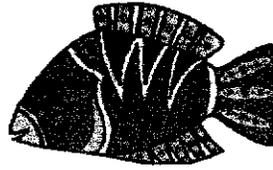


BIG-C

Barrier Islands Governmental Council

Belleair Beach
Belleair Shore
Clearwater
Indian Rocks Beach
Indian Shores
Redington Shores



North Redington Beach
Redington Beach
Madeira Beach
St. Pete Beach
Treasure Island

MEETING MINUTES

July 29, 2009

Present:

Belleair Beach	Vice Mayor Kathy Mortensen
Belleair Shore	Mayor John A. Robertson
Clearwater	Councilmember George N. Cretekos
Indian Rocks Beach	Commissioner Terry Hamilton Wollin
Indian Shores	Mayor Jim Lawrence
Madeira Beach	Mayor Pat Shontz
North Redington Beach	Mayor William Queen
Redington Beach	Mayor Nick Simons
Redington Shores	Mayor Bert Adams
Treasure Island	Vice Mayor Phil Collins
St. Pete Beach	Mayor Mike Finnerty

Guest Speakers:

Board of County Commissioners	Commissioner Ken Welch
American Cancer Society	Christine Hartman
Pinellas County Coastal Engineering	Nicole Elko

Guests Present:

Anne Kramer & Associates	Anne Kramer
Barrier Islands Gazette	Rob Piccirillo
Clearwater Gas System	Kristi Cheatham
City of Indian Rocks Beach	Mayor R.B. Johnson
Indian Rocks Beach	Jose L. Coppen
Town of Indian Shores	Vice Mayor Joan Herndon
Town of Indian Shores	Councilor Carole Irelan
Town of Indian Shores	Councilor Bill Smith
Town of Indian Shores	Councilor Steve Sutch
City of Madeira Beach	W.D. Higginbotham, Jr.
Town of North Redington Beach	Vice Mayor Jerry Knight
Natural Resources Defense Council	Susan Glickman

Paradise By Design
Board of County Commissioners
Pinellas County Planning
Pinellas Planning Council
Progress Energy
Sand Key Civic Association
City of St. Pete Beach
Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber
Tampa Bay Newspapers
City of Treasure Island
City of Treasure Island
Visit St. Pete Clearwater
City of Clearwater Board Reporter

James Montgomery
Commissioner Neil Brickfield
Sandra Knoebel
Linda Fisher
Melissa Seixas
Nick Fritsch
Commissioner Jim Parent
Robin Grabowski
Bob McClure
Commissioner Carol Coward
Mayor Robert Minning
Rhonda Sanborn
Patricia O. Sullivan

BIG-C President Lawrence called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Clearwater Community Sailing Center, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and welcoming comments by City of Clearwater Councilmember George Cretkos and Clearwater Gas System Program Manager Kristi Cheatham. Clearwater Community Sailing Center Executive Director Gene Fleming reviewed Sailing Center programs and announced the Center would host the Veterans Special Olympics in 2010 and international regatta qualifiers in 2009 and 2010.

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

3 – Approval of Agenda

President Lawrence reported the June BIG-C (Barrier Islands Governmental Council) meeting minutes were not available and would be added to the August agenda.

Mayor Robertson moved to approve the agenda of the July 29, 2009 BIG-C meeting as amended. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4 – Minutes Approval – June 2009: Continued to August 26, 2009.

5 – Approval of Treasurer's Report – June 2009

BIG-C Secretary/Treasurer Cretkos presented the Treasurer's Report for June 2009. The \$2,210.91 balance is unchanged.

Mayor Queen moved to approve the BIG-C Treasurer's Report of June 2009, as submitted. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

6 – Correspondence: Email from Florida Oil Counsel in Tallahassee

President Lawrence reported the Florida Oil Counsel had emailed him, requesting to address the BIG-C. Discussion ensued with recommendations that a 15 minute time limit be enforced, an alternative point of view also be presented, and that the request be denied. It was felt that presentation information could be used to counter pro-drilling arguments. Opposition to a debate was stated; it was suggested that attendees submit written questions. Concerns were

expressed that large advertising budgets and political contributions have helped move forward federal legislation that would supersede military limits and permit oil drilling close to Florida's shore. Review of pending State and Federal legislation was encouraged. President Lawrence will handle the request.

7 – New Business

A. Board of County Commissioner Ken Welch

Board of County Commissioner Ken Welch discussed the causes and consequences of reductions to the County's budget, which continues to face a large deficit.

Concern was expressed that the County is supplementing its revenues by increasing charges for services; significant increases to costs for police services have a major impact on municipalities and property owners. Commissioner Welch said the County Commission had rejected a millage rate increase; costs for user based services must increase.

