

## **Presidents Council Update (tentative distribution date 6/2/2021)**

### **Update includes:**

- Federal Beach Project
- New Development on SHI
- Highlights of the 5/18/2021 PC Member Meeting
- PC Board Announcement
- Upcoming meetings: June 15<sup>th</sup> and Summer Plans

### **Federal Beach Project**

**As of this writing the Corps has indicated it will move the project forward with or without the last construction easement.** It is anticipated that this is in keeping with the same timeline intended in our letters (attached) to the Corps requesting that the already obtained Construction Easements meet the Corps requirements to proceed with the project. We appreciate all the continued efforts of the County particularly Joshua Revord and Frannie Hutchinson, Commissioner & Chair of the Erosion District, in conjunction with Congressman Mast and his Deputy Chief of Staff in support of this project. The highlights of the May Member Meeting below provide additional information. Particularly Commissioner Townsend's comments/position about funding. Please see the PC website for all information and updates regarding the project (<https://www.pcofhi.com/committees.html>).

### **New Development on SHI**

At the membership meeting last week, Susan McIntyre provided an update on recent development activity on the island, including Ouanalao Resort/Seaside Resort and Sand & Sea. Please see "Highlights" below for details.

There has continued to be considerable activity, however, regarding Seaside resort since the meeting. The 5/20/2021 SLC Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan to the BOCC. The BOCC will also provide final approval for the alcohol waiver. PC Board has remaining concerns regarding the west side development plans and anticipated shoreline and wetland waivers since they have not yet been presented. We will continue to voice those concerns to SLC staff and communicate with the members as the final approval BOCC meeting is scheduled.

### **Highlights of 5/18/2021 PC Member Meeting**

Charles Grande welcomed a new member to the PC Board, Marsha Benedict from Nettles Island, replacing Laura Jones who has resigned.

### **Guest Speaker: Commissioner Cathy Townsend**

Commissioner Townsend provided an open and engaging discussion on a variety of topics. The discussion began with an update on the Atlantic Wellness Center. Commissioner Townsend indicated she voted in favor of the facility, since it met all codes. Not an easy decision when many of the neighbors were not in favor. A lawsuit was filed by some neighbors and was settled out of court, thus, the County avoided further litigation costs.

Commissioner Townsend pays close attention to the codes and guidelines of the County and votes in favor of projects that are in compliance. She feels that she is the ‘keeper of the finances’ looking very closely at the cost of projects and saving money for the taxpayer, wherever possible. Several examples were provided: ensuring airlines coming to Ft Pierce Airport are right for SLC (i.e. did not support Elite Airlines); ongoing meetings with Canadian company to add companies to the airport; finding the right buyer for the old fire department building next to Chuck’s Seafood. The County is in a good financial position and the Commissioner’s goal is to be able to lower the millage rates.

**On funding the beach restoration project,** Commissioner Townsend is in favor of all St. Lucie residents sharing the cost to maintain the beaches. All St. Lucie residents benefit from and are able to use the beaches and should share in the cost.

Commissioner Townsend’s efforts supported the successful implementation of the backup utility domestic water lines from Vero Beach on North Hutchinson Island. She would like to see the same set-up take place for South Hutchinson Island with Martin County. Charles Grande mentioned that the pipelines are already in place and would only need to be coupled.

Due to Covid and stimulus received by many people, the work force is limited and St. Lucie needs more manpower. Garbage pick-up has been affected in St. Lucie County and the Commissioner asked for our patience at this time. The garbage company has been given 6 months to correct the issue. The addition of automatic arms is being considered.

The Commissioner welcomes your input and will work on issues that are important to you. Property owners have a strong voice.

Joshua Revord (Erosion District) provided a further update on the Federal Beach project. Efforts continue to obtain the last remaining construction easement for Kyle G’s beachfront and if unsuccessful for the Corp to continue to move forward with the project, as all other aspects for the project have been completed. Among others, Congressman Mast’s Deputy Chief of Staff has reached out to the property owner encouraging him to sign. We appreciate all the Congressman’s support and efforts, and a “thank you” will be sent from SLC/PC. Harvey Alligood indicated it is best that property owners continue to let the current efforts play out, and if unsuccessful, additional action may be needed by the PC. Construction is still targeted to commence in November 2021.

Charles Grande questioned Commissioner Townsend about SHI being placed back into the same district with NHI in the future. Up until 10 years ago both islands were in the same district and possibly with the redistricting resulting from the census, NHI and SHI can be merged again. The Commissioner was positive about that happening due to the population changes in Tradition.

Susan McIntyre provided an update on recent development activity on the island. The Seaside Resort application to amend the Development Code to disregard the 1,000-ft distance requirement for alcoholic beverage sales near waterfront parks that was noticed for the Planning & Zoning Commission Hearing on May 20, 2021 has been withdrawn by applicant. PC Board was prepared to request the hearing be deferred to allow more time to

research alternative solutions, and our concerns will continue to be communicated to the SLC Planning staff. The Conditional Use application for the 50-unit resort with Ocean side clubhouse restaurant, bar, banquet, spa, and pool; and River side 20 slip dock and marina remain on the agenda for the May 20, 2021 Planning & Zoning Commission Hearing, with the anticipation it will be forwarded to the Commissioners for final approval.

Susan also provided an update on Sand & Sea Development, which has purchased two 96' parcels north of Regency, leaving Normandy Beach separating new parcels from existing parcels. Dennis Murphy, agent for the developer, has indicated a desire to relocate Normandy Beach to the north end of the parcels adjacent to the southern border of Diamond Sands. Joshua Revord was aware of this possible proposal, and of PC's concerns, on how this may reduce the federal funding for beach renourishment projects. Development site plan details are expected later this summer.

Question was raised about the plans with FPUA to move the Sewer plant off the north end of SHI. There are no plans in the near future, however, this is a topic on which we need to remain informed. Discussions are in the early stages and it has not been decided where the flow from the old plant will go, either south or to the mainland. Commissioner Townsend is not in favor of uniting with Ft Pierce for this endeavor and would like to see St. Lucie build their own sewer plant near the airport.

### **PC Board Announcement**

As was announced at the member meeting in May, Laura Jones has resigned from the Board after many years of support and service to the PC Board. We welcome Marsha Benedict and look forward to working with her as we continue to grow and evolve as a Council.

**Upcoming meeting: June 15, 2021 Guest Speakers:** SLC Sheriff's Chief Deputy - Brian Heaton, Island Safety and Storm Protection; SLC Mosquito Control (MC) District - Terrill Mincey, MC Operations (including Maps of Control Areas on SHI, how they were acquired, how they are used and their impact on us; information on the District can be viewed at the website <https://www.stlucieco.gov/departments-services/a-z/mosquito-control-coastal-management-services/mosquito-control-district>).

There will be no general meetings planned in July and August, though, special meetings may be scheduled as needed. The next scheduled meeting will be September 21<sup>st</sup>.

PC Updates will continue to be distributed throughout the summer and posted to the website.