

PENSACOLA BEACH ADVOCATES (PBA) ANNUAL MEETING 2016

I. Call to Order

The annual meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on October 13, 2016, by PBA president Benjamin Stevenson. The PBA board, officers, committee heads, and other public officials were introduced.

II. Approve Minutes

A vote was taken to approve the minutes from the PBA 2016 Annual Meeting. The minutes were approved.

III. Board Elections

There were three open positions on the board this year, and four candidates running to fill them: Jason Crome, Jack Cerone, Benjamin Stevenson, and Dennis Kress. The candidates were introduced to the membership and ballots were cast. Jason, Benjamin, and Jack were re-elected to their board seats.

IV. Financial Overview

President Benjamin Stevenson presented the PBA's current financial position. There was roughly \$28,500.00 in the bank. This year money was spent on legal fees to obtain an expert opinion on pending lease fee litigation. On the date of the meeting the annual numbers were in the red but it is expected to be in the black by the end of the calendar year. The 2016 financial statement will be available to the membership in January, following the end of the current fiscal year.

V. Guest Speaker

Attorney Ed Fleming (McDonald, Fleming, and Moorehead)

Mr. Fleming was scheduled to speak regarding pending SRIA lease litigation. Unfortunately, at the last minute, Mr. Fleming was unable to make it. Stevenson provided the membership with a brief summary of the Island Resorts case and the distinction between land and improvements. He also explained what appears to be the three different types of leases between the SRIA and beach property owners.

Paolo Ghio – SRIA Executive Director

Mr. Ghio was introduced by Benjamin Stevenson. He spoke at length about several projects and issues going on at the beach including, but not limited to:

Artificial Reefs

National Flood Insurance Credit Rating Program: The SRIA was able to achieve a 5/10 rating for the island as it related to flood preparedness, a 2 class improvement. This improvement means an additional 10% discount to the cost of flood insurance, for a total reduction of 25%. Code enforcement intends on becoming more active in enforcing local building ordinances in order to maintain the current rating in addition to seeking future improvement of the current rating.

Beach Re-Nourishment: The project began at the end of last year but had to be postponed due to weather throughout the winter. The project started back up in June and was a success. 50% of the costs were shared by the state. Because of savings incurred due to the delay of the project a second phase involving replanting and reinstalling dune vegetation and fencing will be paid for without any additional funding being required.

Transition Between SRIA and ESC: Process has been pretty seamless in terms of public works and public safety. Staffing and positions remained consistent.

Upcoming Projects:

- the widening of Sabine channel
- dredging the basin in Sabine, including removing a slice of bird island, which will allow for easier navigation around Sabine;
- Baby Beach re-nourishment (only waiting on permits at this point)
- the first phase of the Dune Walkover project should be underway soon; permits should be obtained shortly and then the job will go out for bidding; first phase will include 11 ADA compliant walkovers
- increased enforcement at the dog beaches
- continuing to provide copies of leases to those who want one
- continued policing of parking areas on Areola
- continuing to enforce open container ban at the Boardwalk; positive feedback from the community; increased presence of families on the Boardwalk
- introduction of third trolley for summer 2017
- ferry system remains a go for May 2017

VI. Committee Updates

Beachkeeper committee head Lauren Campanella was unable to attend the meeting and her update was provided by president Benjamin Stevenson. Discussed the success of the Eco-Happy Hour (150 attendees) and the Sea Turtle Baby Shower (180 attendees)

Government Affairs

Terri Preston provided the membership with an update on the government affairs committee and their work throughout the year. The 50% lease fee reduction does not apply to sub-leases unless passed through by the master lease holder. The SRIA is

suggesting that lease fees need to be increased in the future to offset the potential decrease in tax roll dollars following the recent decision regarding taxing certain leased land on the beach. The annual pass for a resident with homestead property is now only \$5 for the year. The proposed ECUA reclaimed water tank is now going to be built where the current tanks are, rather than off of Via DeLuna next to the beach school. Finally, Preston advised the membership to check their property tax TRIM notices and make any appropriate objections – it appears that the property appraiser may be increasing the assessment on improvements by significant percentages.

VII. Conclusion

The meeting was adjourned by president Benjamin Stevenson.

These minutes were prepared and respectfully submitted by Jason Cromeay, Secretary