Commissioner Welch expressed disappointment with the lack of progress on the Gulf Boulevard beautification project, which is important for the County to compete successfully on the world market. As projected Penny for Pinellas 3 funds will be less than originally forecast, Gulfview funding has been delayed and reduced to \$26,250,000. He remained committed to the project and will work to increase funding should sales tax revenues exceed anticipated levels. He requested BIG-C input regarding the viability of each municipality's projects.

Commissioner Welch presented a photograph of a Texas beach fouled with oil and expressed concern that Pinellas County's white sand beaches could suffer the same fate if coastal drilling is allowed. He discussed the importance of beaches to the County's economy, stating that visitors' annual \$6 billion impact on the local economy is significantly greater than revenues promised by coastal drilling proponents. He said hard data is needed to discern how far accidental spillage can travel and if drilling could degrade County beaches. He reviewed alternate energy sources and efficiencies that could be adopted; he said drilling off Pinellas County's coast will not resolve the country's energy problem. He urged each municipality to take a position against drilling. He reviewed proposed State legislation to allow drilling closer to the coast, stating it would pose a risky gamble.

B. Christine Hartman – American Cancer Society

American Cancer Society representative Christine Hartman reviewed her organization's programs that benefit cancer patients, caregivers, and survivors and discussed Relay for Life events which raise funds for research and local programs. Twenty events are planned in Pinellas County in April 2010. She encouraged sponsorships and volunteers.

C. Nicole Elko – Pinellas County Coastal Engineering

Dr. Nicole Elko of Pinellas County Coastal Engineering said for the first time in 50 years, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association's annual conference will be in Florida. The Trade Winds Hotel in St. Pete Beach will host the October 14 – 16, 2009 event. She invited BIG-C Mayors to attend the opening ceremony to demonstrate local support for beaches and encouraged interested residents to attend the conference. An outdoor barbeque is planned for

Thursday night's award ceremony; a Pinellas County coastal project and the BIG-C have been nominated for awards.

D. Oil/Gas Rig Drilling Committee Update

Nick Fritsch submitted a draft plan for an Oil/Gas Rig Drilling Committee. He anticipated that oil interests will seek approval from the 2010 State Legislature to drill for oil near the gulf coast. The committee would align with Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association. The plan encourages the BIG-C to be prepared and united in its opposition to coastal drilling. The committee would make monthly reports to the BIG-C and draft a case against coastal drilling based on facts, integrity, and quality. Committee membership would include BIG-C members, elected officials, and residents with related expertise. Resources would need to be leveraged through partnerships. A minimal BIG-C financial commitment would be requested for printing and miscellaneous expenses.

In response to a question, Dr. Elko reviewed a lawsuit filed by upland property owners in Walton County claiming a taking as their property no longer touches the water following beach renourishment projects. The Florida Supreme Court ruled against the claim; the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the appeal.

Mayor Robertson moved to approve formation of the Oil/Gas Rig Drilling Committee. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

8 – Old Business:

A. Progress Energy Tour of Weedon Island Facility

Progress Energy representative Melissa Seixas said the Progress Energy Bartow Facility on Weedon Island was converted from oil to natural gas. BIG-C members were invited to tour the state-of-the-art facility on August 12, 2009, at 8:30 a.m. President Lawrence requested that interested members contact him.

9 – Miscellaneous:

A. Legislative Update: None.

B. Beach Update

Dr. Elko reported the number of turtle nests on Pinellas County beaches had increased over last year. Beach communities were commended for their enforcement of turtle lighting.

The Sand Key renourishment project is on track thanks to efforts by Congressman Young. Offshore samples are being collected to identify sand resources. The program should begin in Fall 2010. The Treasure Island project has been delayed several months.

Dr. Elko reported that her position with the County was eliminated and this would be her last BIG-C meeting. She thanked the group for their support. Appreciation voiced for Dr. Elko's efforts on behalf of the beach communities and BIG-C was followed by a standing ovation.

C. Penny for Pinellas Update

It was stated that a protocol is needed to process reimbursement requests for completed Gulfview Boulevard projects. Municipalities were encouraged to prepare projects so they are "shovel ready." Penny for Pinellas 3 funding will be provided over seven years, beginning in 2013. It was suggested that municipalities meet with Pinellas County Planning Director Brian Smith to coordinate efforts. It was noted even though the amount was reduced, significant funds remain. Concern was expressed that it is difficult to plan for 2013 projects, as costs will change.

The next Big-C meeting will be hosted by Belleair Shore at the Town of Indian Shores on August 26, 2009.

10 – Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

President, Barrier Islands
Governmental Council
Mayor – Town of Indian Shores