

SIESTA KEY ASSOCIATION MEETING

Thursday, January 7, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Michael Shay called the meeting to order. A quorum was present: Beverly Arias, Deet Jonker, Joyce Kouba, Catherine Luckner, Dan Lundy, Michael Shay, Robert Stein, and Joe Volpe. December minutes were approved.

COMMUNITY REPORTS

Sheriff's Office

- Sgt. Jason Mruczek reported that two cars had been stolen on the Key. One was a Hummer which was recovered the next day. The other was a rental car which has not yet been recovered. Residents, who see anything suspicious, should call the Sheriff non-emergency number: 941.316.1201.
- Lt. Kaspar thanked SKA for their donation for needy families.
- Joe Volpe stated he had received calls about cars going "airborne" over the humpback bridge.

Commissioner Maio

Commissioner Maio said that he attended the opening of the second new Fire House built in the last 14 months. The County is growing. Two additional Fire Houses will be opened in April. He reminded the audience that a referendum will be held in November 2016. A proposal for new public safety facilities will be on that ballot.

GUEST SPEAKER

Beach Improvements Update

Brad Gaubatz, AIA, LEED AP

Facilities Manager, Public Works – Capital Projects for Sarasota County

- Siesta Beach Park has been 2 years in construction. Of the 21.5 million spent, 17.5 were for construction costs.
- The Park's Grand Opening takes place on February 20th, and promises to be a festive occasion! The new park features pre-cast picnic shelters, a new east pavilion, children's play area, new tennis courts with pickle ball, a new Public Safety Building with a greater than 180 degree view of the park and a first aid clinic. A paver esplanade with seat wall runs the entire length of the park.
- An impressively-efficient County Staff and General Contractor were able to complete 7 of 8 things on the Commissioners' "wish list". The only thing on that list not completed is a covered shelter at the Maintenance Yard. Gaubatz said they may still be able to build this at a later date.
- Amazingly, while deep in the throes of construction, Siesta Key Beach was named # 1 in the nation and 14th in the world! It was an impressive that Sarasota County was able to keep the park open and operational during the entire period of construction. The County took a 1950's era park and brought it up to today's standards. Furthermore, they pulled off this retrofit without going over budget.
- Bond funding for the project is being paid off with general tax revenue. Some tourist development monies were also included, since the beach serves tourists. Bob Luckner pointed out that some 15 million dollars of the funds are generated from the penny tax.
- When asked about Security Cameras, Gaubatz said the County decided to provide conduits should they want to add cameras at a later date. Cameras need to be monitored, meaning that the operational cost of running cameras is higher than the actual cost of equipment. Nonetheless, there is a beach camera in place.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Drive

Beverly Arias reported that the membership drive is underway. Deet Jonker reminded everyone that the organization saves time and money when members

join on-line instead of by mail. Go to www.SiestaKeyAssociation.com to join, or leave a message at 941.364.4880 and you will receive a callback. Membership is \$30. The more members SKA has, the more attention they will get from local government. Each member is entitled to 2 tickets for the March 5th Annual Member Breakfast.

Environmental - Big Pass

- Catherine Luckner reported that on October 6, 2015, a second request (RAI2) was sent by Florida DEP to the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) to respond to a list of questions. The comments of SKA continue to be included in each RAI to the COE. If the Corps does not respond to all questions from DEP on that list before April 7, 2016 (6-month deadline) their application may be dismissed. The Corps can reapply or ask to be extended. Delay is our friend as it provides time for continued input and a design which would be 'NO HARM' yet provide help for our neighbors on Lido.
- Joe Volpe said both Bob and Catherine Luckner have spent hundreds of hours on the issue of Big Pass. The room broke into appreciative applause for their extraordinary service.

OLD BUSINESS

- Dave Thomas reported that the mobile boat speed limit sign has not yet been put up by the Sherriff's Office. Michael Shay encouraged the speaker to contact Lt. Kaspar. Dave will contact to determine what may be done.
- Another member of the audience reported that dolphins have been coming into the Grand Canal in addition to manatees. It is important that all boats observe "No Wake" in the Grand Canal.
- Who is responsible for maintenance of the canals? The County has a program for dredging the canal, with homes along the canal sharing the costs for dredging. For more information, call the County at 941.861.5000. Mangroves require Natural Reserve Permits in order to be trimmed.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Village Craft Fair is February 17-18. The road will not be closed.
- Siesta Fiesta will be April 9-10. The road will not be closed.
- Harold Ashby asked SKA to join in a Bicycle Safety Awareness program. This is particularly important to Siesta Key because we have many tourists riding bikes that may cycle only infrequently and not be aware of cycling rules of the road. He pointed out that rules for bicycles are the same as for cars. Michal Shay invited Mr. Ashby to send a description of his ideas for the Board to consider.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Kouba

Secretary, Siesta Key Association

SKA minutes reflect the column written by Diana Colson and published in the Siesta Sand newspaper with additions by the Association secretary.

Next SKA monthly meeting is Thursday, 2/4/2016 at 4:30 pm.