

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 23, 2002**

**PRESIDENT:** Mayor J. J. Beyrouti, Town of Redington Shores  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Mayor Mike Kelly, City of Belleair Beach  
**TREASURER:** Mayor Tom De Cesare, City of Madeira Beach

**CALL TO ORDER.** The meeting of the Barrier Islands Governmental Council, held at the Madeira Beach City Hall, 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida, was called to order by President Beyrouti at 9:05 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: (Voting = V; Alternate 1 = A1; and Alternate 2 = A2)**

Belleair Beach	Mayor Mike Kelly (V)
Belleair Shore	Mayor John Robertson (V)
Clearwater	Commissioner Hoyt Hamilton
Indian Rocks Beach	Commissioner James R. Palamara (V)
Madeira Beach	Mayor Tom De Cesare (V)
No. Redington Beach	Mayor Harold Radcliffe (V)
Redington Beach	Mayor Bob Fontaine (V)
Redington Shores	Mayor J.J. Beyrouti (V)
St. Pete Beach	Commissioner Peter Blank (V)
Treasure Island	Vice-Mayor, Barbara Blush (A1)

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Dan Autrey	Publisher, Tampa Bay Newspaper/Beacon Leader Bee
Rand Baldwin	Governmental Affairs, Southwest Florida Water Management District
Mary Burrell	Tampa Bay Newspaper/Beacon Leader Bee
Peter Blank	Vice-Mayor, St. Pete Beach
Joe Burdette	Government Committee, Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce
Marlene Clausen	Property owner, Indian Shores
Lee Daniel	Assistant Director, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Convention & Visitors Bureau
Robert DiNicola	Mayor, Indian Rocks Beach
Donna Draper	Town Clerk, Town of Redington Shores
Nick Fritsch	Beach Committee, Sand Key Civic Association
Jerry Knight	Commissioner, North Redington Beach
Gay Lancaster	Chief ACA, Pinellas County
Mary Maloof	Mayor, City of Treasure Island
Bill Ockunzzi	Commissioner, Indian Rocks Beach
Linda Fisher	Program Planner, Pinellas Planning Council
Joan Herndon	Councilor, Indian Shores
John R. Leahy, Jr.	Pinellas Suncoast Fire Rescue
Doreen L. Moore	Vice-Mayor, Madeira Beach
Vince Robertiello	Reporter, Indian Shores
Denise M. Schlegel	City Clerk, Madeira Beach
Steve Schwalb	Sr. Account Manager, Digital Eel, Inc.
Steve Sutch	President, Indian Shores Property Owner Association
Jan Sturgis	Commissioner, Madeira Beach
Steve Sutch	President, Indian Shores Property Owner Association

**INTRODUCTIONS.** Mayor Radcliffe introduced Jerry Knight, a newly elected official of North Redington Beach. President Beyrouti also welcomed and introduced the following newly elected officials: Bob Fontaine, Mayor for the Town of Redington Beach; and Mary Maloof, Mayor for the City of Treasure Island.

The BIG-C membership welcomed them and President Beyrouti reminded all the municipalities that each elected official of the ten beach communities is a board member of the BIG-C and encouraged them to attend the BIG-C meetings.

**TREASURER'S REPORT.** Treasurer De Cesare provided the Treasurer's Report for April, which has an ending balance of \$1,544.66. **Motion** made and seconded to accept the April Treasurer's Report, as presented, carried unanimously by voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** **Motion** made and seconded to approve the BIG-C minutes of the March 26th meeting, as presented, carried unanimously by voice vote.

**GUEST SPEAKER.** President Beyrouti:

- Introduced Dan Autrey and Mary Burrell of the Tampa Bay Newspaper/Beacon Leader Bee.
- Advised the beach communities call it their newspaper, because it reports on the beach communities issues, before any other paper.

Mr. Autrey advised:

- He has been in the community newspaper business for 27 years and had the fortunate opportunity to become the publisher of the Tampa Bay Newspaper.
- Recently, the look of the publication has changed and it is focusing on providing more content;
- The Tampa Bay Newspaper has launched a website which is also more content based;
- The Tampa Bay Newspaper is getting ready to invest approximately \$100,000 in Macintosh hardware and software.
- The Tampa Bay Newspaper is still owned by the St. Petersburg Times, but will never become a daily newspaper.

