

**BIG-C MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2021**

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The **Wednesday, September 29, 2021** Barrier Islands Governmental Council (BIG-C) Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m., by President Alan Johnson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL.

PRESENT:

City of Belleair Beach	Vice-Mayor David Gattis
Town of Belleair Shore	Absent
City of Clearwater	Vice-Mayor Hoyt Hamilton
City of Indian Rocks Beach	Mayor Joanne Moston Kennedy
Town of Indian Shores	Vice-Mayor Mike Hackerson
Town of North Redington Beach	Mayor Bill Queen
Town of Redington Beach	Mayor David Will
Town of Redington Shores	Mayor MaryBeth Henderson
City of Madeira Beach	Mayor John B. Hendricks
City of St. Pete Beach	Mayor Alan Johnson
City of Treasure Island	Mayor Tyler Payne

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Cheryl Stacks, St. Peterburg Transportation Manager
Whit Blanton, Executive Director, Forward Pinellas
Jack Holehouse, President of HH Insurance Group

ALSO PRESENT:

City of Indian Rocks Beach	Deanne Bulino O'Reilly, City Clerk
City of Indian Rocks Beach	Kelly Cisarik, IRB citizen
City of Indian Rocks Beach	Jose Coppen, IRB citizen
City of Madeira Beach	Bob Daniels, City Manager
Town of Redington Shores	Jennie Blackburn, Commissioner
Town of Redington Shores	Cinda Krouck, Commissioner
Town of Redington Shores	Michael Robinson, Vice-Mayor
State of Florida, House District 68	Ben Diamond, Representative
State of Florida, Senate District 24	Lauren Wilson, Legislative Aide
Clearwater Gas	Kristi Pettit, Business Development Mgr.
Forward Pinellas	Angela Ryan, Planner
Foward Pinellas	Sandra Knoebel
Help Us Gather (HUG)	Ashley Richmond, Manager
HUG/Citizen	Tracy Moel
HUG/Citizen	Michael Ciafone
HUG/Citizen	Mikey Johnson

MINUTES — BIG-C
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2021

HUG/Citizen
HUG/IRB Citizen
HUG
HUG
HUG/IRB Resident
HUG/IRB Resident
Ocean Allies
Pennone Associates
Pinellas Co. Economic Development
Pinellas C. Emergency Management
Pinellas Co. Transportation
Pin. Suncoast Fire & Rescue District
St. Petersburg College/ Inst Strategic Policy Solutions
Tampa Bay Newspapers
Tampa Bay Times
Waterfront Realty

Marilyn & Andre Brettner
Ann McIntosh
Kevin Stamper, Visual Storyteller
Rick Farr
Melissa Caulfield
Terry Boatner
Sheri Heilman, Founder/Chair
Vince Barnes, P.E., Project Manager
Debra Scheikowsky, Business Dev. Mgr.
Rick Walker
Johnathan Kuntz, Engineer Tech 1
John Mortellite, Assistant Chief
Sam Jenkins, Project Coordinator
Jeff Rosenfield, Reporter
Lauren Peace, Reporter
Chris Kelly

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION MADE BY MAYOR QUEEN, SECONDED BY MAYOR KENNEDY, TO APPROVE THE AMENDED SEPTEMBER 29, 2021 BIG-C AGENDA BY ADDING TO THE AGENDA UNDER LEGISLATIVE UPDATE BY REPRESENTATIVE BEN DIAMOND. UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES — AUGUST 25, 2021.

MOTION MADE BY MEMBER QUEEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER HAMILTON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BIG-C MEETING OF AUGUST 25, 2021, AS SUBMITTED IN WRITTEN SUMMATION. UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION.

5. Approval of the August 2021 Treasurer's Report.

BIG-C Secretary/Treasurer Kennedy reviewed the August 2021 Treasurer's Report. As of August 1, 2021, she stated the opening balance was \$1,157.82, and the ending balance, as of August 30, 2021, was \$1,135.65.

MOTION MADE BY MEMBER QUEEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER GATTES, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 2021 TREASURER'S REPORT AS SUBMITTED. UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION.

6. CORRESPONDENCE. None.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. CHERYL STACKS, TRANSPORTATION MANAGER FOR THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, AND WHIT BLANTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FORWARD PINELLAS, ON MICROMOBILITY PROGRAMS AND REGULATIONS.

President Johnson stated one of BIG-C's goals is to try and address the micromobility issue with electric bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and so forth.

