

**MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 30, 2020**

The VIRTUAL September 30, 2020 Barrier Islands Governmental Council (BIG-C) Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m., by President Patrick Soranno, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL.

Present:

City of Clearwater	Councilmember Hoyt Hamilton
City of Belleair Beach	Mayor Joseph A. Manzo
Town of Belleair Shore	Absent
City of Indian Rocks Beach	Mayor Joanne Moston Kennedy
Town of Indian Shores	Mayor Patrick Soranno
Town of North Redington Beach	Mayor Bill Queen
Town of Redington Beach	Mayor Nick Simons
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 Lawrence Lunn

Guest Speaker:

Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections: Julie Marcus

Guests:

Belleair Beach	Lesley Notaro
Blackburn Coastal Realty	Jennie Blackburn
CPWG Engineering Services	Cory Carnes
Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District	David Ardman
Duke Energy	Jeff Baker
Duke Energy	Leanne Haely
Florida Department of Transportation	Bob Esposito
Florida Senate District 24	Senator Jeff Brandes
Florida Senate District 24	Melissa Meshil
Florida House of Representatives District 69	Representative Jennifer Webb
Indian Rocks Beach Resident	Kelly Cisarik
Indian Rocks Beach City Clerk	Deanne B. O'Reilly
Pinellas County Coastal Management	Zack Westfall
Pinellas County Emergency Management	Rick Walker
Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority	Bob Lasker
Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce	Doug Izzo
Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce	Robin Miller, President
Tampa Bay Newspapers	Chris George
Treasure Island & Maderia Beach Chamber	Missy Hahn, President
Waterfront Realty	Chris Kelly

3. **Approval of Agenda.**

MOTION MADE BY MAYOR QUEEN, SECONDED BY MAYOR KENNEDY, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 BIG-C AGENDA AS PRESENTED. UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION.

4. **Approval of Minutes — August 26, 2020.**

MOTION MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER HAMILTON, SECONDED BY MAYOR HENDERSON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL REGULAR BIG-C MEETING OF AUGUST 26, 2020, AS SUBMITTED IN WRITTEN SUMMATION. UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION.

5. **Approval of the August 2020 Treasurer's Report.**

BIG-C Secretary/Treasurer Henderson reviewed the August 2020 Treasurer's Report. She stated there was a beginning balance of \$664.23, and one check written to Digital Eel in the amount of \$31.67, leaving \$632.56 as ending balance as of August 31, 2020.

MOTION MADE BY MAYOR QUEEN, SECONDED BY MAYOR KENNEDY, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 2020 TREASURER'S REPORT AS SUBMITTED. UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION.

6. **Correspondence. None.**

7. **New Business:**

- **Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Julie Marcus on the upcoming elections and pandemic's impact on the election process.**

President Soranno introduced Julie Marcus, the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections, and provided a brief educational background and her professional career.

Ms. Marcus reported on the upcoming elections and the impact of the pandemic on the election process.

Ms. Marcus stated Pinellas County has the most registered voters that they have ever had in the history of Pinellas County with more than 702,000 registered voters. Yesterday, 370,000 mail ballots were mailed to registered voters.

Ms. Marcus stated due to the pandemic, early voting and mail ballots have become major components of the November Election.

Ms. Marcus stated when her team looked at how they were going to approach this election, they looked at it with a layered approach which included mail ballots being a major component, along with early voting, and election day.

Ms. Marcus stated looking at mail ballots, her team decided to get as many voters to vote in the comfort and safety of their homes. So, in June the Elections Office sent out 400,000 request postcards for mail ballots. At that time, there were 272,000 mail ballot requests on file, and now there are 370,000 requests on file, which demonstrated a tremendous outreach that resulted in voters saying they will do their part and vote at home in a safer environment.

Ms. Marcus stated her office will be maintaining five early voting locations, and there will be 25 drop-off locations. She stated there would be 166 polling places and all polling places will be adhering to CDC guidelines.

Ms. Marcus stated Pinellas County needs to be ready and prepared for this election. In the November 2016 Presidential Election, Pinellas County had a 77% voter turnout.

In closing, Ms. Marcus reminded everyone that the last day to register to vote is October 5.

Ms. Marcus stated for official election information, contact the Election Center at (727)464-VOTE or visit their website at votepinellas.com.

8. Old Business:

Nominations for BIG-C Representative appointment to Forward Pinellas for a two-year term.

President Soranno asked for each city's nomination:

Belleair Beach	Councilmember Shirley
Belleair Shore	Absent
Clearwater	Mayor Kennedy
Indian Rocks Beach	Mayor Kennedy
Indian Shores	Mayor Kennedy
Madeira Beach	Mayor Kennedy
North Redington Beach	Mayor Kennedy
Redington Beach	Mayor Kennedy
Redington Shores	Mayor Kennedy
St. Pete Beach	Mayor Kennedy
Treasure Island	Mayor Kennedy

MOTION MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER HAMILTON, SECONDED MAYOR QUEEN, TO APPOINT INDIAN ROCKS BEACH MAYOR JOANNE MOSTON KENNEDY TO FORWARD PINELLAS FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: CLEARWATER, INDIAN ROCKS BEACH, INDIAN SHORES, MADEIRA BEACH, NORTH REDINGTON BEACH, REDINGTON BEACH, REDINGTON SHORES, ST. PETE BEACH, TREASURE ISLAND.

NAYS: BELLEAIR BEACH.

ABSENT: BELLEAIR SHORE.

MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 9 TO 1.

9. Miscellaneous.

President Soranno stated the next meeting will be held in Belleair Beach in-person.

Mayor Manzo stated their meeting hall can accommodate 40 to 50 while meeting the social distancing guidelines.

It was suggested by the Board that Mayor Manzo think about having wrapped breakfast sandwiches or prepackaged breakfasts. The Board left the decision up to Mayor Manzo.

Rick Walker, Pinellas County Emergency Management, stated he has the equipment to have a hybrid meeting (in-person and Zoom) if the BIG-C is interested.

Mayor Henderson stated the Town of Redington Shores just adopted a short-term vacation rental ordinance that regulates the maximum number of individuals allowed per bedroom, all parking must be on the premise, no on-street parking, three strikes and the property owner cannot rent for an entire year. The ordinance encourages peace and harmony among the residents.

The Board recommended the Redington Shores ordinance be forwarded to all members of the BIG-C.

10. Legislative Update.

Senator Brandes spoke on what he expects from the coming Legislative Session. Given the financial impacts that the pandemic has had on the State budget, except that significant efforts will be spent on reducing this year's budget. He stated he will be advocating for prioritizing items in the budget and steering the Legislature away from across the board cuts. When the Legislature sets next year's budget, he anticipates another challenging year. He stated that elected officials will see him focus on insurance reform and continue his efforts on the economy, jobs, transportation, and criminal justice reform.

Senator Brandes reiterated his three priorities for this year are the budget, jobs, and insurance. Florida needs to stabilize its market.

Representative Jennifer Webb spoke on raising costs for property insurance, the manufacturing industry, jobs, tourism, small business packages, fee abatements for small businesses, Amendment No. 2, and additional revenue sources, such as the gaming compact and the Wayfaring U.S. Supreme Court decision, which states that states can mandate that businesses without a physical presence in a state with more than 200 transactions or \$100,000 in-state sales collect and remit sales taxes on transactions in the state.

Representative Webb stated that there is this idea that the tourist market will quickly rebound, which might be true for the hotels and restaurants. Still, the bars and breweries have shouldered more of the burden with the retail sectors being decimated because they missed an entire season.

Representative Webb stated she is putting together small packages for small businesses, and she is working with the various chambers because of the addition to the economic downturn, there is also Amendment No. 2 on the November Ballot, which raises the minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour, and will affect small business owners and restaurants.

Representative Webb stated it is incumbent upon the state to figure out how to diversify the relief packages in terms of reaching down to the small businesses instead of stopping at the larger corporations, and providing fee abatement, loan forgiveness, and etc., to small businesses.

Robin Miller, Chair, Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce, stated she would like the Florida Legislature to address some landlord protection program because of the Governor's Executive Orders for eviction stays. The landlords (property owners) still had to pay the mortgages, property taxes and keep the properties up, and if the landlords do not receive any landlord protection, the state could see a lot of foreclosures.

Mayor Manzo thanked Senator Brandes and Representative Webb for attending the BIG-C Meetings and showing their concern and listening to them as their Florida Legislature representatives. He stated Governor DeSantis has spoken about having some stringent protest laws for the state of Florida.

Mayor Manzo stated he is speaking for himself, and this is not his city's position. He stated when he sees people jumping on Mercedes Benzes, disrupting people's dinners in St. Petersburg, disrupting the diners at the new St. Petersburg Pier, and burning a man's gas station in Tampa to the ground for something that happened in Minneapolis, this is lawlessness. If Pinellas County hopes to bring people to the state of Florida, this has to be addressed. So, if the Governor's protest laws come before the Florida Legislature, he would like Senator Brandes and Representative Webb to give it their strongest consideration. As a State, he thinks the Florida Legislature has to respect residents and their property rights and visitors.

Mayor Hendrick spoke on the shoaling out at John's Pass. When the new John's Pass Bridge was built, all the debris from the old bridge was left in the water there, which contributed to the shoaling.

Mayor Hendrick stated he needs to know that this is on Senator Brandes' and Representative Webb's agenda to help push this upward through the Florida Legislature.

Mayor Hendrick stated the shoaling is so bad that some of the businesses are in trouble. The city needs help in removing debris because it is affecting some of the businesses in the John's Pass Village now, and as John's Pass Village goes, so does the city of Madeira Beach.

Mayor Hendrick stated there was a bill on the Governor's desk last session to redo the groins that the Governor vetoed, which the city desperately needed. The city has never received beach nourishment.

Representative Webb stated she is reaching out to Congressman Bilirakas since he successfully received money for the Anclote River, which was a similar situation.

Senator Brandes stated the city of Madeira Beach has his full commitment, and they are continuing to work on this issue. He understands this is an overall pivotal area for the beaches and not just for the residents of Madeira Beach and surrounding areas. The entire region benefits from John's Pass.

11. Public Comments. None.

12. City Events.

BIG-C members reviewed upcoming events.

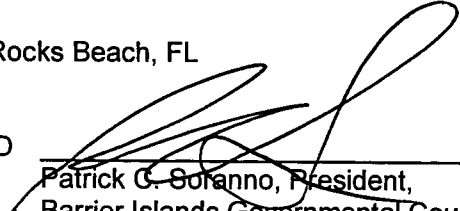
13. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

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

10/28/2020
Date Approved

APPROVED


Patrick C. Soranno, President,
Barrier Islands Governmental Council
Mayor, Town of Indian Shores

ATTEST


Freddie Lozano, Town Clerk
Town of Indian Shores