will be out at night. For non-emergency help, call 316-1201. Sea Tow should be towing the beached sailboat shortly. Can the Sheriff change the lights so that traffic will not be tied up on US 41 when the bridge is open? Sgt, Mruczek will pass the inquiry to the Coast Guard. Several people asked about speeding and signs on roads and were referred to the Sarasota Traffic Advisory Council. People have been allowing their dogs to run on the beach. Dogs are not allowed on the beach.

## **GUEST SPEAKER**

Commissioner Nancy Detert

We all know we have a paradise; the hard part is how do we keep it. Commissioner Detert is happy to be locally implementing programs that she fought for at the State level. She helped secure money for beach renourishment and is now seeing how that money is being used. She is happy to be helping to implement the Guardianship program that she fought for. Commissioner believes that sand and water will escalate to major issues. She is not a supporter of the Siesta Promenade or other projects where developers purchase property and request zoning changes solely for increased profits. Decisions should be made based on what is best for the community and kind the of community we want to live in. That is part of protecting our part of paradise. Commissioner Detert opened the floor to questions.

Could you address the request to change the Comprehensive Plan to allow increased density and intensity of use to permit larger hotels on barrier islands? Commissioner Detert has not formed an opinion on the issue as yet. She always considers the integrity and past performance of developers.

Rob Sax, resident of Marina del Sol, questioned the validity of the traffic study for the Promenade. The Developer does the traffic study, but the County will review the study for validity. Commissioner Detert said Sarasota should be able to pick what we want to be developed and not just allow companies to put a gas station and hamburger stand on every corner.

What is your perspective on Big Pass? Commissioner Detert felt that the County has no standing in the issue and the City has a right to choose their project. Dave Patton expressed concern that Whispering Sands will lose their pool if the Big Pass dredging project continues. Ken Larsen questioned why not dredge Midnight Pass. Commissioner Detert felt that the State would have cooperated on that proposal if the City had requested it.

Why can't Lido replenish the same way Turtle Beach did? Offshore sand is becoming scarce. Miami is proposing shipping sand from the Bahamas.

Mike Consentino injected that what is most important to Siesta Key is to keep to the density and intensity limitation in the Comprehensive Plan.

## **BOARD REPORTS**

## **Membership**

Bob Miller

At present SKA is ahead of last year's drive. Please renew your membership for 2017 as soon as possible. SKA needs your support when we advocate for Siesta Key. Membership is \$30. The new membership form has space for donations to the newly-formed Siesta Key Environmental Defense Fund. This fund will initially be used for appealing the Big Pass Dredge project. Donations can also be made at [skdef.org](http://skdef.org).

## **Bicycle Safety Initiative**

Harold Ashby

SKA asked the County to install markings on roadways to indicate areas of shared bikes and autos. These markings have been approved for Ocean Blvd.

North of Treasure Boat, grass is growing into the bike lane. Send info using the County See-Click-Fix application to request cleanup. The SKA web site has a link.

## **Environmental Report – Big Pass Dredging**

Catherine Luckner

SKA, SOSS2, and Florida Dept. of Fish and Wildlife submitted administrative appeals to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) appealing their intent to issue a permit to dredge Big Pass between Lido and Siesta Key to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). SKA's appeal has been accepted but not scheduled.

Catherine believes that it has not been scheduled because SKA also filed a Verified Complaint for injunctive relief stating that if FDEP issues the permit, it would violate Florida State law. The City has 30 days to fix the problems. The Comprehensive Plan prohibits dredge and fill activities in the Gulf, except to maintain existing channels, unless approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The Sarasota City Comprehensive Plan states that hardening (e.g. groins) are prohibited except for an emergency. The FDEP has asked what SKA wants. FDEP as the permitting agent can refuse to go further with the permit until the problems are addressed. The State circuit court has priority. If the State court issue is resolved, the administrative appeal may not be needed. More information should be available in the next few days. Watch the SKA web site for

updates. SKA has been drawing on its existing legal fund, but due to current legal activity, donations are needed.

An attendee asked about the Sarasota City manager's recent statements in the newspapers that SKA would not meet with them. SKA has been meeting with various organizations, including many Sarasota City departments, since this project was first announced. SKA funded and held a public meeting where the USACE presented the project to a large gathering from Lido Key, Bay Island and Siesta Key. Catherine said that when Mr. Barwin recently called, she provided a choice of days to meet but he never set a meeting.

### **Siesta Promenade Project**

Harold Ashby

The County approved a work plan for the studies necessary for the CAP plan. The independence of required studies was questioned. Under a CAP plan, the project could be denied based on traffic concerns. This is no longer possible with a straight rezone. Sura Kochman stated that the County Commission is proceeding in violation of state law because the boundary has not been determined. The developer could apply for straight commercial. SKA will oppose any project that will increase intensity or density of traffic on Siesta Key.

### **Comprehensive Plan Change for Hotels**

Joe Volpe

The proposed Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan change applies to Commercial General(CG) zoned property on barrier islands. Siesta Key has three CG properties of sufficient size to accommodate a large hotel, one site being in the Village. SKA invited the petitioner to make a presentation at a monthly meeting.

### **SKUA Update**

Bob Luckner

Decommission of the waste treatment plant is continuing on schedule. Booster station construction has begun. Fresh water and sewer pipes have been pulled under the Intracoastal. The pipe lines surface at South View Drive and will be bored to Midnight Pass. After school is out, Shadow Lawn will be periodically shutdown for pipeline construction. A temporary light will be installed at Beach

Road to handle diverted traffic. The project appears to be on schedule and should be complete by the end of the year.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

FDOT will conduct a meeting concerning I-75 improvements at Bee Ridge. They plan to convert the exit to a partial diverging diamond intersection. The meeting is Feb 9 at 2-3:30pm or 5:30-7pm at the Realtor Association of Sarasota and Manatee, 2320 Cattleman Road.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Harold Ashby adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Kouba

Secretary, Siesta Key Association

**Annual SKA breakfast meeting is Saturday, March 4, 2017 at 8:00 am.**