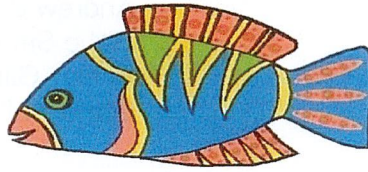


BIG C

Barrier Islands Governmental Council

*Belleair Beach
Belleair Shore
Clearwater
Indian Rocks Beach
Indian Shores
Madeira Beach*



*North Redington Beach
Redington Beach
Redington Shores
St. Pete Beach
Treasure Island*

OFFICERS

Alan Johnson
President
Mayor, St. Pete Beach

MaryBeth Henderson
Vice President
Mayor, Redington Shores

Joanne "Cookie" Kennedy
Secretary/Treasurer
Mayor, Indian Rocks Beach

Meeting Minutes August 25, 2021

BIG C (Barrier Islands Governmental Council) President Alan Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Clearwater Beach Recreation Center, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in memory of Clearwater City Manager Bill Horne

2 – Roll Call

Present: Belleair Beach
Belleair Shore
Clearwater
Indian Rocks Beach
Madeira Beach
St. Pete Beach
Treasure Island

Vice Mayor Dave Gattis
Mayor Robert E. Schmidt Jr.
Vice Mayor Hoyt Hamilton
Mayor Joanne "Cookie" Kennedy
Mayor John B. Hendricks
Mayor Alan Johnson
Mayor Tyler Payne

Guest Speakers:

Pinellas County Public Works
SeaSalt Properties
Sheri Heilman

Public Works Director Kelli Hammer Levy
Hendrik Bisanz
Ocean Allies

Also Present:

City of Clearwater
City of Clearwater
Clearwater Gas
State of Florida Department of Transportation
State of Florida Senate District 24 Legislative Assistant
Forward Pinellas
Town of Indian Shores
Largo
City of Madeira Beach
Pinellas County Administration
Pinellas County Economic Development
Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District
Town of Redington Shores
St. Petersburg College/Inst. Strategic Policy Solutions

Rosemarie Call
Patricia Sullivan
Chuck Warrington
Bob Esposito
Lauren Wilson
Sandra Knoebel
Councilor Diantha Schear
Dan Parri (attorney)
Bob Daniels
Brian Lowack
Debra Schweikowsky
Larry Schear
Commissioner Jennie Blackburn
Sam Jenkins

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SeaSalt Properties
Tampa Bay Times
Treasure Island Resident
Waterfront Realty

Andrew Beltz
Gabe Stern
Ashley Gilroy
Chris Kelly

3 - Approval of Agenda

It was requested that Sheri Heilman of Ocean Allies be added to the agenda as a speaker and that information be provided re abandoned boats.

Mayor Kennedy moved to approve the Agenda as amended. The motion was duly seconded by Vice Mayor Hamilton and carried unanimously.

4 - Approval of Minutes – July 28, 2021 BIG C Belleair Beach meeting.

Vice Mayor Hamilton moved to approve the minutes of the regular BIG C meeting of July 28, 2021, as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded by Vice Mayor Gattis and carried unanimously.

5 - Approval of June 2021 Treasurer's Reports.

BIG C Secretary/Treasurer Cookie Kennedy reviewed the June 2021 Treasurer's Report. The opening balance, as of June 1, 2021, was \$1,202.32 and the ending balance, as of July 31, 2021, was \$1,157.82.

Vice Mayor Hamilton moved to accept the June 2021 Treasurer's Report. The motion was duly seconded by Mayor Hendricks and carried unanimously.

6 - Correspondence: None.

7 - New Business:

7a. Kelli Levy, Pinellas County Public Works Director – Red Tide Update

Pinellas County Public Works Director Kelli Levy said the County hires contractors to remove abandoned vessels, which is a long process with significant red tape. A separate grant application must be submitted for each removal which requires State approval before the County can act. Amended language in the law streamlined the process for law enforcement but did not help to remove boats or finance the efforts. Boat registration fees, earmarked to fund removals, benefit small communities with few abandoned boats at the expense of large counties inundated with numerous derelict boats; the County does not recoup local registration fees.

