

BARRIER ISLANDS GOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (BIG-C)
September 26, 2007
MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Barrier Islands Governmental Council, hosted by the City of Indian Rocks Beach, was held on ***Wednesday, September 26, 2007***, in the Beach Arts Center, 1515 Bay Palm Boulevard, Indian Rocks Beach, Florida.

President Bill Queen called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 2. Roll Call:** All present were asked to introduce themselves.

Members Present:

Belleair Beach	Vice Mayor Kathy Mortenson
Belleair Shore	Mayor John Robertson
Clearwater	Councilman George N. Cretekos
Indian Rocks Beach	Mayor-Commissioner Bill Ockunzzi
Indian Rocks Beach	Commissioner Jose Coppen
Indian Shores	Mayor Jim Lawrence (Vice President)
Indian Shores	Vice Mayor Joan Herndon
Indian Shores	Councilor Marlene Clausen
Indian Shores	Councilor Bill Smith
Madeira Beach	Vice Mayor John Wolbert (Secretary/Treasurer)
North Redington Beach	Mayor Bill Queen (President)
Redington Beach	Vice Mayor Mark Deighton
Redington Shores	Mayor Jody Armstrong
St. Pete Beach	Commissioner Ed Ruttencutter

Guests:

Dan Autrey, Publisher, Tampa Bay Newspapers/TBBC
Sue Berfield, Legislative Assistant, Office of Representative Jim Frishe
Laura Berkowitz, Sr. Research Manager, Pinellas County Economic Development
J.J. Beyrouiti, former Mayor of Redington Shores
Doris Burns, Legislative Assistant, Office of Senator Dennis Jones
Lee Daniel, Deputy Director, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Linda Fisher, Program Planner, Pinellas Planning Council
Nick Fritsch, Beach Chairman, Sand Key Civic Association

Sandra Knoebel, Planner, Pinellas County Planning Agency
Bob MacPherson, Reporter, Beach Beacon-Bee
DT Minich, Executive Director, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Doreen Moore, 2007 Tourist Development Council Member

3. Approval of Agenda.

Motion made by Vice President Lawrence and seconded by Belleair Shore Mayor Robertson to approve the Agenda. Unanimous approval by acclamation.

4. Approval of minutes of August 29, 2007.

Motion made by Vice President Lawrence and seconded by Belleair Shore Mayor Robertson to approve the Minutes of the August 29, 2007 BIG-C meeting. Unanimous approval by acclamation.

5. Approval of Treasurer's Reports of September 2007.

Secretary/Treasurer Wolbert presented the Treasurer's Report. The balance as of August 1, 2007 was \$2,188.23. There were no expenses and no income, leaving a register balance as of August 31, 2007 of \$2,188.23.

Motion made by Vice President Lawrence and seconded by Belleair Shore Mayor Robertson to approve the Treasurer's Report. Unanimous approval by acclamation.

6A. Tourism: DT Minich, CDME, Executive Director, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Mr. Minich addressed the members and guests regarding the recent efforts of the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB). He advised that he began employment with the CVB on May 1, 2007, coming from Lee County. He remarked that tourism is the largest industry in Pinellas County. He stated that the CVB is making changes, including: a focus on the off-season, a new logo, the creation of a new visitor's guide with 24 additional pages, and more information available on the website, www.FloridasBeach.com. He stated that the CVB has an \$8.3 Million advertising budget, that is 100% funded from the bed tax collected by hotels and such, and they also give grants. He stated that the CVB is strengthening relationships with airlines, including a new marketing agreement with Direct Air, which flies into the St. Petersburg/Clearwater

Airport, to enhance the Canadian market. He stated there will be an Orlando market push, for visits the beach before or after a Disney vacation. He also stated there will be a big marketing effort focused on the Orlando Sanford International Airport, which is a popular destination for flights originating in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Minich stated that the grant process is being revamped, grant applications will be available in February, and awarded in early summer. He advised that statistical information regarding this area's tourism is available on another part of the CVB website, www.PinellasCVB.com. He advised that the 2009 Super Bowl will be in Tampa and the CVB is planning for that.

