

## SIESTA KEY ASSOCIATION MEETING, November, 2015

**Michael Shay** called the meeting to order. October Minutes were approved.

### Community Reports - Sheriff's Office

- **Sgt. Jason Mruzek** said there was an increase in vehicle burglaries at the Public Beach. Most vandalized cars were unlocked. Sheriff's Office is keeping their eyes on a couple of people of interest. He urged citizens to keep their cars locked, and to keep possessions out of plain view. If you see suspicious persons, call the Sheriff's Office.
- An audience member asked about people speeding through The Village in the early morning. Sgt. Mruzek said speed enforcement would be set up in the area, and violators issued warnings. He also asked people to get the license numbers of offenders. Call 941.365.TAGS, and Sheriff's Office will send a letter telling the offender that someone had complained about their vehicle.
- Another audience member requested that a Reader Board be set up on the Grand Canal to remind boaters that it is a slow-speed, no-wake boating area.
- Another audience member asked about the NO FISHING signs on the Hump-Back Bridge, the one that connects the City to the County. She noticed dozens of fishing lines were caught on nearby power lines. Sgt. Mruzek said he would look into the situation.

### MAIN SPEAKER — Laird S. Wreford, Coastal Initiative Manager, Environmental Protection Division, spoke on the subjects of *Turtle Beach Re-nourishment and Park Renovations*.

- **Laird Wreford** reported that Re-Nourishment was scheduled for early 2016. He said: "The project has been challenging, ambitious, and rewarding. It is something we have needed. Happily, fortunately, our beautiful Siesta Key Beach is the opposite of eroding. The reason for that is the presence of Point of Rocks, which acts as a barrier for sand movement."
- Sand piles up north of Point of Rocks. However, the area south of Point of Rocks—including Turtle Beach—is sand starved. What makes the situation worse was the 1983 closing of Midnight Pass. When Midnight Pass was open and flowing, Siesta did not have the same rate of erosion. However, Casey Key was very much sand starved. The 1983 closing of Point of Rocks made Casey Key fat and happy, but served to make Turtle Beach sand starved.
- Wreford told of The Good News and The Bad News. He is delighted by the fact that we were able to secure state permits in less than 18 months! The Federal Government usually waits until the State issues their permits, then within 2-4 weeks, issues Federal Permits. Had this happened, we would have been permitted in January of 2015 and immediately started pumping sand. (We cannot re-nourish the beach during Turtle Nesting Season, May 1 to October 1.) However, obtaining the Federal Permit ended up taking 10 months because of the Red Knot Nesting Bird, newly listed as an endangered species. Furthermore, the Sea Turtle Nesting rule was suddenly declared to be expired. These two endangered species issues that had to be worked through, hence the 10-month delay.
- Wreford was glad to say we now have our Federal Permits. This launches a flurry of work that has to be done within a very short period of time before Turtle Nesting Season starts. Construction will begin in January, and will have to be completed by the end of April. However, there is still one last issue that could derail the project: if Construction bids came in way beyond budget, everything would have to be refigured. Bids are opened Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of November, and they will find out whether bids are within budget.

- Next comes the briefing of the County Commission. On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) will bring a request to establish a public meeting for establishing the Assessment District. People living within the affected area will receive invitations to attend that public meeting.
- December 9<sup>th</sup> marks the last County Commission Meeting for 2015. By December 9, EPD will have negotiated a tentative contract with construction services. An Amendment to the Capital Budget will be required, with a commercial borrow necessary to supply the dollars.
- In January EPD would start the Re-Nourishment Project, pushing the Turtle Beach waterline back another 140-180 feet.
- Wreford reports that they have found enough sand not only for this Re-Nourishment, but also for the next one. (The state allows a 15-year permit.) Sarasota would do another Re-Nourishment 8-10 years from now. We now have 3 borrow sites having sand compatible with the sand on Turtle Beach. These sites are all 8-10 miles out. Only a certain number of seaworthy vessels can go that far, pick up sand, and spew it back out near the beach.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **Big Pass Dredge Project:**

- **Bob Stein** reported, and Laird Wreford supplied additional information. The Atkins Report has been received by the City of Sarasota. The best outcome would be to provide opportunity for the City and the Army Corps of Engineers to clarify issues identified as concerns by the Atkins Report. The report stated that if certain work had indeed been completed, it had not been sufficiently clarified. The report has now been sent to the state. The next step is permitting. Bob Stein mentioned that the groins in Lido Park could cause potential damage. The Atkins Report raised the issue that City and Army Corps need to make some kind of contingency plan in case things start to go wrong. Funds need to be put aside should damage happen.

#### **Siesta Key Focus Group:**

- **Michael Shay** talked about the Siesta Key Focus Group, to be made up of residents who would decide what people want in terms of best practices at the beach. The first meeting would be on November 13 from 10 am to noon. He is hoping 6-8 people would serve.

#### **Beach Garbage Bag Project:**

- **Michael Shay** said they were trying to get permission from the County for a pilot program to provide a dispenser with bags at one of the beach entrances. The hope was that people walking the beach in the early morning might pick up a bag, and use it to gather rubbish.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Roundabout Proposal at Beach Rd. & Midnight Pass:** There are 3 possible solutions: do nothing; make a roundabout; or make a true right-angle right turn lane. **Bob Stein** said it was safe to say that a majority of respondents were not in favor of a roundabout. To date a decision has not been made.
- **Membership Drive:** **Beverly Arias** said the drive is underway. SKA is encouraging condo people to get their own individual membership. SKA will be sending out e-mail and postal reminders. The most efficient way to process everything is on line.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Crystal Classic is November 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.
- *Light Up the Village Parade* will be November 28. SKA will be in the parade with a fire truck.

**Next SKA monthly meeting is Thursday, 12/3, at 4:30 pm.**