

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF REDINGTON SHORES
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

Present upon roll call: Commissioner Wojcik, Commissioner Branch, Commissioner Holthaus, Vice Mayor Adams, Mayor Armstrong and Attorney Denhardt.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Regular Meeting, Tuesday, May 14, 2008

Commissioner Holthaus moved to approve the minutes as stated, second by Vice Mayor Adams. Roll call: all yes.

APPROVAL OF BILLS – June 2008

Vice Mayor Adams moved to approve the June 2008 bills, second by Commissioner Branch. Roll call: all yes.

COMMISSION REPORTS

Mayor Armstrong

Mayor Armstrong reported the Board of County Commission has approved 35 million Penny for Pinellas pledge for Gulf Boulevard Undergrounding and beautification. Redington Shores' allotment will be approximately 1.7 million, which will be paid out through 2011 and 2016. Mayor Armstrong will keep the Commission abreast of this project. There will need to be input from the Commission and residents as to whether they would like to continue with the project as other monies will be needed.

Mayor Armstrong reported the Rays Baseball Team presented their proposal to the Tourist Development Council regarding their funding requirements, seeking an extension of the fourth cent on the bed tax, which is set to expire in 2015. The extension would be to fund the debt service on the new Rays Stadium and would expire in 25 to 30 years. The BIG-C has taken a position on this proposal and Mayor Armstrong is asking the Commission what their thoughts are so she can report back to the BIG-C. Vice Mayor Adams commented he likes the existing stadium. Commissioner Branch also likes the existing stadium, as it is enclosed and air conditioned. Commissioner Wojcik expressed that all stadiums have a life expectancy and the round stadiums built in the 60's had a 25-year life span. Tropicana Field is about that age and using the bed tax and tourist to pay for it is good. Commissioner Holthaus also expressed he is in favor of using the bed tax money for a new stadium.

Mayor Armstrong reported to the Commission the Double Tree in North Redington Beach received the 2007 Care Award for Customer Service. Mayor Armstrong was invited to the Awards Ceremony and was very impressed on they have embraced tourism.

Vice Mayor Adams, Commissioner District No 1

Indian Shores Police Department – Vice Mayor Adams reported from May 07 to May 08; criminal reports were up by 31, physical arrests down by 8, traffic citations up by 54, parking citations up by 37.

Undergrounding – the project is complete. The restoration will begin shortly. The road cuts done on the West Side of Gulf Blvd., will be restored.

Commissioner Branch, Commissioner District No 2

Commissioner Branch thanked Mayor Lawrence of Indian Shores for inviting the Redington Shores Commission to their Memorial Day Celebration; they did a great job and paid a great tribute to our Country.

Stormwater/Paving Project - are out and five contractors have picked up the information. A contractor should be selected at the July 9, 2008 Commission meeting.

Sewer Rehab, 176th Ave. and 1st Street East – the water lines have been moved for the lift station project.

Palm Trees Gulf Boulevard – The town has received a variance to continue with the project, there will be approximately three to four trees in the medians. The Town has received grant monies for this project.

Commissioner Branch reported he has had complaints about residents not being able to hear the Commission on TV during a meeting. Commissioner Branch asked for any residents who have trouble hearing to please contact Town Hall.

Commissioner Wojcik, Commissioner District No 3

Emergency Management – Commissioner Wojcik thanked the speakers who attended the Annual Town Hurricane Meeting held on May 27, 2008. Town staff has met and are upgrading the Town Hurricane Plan for 2008. Information will now be available on the town's web site for hurricane information. Staff from Redington Shores and Indian Shores will be visiting the secondary EOC at Chapel on the Hill.

Sea Oats – the town will receive 15,000 sea oat plants at no cost to the town. Volunteers are needed to help plant the sea oats, which will be planted on a Saturday morning. More information to follow.

Commissioner Holthaus, Commissioner District No 4

Spitzer Park – a meeting was held with the Parks and Recreation Committee, co-chaired with Commissioner Branch. Commissioner Branch lives near Spitzer Park and hears from the residents in the area as to suggestions to enhance Spitzer Park.

Constitution Park – in good shape. The hole on the matting has been replaced. The Time Capsule needs some attention, which will be taken care of this month.

OLD BUSINESS

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

Second Reading and Advertised Public Hearing Ordinance 08-03; Land Use/Zoning Fees

Attorney Denhardt read Ordinance 08-03 by title. Vice Mayor Adams moved to adopt Ordinance 08-03 on second reading, seconded by Commissioner Branch. Mayor Armstrong asked for any discussion. There being no discussion, roll call on the motion and second: all yes.