Mary Burrell advised it was a smooth transition with Dan Autrey; the paper now encompasses Treasure Island; and explained the different territories the Tampa Bay Newspaper covers.

Mayor DiNicola would like the newspaper to expand and share all of the beach community news in one issue, instead of two or three different issues. Mrs. Burrell stated most of the beaches are tied to the mainland, because most of the advertisers are on the mainland.

Another person in the audience also commented that she has to go to other beach communities to get their edition and suggested that the Tampa Bay Newspaper consider placing Belleair and Seminole together. Mr. Autrey advised then there would be someone else with the same argument. Mr. Autrey advised they have many customers now that moved from the Beacon area to the Bee area, but still want their Beacon.

Another person complimented Mary Burrell on the reporting of the community news.

Mr. Autrey advised he will investigate the feasibility of tying the beach communities together into one edition.

On behalf of the BIG-C, President Beyrouti welcomed Mr. Autrey to the community and stated the communities look forward to working with him.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Gulf Boulevard Undergrounding and Beautification Report**

President Beyrouti advised:

- When the Gulf Boulevard Improvement Project financial figure reached \$79 million dollars, the Task Force formed a smaller finance committee to see if the \$79 million dollar figure could be reduced;

- Phil Graham, the contractor that designed the improvements suggested to only bury the overhead cross wires or just do the 14 or 15 designated focal points (\$50 million);
- The cost of undergrounding alone is approximately \$29 million;
- The Pinellas County Board of Commissioners suggested increasing the gas tax by 2 cents; however, it also wanted these funds to be used for all county enhancements.

Gay Lancaster advised that although there is overwhelming support, the Pinellas County budget is tight. The economic posture that we are in right now is a great concern, because of all the cost shifting, being proposed in the Legislature, and the affect it will have on the funding it will provide to counties.

Ms. Lancaster proposed three meetings in strategic locations up and down the beaches to discuss two topics:

- To clarify the focal areas; and
- The use of the potential gas tax as a funding mechanism

Ms. Lancaster felt if these two issues were resolved, each community would be encouraged to adopt two separate resolutions. One resolution would be in support of the revised plan and the other would be in support of the gas tax for a funding mechanism.

Ms. Lancaster also stated these issues would have to be addressed by mid-May at the latest to coordinate them into the Pinellas County budget.

In the focal areas, the County would straighten the light poles, remove cross wires, and the City would be responsible for the street-scape, private hook-ups, and acquiring easements.

Secretary/Treasurer De Cesare suggested not scheduling these meetings until the Legislature determines how much money the counties will receive.

President Beyrouiti stated the vibes are not good. It has been stated that Gulf Boulevard is not a transportation project which is why it would not qualify for funding.

Mayor Radcliffe felt the BIG-C should not lose sight of the fact from a standpoint of safety as well as beautification; this project is a bit of an abortion and asked what would guaranty or ensure them of finishing the project in their life-time. Mayor Radcliffe felt it would be foolish to start this project if there is no plan or attitude of how it will be finished.

Ms. Lancaster advised that each municipality will receive a letter from the County advising what is needed and the time frame in which to pass the Resolutions.

## **B. Legislative Issues**

President Beyrouiti advised:

- The \$30 million dollars for beach renourishment funding is already in the house and Senator Dennis Jones appears to be comfortable with the way it is going; however, he feels if it is reduced it would be no lower than \$25 million.
- The density issue is being proposed to be controlled by Pinellas County, under a pilot program.
- Senator Jones and Representative Carassas are supporting a bill which will authorize municipalities to adopt reasonable per diem and travel allowance policies.

## **C. American Assembly**

President Beyrouiti commented:

- The American Assembly was established to find a better way to govern the County as a whole.
- Six Task Forces were also established to study annexation, services, fire, recreation, transportation, and health.
- Advised municipalities will be receiving a letter from Karen Seel, Chairperson of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, regarding an orientation to tell each Task Force what

will be expected of them. Chairperson Seel will also be requesting locations where the Task Forces could meet.

## NEW BUSINESS

### A. Website Proposal

President Beyrouti felt that having a website for the BIG-C would be beneficial to share views on important issues.