President Johnson stated the City of Petersburg adopted an ordinance a couple of years ago. He wanted to see if the BIG-C cities that have not adopted an ordinance can adopt one that can be as reasonably consistent as possible up and down the barrier islands to be easier for visitors.

Cheryl Stacks, Transportation Manager for the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, presented a PowerPoint Presentation on St. Pete Micromobility Program and Regulations.

Ms. Stacks reviewed the 2019 State Legislation background. She stated the law was enacted on June 18, 2019. The law modified the definition of motorized scooter, including the maximum operating speed of 20 mph, created a definition of "micromobility" device to include motorized scooters made available for rental/reservation, gives riders all the rights and duties of a bicycle rider, and preserves "home rule" for creation of individualized scooter programs and local ordinances.

Ms. Stacks reviewed the regulations within St. Pete Micromobility Ordinance. She stated the ordinance covers Scooter Share Program but also addresses certain elements/operations of privately-owned/-operated devices.

Ms. Stacks stated scooters are prohibited on the sidewalks and are enforced through technology solutions by Scooter Share devices and augmented by the police department. Scooters are allowed within bike lanes and on low-speed streets (30 mph or less) and Shared-Use Trails.

Ms. Stacks stated the City developed parking corrals that are shared equally among operators. The approximately 100 corrals to date are re-purposed unused space and expanded existing bike-share hub areas, converted a minimal number of parking spaces and/or loading zones.

Ms. Stacks stated the City requires a license for Scooter Share Operators.

Ms. Stacks reviewed the program funding. She stated that no subsidy was required by the City, except for a one-time up-front funding allocation of \$40,000 to establish initial parking corrals. She stated is a right-of-way use fee of \$1 for an authorized scooter per day. She stated nuisance fees are assessed on improperly parked scooters to encourage operators to respond to issues quickly.

Ms. Stacks addressed the questions and concerns of the Board Members and the audience.

Whit Blanton, Executive Director of Forward Pinellas, stated Forward Pinellas recognizes this is a Countywide issue because there are scooter rentals on the beach, with Clearwater

exploring scooter issues. There are some issues on the Pinellas Trail with an electric bike and the perception that they are going too fast compared to other users on the trail.

Mr. Blanton presented a PowerPoint Presentation on micromobility in Pinellas County and what the public needs.

Mr. Blanton stated Forward Pinellas wants to provide some consistency of definitions and a clear understanding of the classifications based on the state statutes that Ms. Stacks mentioned. The term "micromobility" is new even for transportation professionals, and there is a lot of differentiation between communities.

Mr. Blanton stated it is important to think of the devices as a component of the transportation network, noting the county's mass transit system has gaps in coverage that e-scooters and the like could bridge.

Mr. Blanton stated the micromobility devices could typically connect up to three miles, and these could help bridge that gap and provide sustainable transportation options all over Pinellas County.

Mr. Blanton stated Forward Pinellas would be working with the City of St. Pete Beach on a safety program for Gulf Boulevard that will consider micromobility devices.

Mr. Blanton stated Forward Pinellas would be hosting the Gulf Coast Safe Streets Hybrid Summit November 2 through 4, 2021, at the SunCoast TPA and encouraged the BIG-C members to register and attend the summit.

The BIG-C members stated they would like to see conformity with micromobility devices on Gulf Boulevard. They acknowledged that the speed limit is not consistent on Gulf Boulevard. It was noted that electric bicycles are prohibited on the beach.

Member Queen clarified that these devices are prohibited on the sidewalks in the City of St. Petersburg and asked President Johnson if St. Pete Beach would also restrict them off the sidewalks.

President Johnson responded in the affirmative. However, he does see them on the sidewalks in St. Petersburg. He stated that St. Pete Beach has a big problem too, and they have not organized it yet.

President Johnson noted his City has entered into an interlocal agreement with Treasure Island to help keep local legislation and regulation consistent.

Member Hendricks stated what he sees as a big problem is even on a four-lane highway, Madeira Beach has a shared lane (bicycle path icon) that he sees as a problem. He stated this lane causes traffic to back up because of the bicycles and the micromobility devices. They do not move out of the way to let traffic pass by. He does not think it is safe. It is an accident just waiting to happen.

Ms. Stacks stated in the absence of a local ordinance, it defers to State Statutes, which gives micromobility devices all the rights and duties of a bicycle rider.