Ms. Levy provided a PowerPoint presentation on the current outbreak of Red Tide, which began to increase in Pinellas County in June 2021 following Piney Point's March – April discharge into Tampa Bay of 215 million gallons of wastewater containing approximately 205 tons of nitrogen. By May, the discharge had migrated north in Tampa Bay and along the gulf coast resulting in algae along Indian Rocks Beach and Sarasota. By late June, a massive number of fish kills were reported, including in the Intracoastal and canals; large fish kill locations fluctuated. Big fishing boats helped collect dead fish before they came ashore. As of August 20, 1,835 tons of dead fish had been removed from local waters at a cost of approximately \$2.1 million. Since the FDEP (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) agreement to reimburse the County \$902,500,

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Pinellas County has requested additional funds. The County publishes a weekly report on Red Tide, which remains along the coast and in Tampa Bay. The public needs to be cognizant that storm drains transport everything dumped in their streets directly to the bay, which is now unhealthy following years of improvement.

Ms. Levy was thanked for County efforts and support of coastal communities to remove dead fish. It was noted that Boca Ciega Bay docks had been inundated with dead fish. It was stated that boat captains had lambasted elected officials to do something and implement regulations. County efforts were reviewed including proactive actions to place containment booms in the Intracoastal, blocking two-thirds of the fish.

In response to questions, Ms. Levy said the Piney Point discharge was not radioactive; contractors were cleaning the water onsite but nitrogen levels were still too high. The County has a Piney Point page on its website. Two lawsuits were filed by environmental entities and the FDEP, which previously had required the site to be cleaned by 2019. A judge will determine receivership for the site. More than 700 million gallons of wastewater remain; stacks were close to overflowing again due to heavy rains. Details had not been shared re the cause of the discharge.

Ms. Levy was complimented for her efforts.

7b. Hendrik Bisanz, SeaSalt Properties – Help keep your beach clean

SeaSalt Properties Representative Hendrik Bisanz said the main objective of his company's website, funded by corporate sponsors, was to increase awareness and create ways to connect organizations that host beach clean-ups with volunteer residents and visitors. He said his firm was gathering local beach clean-up schedules and will organize the information by date on one site, Your-beach.com. He encouraged beach communities to promote the domain with 12x18 inch signage at beach access points. He hoped the project will expand statewide.

In response to questions, Mr. Bisanz said tying musicians, beach triathlons, volleyball tournaments, early yoga sessions, beverage giveaways, etc. with beach clean-ups would increase participation. He said his firm was working on the website and social media pages will be created. He said the venture was not designed to make money.

Sheri Heilman, Ocean Allies

Sheri Heilman of Ocean Allies encouraged the public to participate in the October 11 – 16 citywide cleanup in Clearwater. The beach cleanup is scheduled for October 16. The rest of the city is mapped out in zones to cover parks, recreation centers, parking lots, causeways, etc. She thanked the Clearwater City Council for collaborating with Ocean Allies for the event. She said keeping the beach clean and adopting turtle friendly lighting on the beach were closely related. She suggested the BIG C schedule the Clearwater Marine Aquarium for a sea turtle presentation; the information would benefit beachfront businesses. She encouraged everyone to shop mindfully for products that can be recycled and reduce ocean plastics. She said Ocean Allies was working with businesses and hotels on ocean friendly certification. She hoped Pinellas County will be the top ocean friendly location in the country, which will attract tourists and families.

Ms. Heilman was thanked for her efforts.

8 - Old Business: None.

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9 – Discussion Items: None.

10 – Legislative Update:

Senate District 24 Legislative Assistant Lauren Wilson said Senator Jeff Brandes encouraged residents to contact him about any legislation. In response to a question, she said the Senator will try to schedule one-on-one meetings next month with BIG C members in his district.

It was requested that the Florida legislature reinstate local control over local waterways.

11 – Public Comments: None.

12 – City Events:

BIG C members reviewed upcoming events.

Mayor Johnson requested members forward him ideas re speakers for future meetings.

13 - Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

September 29, 2021

City of Indian Rocks Beach

Indian Rocks Beach Commission Chambers, 1507 Bay Palm Boulevard

Minutes Prepared by:
Patricia Sullivan
Board Reporter, City of Clearwater, FL

Date Approved

9/29/2021

ATTEST



Amber LaRowe, CMC, City Clerk
City of St. Pete Beach

APPROVED:



Alan Johnson, President,
Barrier Islands Governmental Council
Mayor, City of St. Pete Beach

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