

## **Pensacola Beach Advocates Minutes Annual Meeting October 19, 2010**

The Annual Meeting was called to order by President, Jim Cox at 5:35 PM. In attendance were approximately 200 people including members and guests.

Jim Cox welcomed all to the meeting. Escambia County Attorney, Allison Rogers, and District 4 County Commissioner, Grover Robinson were introduced.

### **FEE SIMPLE PRESENTATION**

Jim informed the members and guests of the following:

>Fee Simple does not negate the law suit currently in the court.

>An Ad Hoc committee was formed to determine if the “Time has Come” to pursue Fee Simple. Jim said the in the past there was resistance to pursuing Fee Simple because 1) the leaseholders had not yet had their “Day in Court” and 2) the leaseholders feared that the conservation areas might be rezoned for development resulting in unchecked growth. Members of the Ad Hoc committee have met with the County Commissioners to discuss how to proceed with the process of pursuing Fee Simple.

**Allison Rogers** gave the Power Point that was presented to the BCC. The Power Point began with the **history and terms of the conveyance** of Santa Rosa Island to Escambia County in 1947, and the 1947 **Florida Special Act** creating the SRIA. Mrs. Rogers said that in **1956, Escambia County via SRIA entered into a 99-year lease agreement with Santa Rosa County** covering the eastern 4 miles of SR Island as “Navarre Beach”. In the **1991 Florida Special Act** the boundaries of Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties were redefined to include Navarre Beach in Santa Rosa County. In **1993, title of Navarre Beach was conveyed to Santa Rosa County**. Mrs. Rogers gave a brief **history of Taxation and Lawsuits** on Navarre and Pensacola Beaches. The **current situation** is, if the County wants to initiate steps to allow for the potential to convey fee simple title, **what steps that need to be taken**. Mrs. Rogers went through the legal and administrative steps, what to do with the SRIA, and governmental actions. She explained that the **process may take two years**. Mrs. Rogers suggested that since leaseholders in Okaloosa Island obtained fee simple title in 1995, Pensacola Beach leaseholders can look to their situation for guidance. A copy of the Power Point is attached to the minutes.

**Grover Robinson** told the membership that when the issue of Fee Simple came up two years ago, the County Commissioners voted to not proceed. Now that the intention to tax the land is real, the time has come to address the issue. He said that Leaseholders do not have the same “bundle of rights” that Fee Simple title gives owners. During the question and answers, Commissioners Robinson stated that he supports some entity to govern the Island like the SRIA, he supports keeping the public areas on the beach as “public” and he does not want the county to get a “windfall” from leaseholders who gain Fee Simple title.

Jim presented to the membership the **Pensacola Beach Advocates' Position Statement:** Fee Simple Title. A copy is attached to the minutes. The membership voted to adopt the position statement with a change that says the PBA supports "the SRIA **or similar entity** to be retained". Jim said that there is a joint meeting of Escambia and Santa Rosa County Commissions on Monday October 25 at 1:30.

### **Business Meeting**

Jim Cox said that the Board has decided that the dues for the 2010/2011 year remain at \$30.00.

Jim took names from the floor for nominations for Board members for the upcoming 2 year term. Since none were presented, current Board members Jim Cox, Judi Purcell and Max Scroggin will remain on the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandi Johnson, Secretary, Pensacola Beach Advocates