Member Queen asked Mr. Blanton if the micromobility devices would be restricted in county parks and the Pinellas Trail.

Mr. Blanton responded that he did not know yet for the parks, but the trail no. The signage states no motorized vehicles, which is confusing. Pinellas County Parks is working on a sign to clarify that these device scooters and electric bikes are allowed on the trail so long as they do not exceed the 20-mph speed limit.

Mr. Blanton stated as far as parks go, he does not think that the county plans to restrict these from parks because they have the same rights and duties as bicycles, and bicycles are not prohibited from parks. However, they could be banned from some of the narrow sidewalks in the parks.

Member Queen reiterated that electric bicycles are prohibited from the beach, and he feels that they should be prohibited from the county parks because it is recreational, not transportation.

Member Payne asked if the City of St. Petersburg restricts micromobility devices on certain roads based on the speed limit.

Ms. Stacks responded in the affirmative and stated they are allowed on roadways with bike lanes if they are operated in the bike-lanes, and they are allowed on low-speed streets, which are 30 mph or below.

Member Will asked how does St. Petersburg addressing the micromobility devices that cross the physical boundaries between municipalities.

Ms. Stacks stated they do not have parking corrals in other municipalities, and so far, this has not been an issue for the City.

B. GUEST SPEAKER: JAKE HOLEHOUSE, PRESIDENT OF HH INSURANCE GROUP, "FLOOD INSURANCE RISK RATING 2.0.

Jake Holehouse, President of HH Insurance Group, presented a PowerPoint Presentation on flood insurance changes to the FEMA Program Risk Rating 2.0. The presentation included the adoption of the flood map changes of the west coast of Florida, the history of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), flood map change versus the NFIP rating change, the NFIP flood rates from 1975 through 2021, the Biggert-Waters Act, and the Private Flood Market Programs.

Mr. Holehouse reviewed the Biggert-Waters Act of 2012 that was signed into law July 6, 2012. The intention of the Act was to phase out subsidies for many properties, raising the cap on annual premium increases from 10 percent to 20 percent, allowed owners or multifamily properties to purchase NFIP policies, imposed minimum deductibles for flood claims, required the NFIP administrator to develop a plan for repaying the debt incurred from Hurricane Katrina, establish a technical mapping advisory council to deal with map modernization issues.

Mr. Holehouse stated the actual Act skyrocketed rates for slab on grade homes to \$10,000 per year, the Private Market Flood Program emerged as an affordable alternate, and it removed grandfathering and the transfer of flood policies.

Mr. Holehouse reviewed the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (HFIAA) that was signed into law on March 24, 2014. The Act repealed certain parts of the Biggert-Waters Act by restoring the grandfathering clause, locked in primary residents homeowners at 15% annualized rate increase, secondary and seasonal commercial at a 25% annualized rate increase, and updating the approach to ensuring the fiscal soundness of the fund by applying an annual surcharge to all policyholders.

Mr. Holehouse stated that the State is still operating under the HFIAA of 2014 in flood insurance regulations.

Mr. Holehouse stated separate from Pinellas County flood map changes on August 24, 2021, and Risk Rating 2.0 set for October 1, 2021, there is the NFIP Renewal. He stated when the Biggert-Waters Act was passed in 2012, it gave the NFIP Program a five-year extension, which was 2017. For approximately the last three years, the NFIP has essentially been running on a month-to-month basis waiting for a long-term extension.

Mr. Holehouse stated the essential part of getting the NFIP renewed is a long-term bill that provides five to seven years of protection. The second essential part of getting the NFIP renewed is preserving grandfathering. Grandfathering allows areas where a map change has occurred to have flood rates in the \$1,000 range when the rates should be closer to \$2,500 based on today's and future maps.

Mr. Holehouse stated there are two types of grandfathering:

Built-in Compliance:

- Any structure built after the municipality's FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) date that was built in compliance of flood insurance codes at the time of construction is eligible for grandfathering.

Continuous Coverage:

- Any structure that has maintained a FEMA flood insurance policy is not subject to flood zone changes or base flood elevation changes from a flood insurance rating standpoint if they have maintained continuous flood coverage.
- While this does not help the pre-FIRM structures, it does not stop the mandatory 15% to 18% rate increases on pre-FIRM primary homes.