Mr. Minich commented on the Pinellas County initiative to allow increased zoning density for hotels. He stated there will be two public hearing in October on the subject, and if it is approved that will have the effect of "raising the umbrella," that the cities can then adopt a policy up to those limits or a portion of those limits. He stated that each community will have their own control of how they want to handle it.

7. Miscellaneous.

A. Legislative Update:

Ms. Burns stated there is not a lot to announce; Senator Dennis Jones is on his way to Tallahassee for Budget fine-tuning, there is a special session next week.

B. Member Updates:

President Queen obtained a consensus for the BIG-C to provide a letter of support for the annual meeting of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) to be held in Pinellas County.

President Queen thanked members who attended the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association (FSBPA) Annual Meeting, where Dr. Nicole Elko of Pinellas County gave an excellent presentation on the history of beach renourishment in Pinellas County. He stated that she would give the same presentation at the October meeting of the BIG-C.

President Queen advised that he was contacted by an individual offering beach cleanup services for hire. The individual uses a barge in the Intracoastal Waterway. President Queen referred him to Pinellas County, but he has contact information if anyone is interested.

Mr. Daniel of the CVB advised that there will be a retirement party for Carol Ketterhagen on October 9, 2007 from 6-8 p.m., at the Sheraton Sand Key, 1160 Gulf Boulevard, Clearwater. He advised that anyone who wished to attend should contact him for an invitation.

Secretary/Treasurer Wolbert stated that BrightHouse Networks is about to take away the public access channel in Madeira Beach, and he is trying to get support to reverse their decision. He also stated that BrightHouse would like to put that channel in the high digital cable channels, where access is \$20-\$30 more per month for each residence. He stated that this is a big concern in Madeira Beach.

President Queen commented that the Mayors' Council addressed this issue last month and has drafted a resolution in opposition to it. He stated that the BIG-C could adopt a similar resolution.

Vice President Lawrence spoke about the pole eradication ceremony held in Indian Shores to commemorate the first utility poles coming down on the south part of town. He stated it looks great and thanked the elected officials and others who attended.

Redington Shores Mayor Armstrong advised that she attended the FSBPA Conference, which was the 50th Anniversary of the organization, and it highlighted the historical look of the past 50 years. She praised the work of Dr. Elko.

Redington Shores Mayor Armstrong advised that Coastal Cleanup is scheduled for the weekend of October 20, 2007, and encouraged participation. She stated that she could use volunteers that weekend at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium for construction preparation.

Redington Shores Mayor Armstrong stated the Ironman World Championship Event is being held on November 10, 2007 in Clearwater. She stated that it is a strong venue for the cities to support.

President Queen stated that the community is grateful for Senator Dennis Jones and Congressman Bill Young for their work in shore preservation. He stated that the FSBPA has awards dedicated to each of them now.

Clearwater Councilman Cretkos announced that October 18-21, 2007 is the Clearwater Jazz Holiday, which is also a big draw for tourists.

Clearwater Councilman Cretekos stated that the Clearwater City Council intends to change their election date to January 29, 2008, in order to coincide with the Presidential Preference Primary. He stated that cities are able to make this change due to the State law that changed the date of the Primary and advised members to consult with their city attorneys. He stated that it would probably increase voter turnout and help lower the costs, since the State would absorb the cost for the local elections.

Mr. Fritsch stated that he came away from the FSBPA realizing that a few very passionate people have made a difference in these beaches for us, and they are in their twilight years. He stated that for fifty years it has been the passionate few who have fueled our beaches, and that type of capable, quality, passionate people are needed in those key positions in the future.

Motion made by Vice President Lawrence and seconded by Belleair Shore Mayor Robertson to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 a.m. Unanimous approval by acclamation.