First Reading and Advertised Public Hearing Ordinance 08-04; Transient Rentals

Attorney Denhardt read Ordinance 08-04 by title. Vice Mayor Adams moved to adopt Ordinance 08-04, seconded by Commissioner Branch. Attorney Denhardt explained the ordinance has been reviewed by Pinellas Planning Council and is in compliance. Mayor Armstrong asked for any discussion. Resident Paula Polen addressed the Commission asked for clarification on the rentals in RS-7. The Commission explained the ordinance would allow rentals to be a minimum of six-months. There being no further discussion, roll call on the motion and second, all yes.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Public Easement 176th Ave. West and Lee Avenue

Mayor Armstrong explained the Gulf Mariner Association hired an Attorney to advocate or to restrict that pedestrian walkway to pedestrian use only. After a lengthy discussion the Attorney from Gulf Mariner followed up with a letter which states "Based on the understanding that the current administration does not have an intention to expand the use of the existing easement beyond its traditional, pedestrian use, the Association respectfully withdraws its request to have the commission act on the proposed resolution at this time." Mayor

Armstrong feels it very important to provide background on this easement and on all beach accesses as it pertains to this Commission and any other Commission. On July 13, 1971 minutes of a town meeting, the developer of the Gulf Mariner Condominium explained that in return for the town vacating a section of Lee Avenue the condominium would grant the town a 10 foot easement at that site and section, that directly abuts and in the minutes they would pave the 20' easement. Subsequent commissions have followed the 1989 Comprehensive Plan, under the Coastal and Conservation Element, the Policy 1.9.4, states that the town shall continue providing adequate public access to beaches and shore lines, enforcing public accesses to beaches renourished at public expense, enforcing the public access requirement of the Coastal Zone Protection Act of 1985 and providing transportation or parking facilities for beach and shoreline access. Followed by Policy 1.9.5, the town shall develop a plan for improving existing and acquiring additional beach access. This plan shall include the acquisition improvement of crossover structures and parking facilities and access consistent with standards included in the Recreation Open Space Element. Under the Recreation Open Space Element, Objective 1.1, states the town shall provide and maintain access to beaches and shores meeting the needs of current and future residents, visitors and tourist.

The position of this Commission and this is **for the record** and for future Commissions. The position is that this Commission will continue to aggressively defend its position not to restrict beach access at 176th and Lee Avenue. This is the only 20-foot beach easement in our town; all other easements are 10-feet wide or less. This Commission will use this easement in anyway as necessary. This Commission will not be bullied nor intimidated by a NIMBY attitude nor accept Gulf Mariner's Attorney's position that this access is traditional pedestrian use. Several instances that are necessary, historical items that have happened I feel that is necessary to bring up and raise the attention and the awareness. When I served as Commissioner, the adjoining property, Mr. and Mrs. Greenberg, requested that the town vacate a 10-foot easement adjacent to their property, that's is half of this 20-foot easement. The sitting board denied that request. Mr. and Mrs. Greenberg offered to landscape and maintain the foliage they wanted to plant in this easement. The Commission approved that request. Let me make this very clear, this is the town's property, the town will not relinquish any rights to this beach easement nor restrict its use in any way. If vehicular beach access becomes necessary, and necessary is determined by the town, it will happen without seeking approval from either neighbor. If the town desires to widen the paver stones to its full extent it will happen without seeking approval from either neighbor. When the paving of beach access began foliage and other obstructions were removed from between properties up and down our coast line. No other neighbors have made this demand that Gulf Mariner seems to have a right to. When Yacht and Tennis Club requested a semi-private beach access, that request was denied over and over again. This Commission and Commissions before it have consistently denied any restrictions on beach access easement, this will not change. As your Mayor I have the fortune of time on my side, I am younger than most of the folks that live and possess this NIMBY attitude and I commit to stand by any future Commission to defend this access until my dying breath. Further I will entertain a motion affirming the town's position for future Commission guidance should this topic resurrect. **Vice Mayor Adams moved to affirm the policy that the Mayor just stated, seconded by Commissioner Branch.** Mayor Armstrong asked for any comments. Commissioner Wojcik stated he has been very consistent that we are a beach community and we need access to the beach, need parking for visitors who come to use that access to the beach. Commissioner Wojcik stated he was puzzled why this topic ever came up. We have to recognize that something generated the fears of the Gulf Mariner residents to surface this issue. I appreciate the fact that it is the town's property. One of the problems with putting any restrictions on is that you restrict unforeseen future needs; we have to keep the town totally viable totally flexible to meet those unforeseen future needs. We also need some way to calm the fears of the people who feel there is going to be consistent traffic through that area, which Commission Wojcik is not sure on how to bring comfort to them. Commissioner Branch stated he does not think there are any changes in site, but if needed it will be used. There being no further discussion roll call on the motion and second, Commissioner Wojcik, no; Commissioner Branch, yes; Commissioner Holthaus, yes, Vice Mayor Adams, yes, Mayor Armstrong, yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation – June 2008 Hurricane Awareness Month

Mayor Armstrong Proclaimed June 2008 Hurricane Awareness Month.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

MISCELLANEOUS

Mayor Armstrong announced the following meeting dates:

Workshop Meeting – Wednesday, June 25, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting – Wednesday, July 9, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Armstrong invited anyone who wishes to attend the next BIG-C meeting, on Wednesday, June 25th at 9:00 a.m. in Treasure Island to hear a presentation on the usage of the bed tax for a new stadium.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary F. Palmer, MMC
Town Clerk