Mr. Schwalb of Digital Eel Web Development out of St. Pete Beach stated:

- He was surprised the BIG-C did not have a website;
- The company has developed several hundred websites of which 90% of them are within a block of Gulf Boulevard and it is very familiar with the area;
- The benefits of having a website;
- Updates are on-line within 24 hours of receiving the information.

President Beyrouti requested Mr. Schwalb to discuss the cost of having a maintaining a website.

Mr. Schwalb advised on:

- **Pricing, which consists of five components:**
  - Domain Name ..... \$70.00 (2 years)
  - Hosting (\$21.95 per month)..... \$263.40 (1 year)
  - Custom Design..... \$1,190.00 (10 pages)
  - Search Engine Optimization/Submission ..... \$299.00 (one-time)
  - Updates .....\$75.00 (Hourly, 1 minute increments)
- **Domain names**
  - Already taken:
    - BIG-C.com** is registered to PC Warehouse in Gardena, California and the administrative contact is in Hong Kong.
    - BIG-C.org** is registered to On-Line Nic.com in California.
  - Available:
    - BIG-C.gov** (Cannot use “.gov” if it is not a government, therefore it cannot be used)
    - Barrier Islands Government.com**
    - Barrier Islands Council.com**
- **Custom Design.** Mr. Schwalb stated he would envision a mission statement, a meeting schedule calendar, agendas, minutes, any resolutions which are adopted, maybe some biographical information, links to individual municipalities, area information, maps, budgets or annual reports, emergency issues which can be on the website in a matter of minutes, etc.

All word documents received are turned into a “.pdf” file which can read on any machine, but cannot be tampered with.

President Beyrouti inquired what the membership thought about starting a website.

Treasurer De Cesare reminded the membership the BIG-C has a balance of \$1,500 in the bank.

The BIG-C membership agreed it should have a website and create “Barrier Islands Council.com” as the domain name.

**Motion** made and seconded to adopt “barrierislandscouncil.com” as the domain name, carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Radcliffe stated he did not mind selecting a name, but before any contractual agreements are

finalized; he felt the voting delegates should run it past their boards.

President Beyrouti suggested each municipality contribute \$200 towards the establishment of a website.

**B. PSTA/MPO Discussion**

The PSTA is holding a workshop at 9 a.m. on April 30th. Mayor Robertson encouraged all the municipalities to attend, especially those who are not members of the PSTA, because one of proposals is to tack on a millage rate to those that are not members to raise funding.

**C. Resolution 2003.02 - Roadway Improvements**

President Beyrouti advised Resolution 2003.02 (copy attached to these minutes) supports the City of Indian Rocks Beach and Town of Indian Shores in efforts to obtain funding assistance for the project known as the [Gulf Boulevard Roadway Improvements] [Walsingham Road to Park Boulevard], which is the last substandard two-lane road on Gulf Boulevard between St. Pete Beach and Clearwater Beach

**Motion** made and seconded to adopt Resolution 2003.02, as presented, carried unanimously.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

President Beyrouti advised:

- He had a proclamation for Human Rights.
- The mangrove amendment is still being discussed by the County Commissioners.

Vice-Mayor Blush distributed a copy of Treasure Island's Resolution to 03.39 supporting an education and rehabilitation center project as proposed by Save Our Seabirds, Inc. and encouraged the BIG-C and each municipality to adopt a similar resolution.

**Motion** made and seconded to pass a Resolution (Resolution 2003-03, attached) supporting an education and rehabilitation center project as proposed by Save Our Seabirds, Inc., carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor DiNicola advised he is pursuing with the assistance of Representative Carassas to urge that the Florida Legislature prohibit the unfair business practices of QualSure Insurance Company, who requires that it insured residents with windstorm insurance policies purchase other insurance products against their will from QualSure or be denied the ability to obtain windstorm insurance.

Commissioner Palamara also introduced Bill Ockunzzi who was elected as a Commissioner for the City of Indian Rocks Beach.

**ADJOURNMENT.** Being no further business to come before the BIG-C, the meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Approved by the BIG-C on  
May 28, 2003

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Denise M. Schlegel, City Clerk  
City of Madeira Beach

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Tom De Cesare, BIG-C Treasurer  
Mayor, City of Madeira Beach, Florida