Mr. Holehouse reviewed Flood Risk 2.0:

- NFIP has redesigned its risk rating plan to charge more for coastal risks and less for non-coastal risks through a program called Risk Rating 2.0.
- This is the first change to FEMA rating methodology since 1975.
- Risk Rating 2.0 fundamentally changes the way FEMA rates a property's flood risk and prices insurance.
- Risk Rating 1.0 FEMA develops rates based predominantly on Flood Insurance Rate Map Zones and Base Flood Elevation. Risk Rating 2.0 incorporates past and future flood models into projecting a flood insurance rate.

FEMA'S OBJECTIVE

- Risk Rating 2.0 will help customers better understand their flood risk and provide them with more accurate rates based on their unique risk. This will include determining a customer's flood risk by incorporating multiple, logical rating characteristics-like different type of flood, the distances a building is from the coast or another flooding source, or the cost to rebuild a home.

ACTUAL

- Massive rate increases for Tampa Bay homes. The rate increases are the most substantial for lower elevation homes, coastal homes, high-value homes.

Mr. Holehouse stated Risk Rating 2.0 complies with existing statutory caps on premium increases at 18% to 25% per year.

Mr. Holehouse showed actual live rate examples based on Pinellas County Property Appraiser records as well as the Florida Maintained Elevation Certificate Data-Based. He provided examples of flood insurance policies for homes off the barrier islands, and then he worked his way up to the barrier islands. He showed the NFIP Risk Rate 1.0, the NFIP Risk Rate 2.0, and the Private Flood Market rate.

Mr. Holehouse recommended that the BIG-C members call and write to Congressman Crist, Senator Rubio, and Senator Scott for their support regarding the NFIP Risk Rate 2.0.

Mr. Holehouse also recommended that the BIG-C members call and write to State Representatives and Senators to write letters of encouragement to local congressional and senate leaders about the need for slowing this process now and getting it right.

Mr. Holehouse addressed the BIG-C members' questions and concerns.

Member Payne stated it seems like FEMA policymakers do not want barrier island communities to exist. They are just trying to price these communities out and from rebuilding the coastline.

Mr. Holehouse stated FEMA wants to slow down coastal development, but from the 1970s, they have encouraged it to do new builds on the coast from a rate standpoint. FEMA is now changing that from a policy standpoint, reflective in the rates.

8. OLD BUSINESS. None.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS.

A. ASHLEY RICHMOND, COMMUNITY OUTREACH, HELP US GATHER (HUG) — BEACH ACCESS MOBIMAT.

Ashley Richmond, Help Us Gather, stated HUG is a nonprofit organization based in Clearwater dedicated to people with disabilities. She stated HUG was started to advocate for inclusion and connect people with disabilities to a vibrant social life. She said when people are connected, they are happier, live longer, and lead a healthier lifestyle.

Ms. Richmond stated the Forward Foundation, a private foundation based in Clearwater, is partnering with HUG, and Disability Achievement Center, two local nonprofits that serve individuals with special needs, to give area cities a unique officer a blank check to every beach-facing city interest in installing a mobility mat.

Ms. Richmond stated mobility mats are nonslip pathways that help individuals with mobility challenges avoid getting stuck in the soft, uneven sand, allowing them to access the beach safely and easily.

B. SHERI HEILMAN, FOUNDER OF OCEAN ALLIES.

Sheri Heilman, the founder of Ocean Allies, encouraged the public to participate in Clearwater's October 11-16, 2021, citywide cleanup. She stated they would clean up the entire City and stated over 1,700 volunteers and 60+ businesses have already signed up. She said on the last day of this event, they will not only be cleaning up Clearwater Beach, but they will be cleaning up Downtown Clearwater.

Ms. Heilman stated Ocean Allies goes to businesses to show them how to be eco-friendly.

10. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

A. Representative Ben Diamond, District 68.

Representative Diamond stated his priorities are to protect the environment and the quality of life to maintain the affordability of living here in paradise. He has tried in his work in Tallahassee to be significantly different from local government in his approach because he understands that the mayors and local council are on the front lines on all of these problems and that when residents have challenges, they usually contact the mayor.

Representative Diamond stated he sits on the State Appropriations Committee and has been a big advocate for Visit Florida and Pinellas' tourism dollars.

Representative Diamond stated his priorities for this session are: environmental issues, resiliency, beach renourishment, vacation rentals, improve transportation.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS. None

12. CITY EVENTS.

BIG-C members reviewed upcoming events.

13. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Minutes Prepared by:
Deanne O'Reilly
City Clerk Indian Rocks Beach, FL

Date Approved

10/27/2021

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