

West Galveston Island Property Owners Association (WGIPOA)

Board of Directors Meeting

The WGIPOA Board of Directors meeting was held on August 17, 2013 at the Galveston Country Club, The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Jerry Mohn, Present. Directors present were Jay Hellerich – Acapulco Village, June Newton – Bermuda Beach, Boyd Carr – Isla Del Sol, Al Galli – Jamaica Beach, Bet Jennings – Laffite’s Cove, Lee Slataper, Pirates POA, Lee Petros – Pointe West, Chris Kasper – Spanish Grant Bay, and Nina Parker - Terramar. Susan Gonzales, CKM as Secretary.

Officials in attendance: Marie Robb – COG Council also running for council, Judge Jim Schweitzer rerunning,, and Pat Grady running for District Court. Other candidates were Wilford Schmidt and George Young. Chief Constable Clint Wayne Brown was also present.

Corp. Sponsors Marie Robb – Coastal Solutions was recognized.

The prior meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion by Boyd Carr and seconded by Bet Jennings, the minutes of July 2013 and the financial & collection report were approved.

District 6: City Council Member Marie Robb – City is in the; middle of budget, biggest issue is with capital improvement plan for district 6 and it has to do with the sewer. The City of Galveston has moved it back a year. Marie will be meeting with the City to let them know this is not acceptable. The Isla Del Sol water plant has a bad odor. Marie will follow up on the Isla Del Sol water plant. Safety is a huge issue on the west end and we need more police force and fire coverage. What is key in getting more coverage on the west end is to call and report the crime no matter what has occurred. Service is based on calls received. Call 911 and call the non-emergency number 409-765-3702. Call the non-emergency number also handles animal control so if they answer please leave your number. There will be 5% increase in windstorm. There are some companies that are writing through your Homeowners policy for windstorm, Lexington and GIA is writing the policies. District 6 faired pretty well, compared to the Back Bay areas. We are AE Zone which means rates will come down. If you have a pre-firm property (downstairs are covered) If it is your main residence there will be an adjustment, if second home there will be an increase. You need to write Senators and Congressman

Community Policing: Officer Chad Meyers - City of Galveston: Crime has been slower this year; He recommends you secure your property. Fishing equipment, golf carts, etc...secure your property too easy to steal. Don’t leave your property in your boat or outside of your home.

Officer Meyers was asked to respond to what is done when someone drives a vehicle or golf cart on the beach. Officer Meyers stated no vehicle is allowed on the beach, except a golf cart that is licensed as a handicapped vehicle and the handicapped person must be on the golf cart. Only licensed drivers can drive a golf cart. If renters are trespassing on property call 911. Vehicles

can be parked on the road but not on both sides of the street as it would block emergency vehicles.

Presentation: Sargassum (seaweed) Early Warning System by Dr. Jens Figlus and Captain Robert Webster.

Where does it come from? Sargassum comes from the Atlantic Ocean and then into the Gulf of Mexico. In the middle of the Atlantic Ocean floats a 3,520,000 – square kilometer mat of float seaweed. This is the Sargasso Sea. It was originally named “Sargaco” by Christopher Columbus because of the resemblance to little grapes of the air bladders that keep the seaweed afloat. Sargaco eventually became Sargasso, the area-the Sargasso Sea, and the weed Sargassum. The Sargasso Sea is bounded on the west by the Gulf Stream; on the north, by the North Atlantic Current; on the east, by the Canary Current; and on the south, by the North Atlantic Equatorial Current. This system of currents forms the North Atlantic Subtropical Gyre.

The main source of the Sargassum found floating throughout the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean is the Sargasso Sea. The species being observed on our shores is a brown, macro-algae called Sargassum fluitans, often found in association with Sargassum natans, both native to the Caribbean and both commonly called sargassum seaweed. Unlike most other Sargassum species, they are pelagic (free-floating) and have never been attached to the seafloor during their life cycle.

Even though the prevailing currents surrounding the Sargasso Sea work to keep the seaweed centrally located, winds, storms and spiraling currents help disperse Sargassum throughout the world's oceans. Generally, this is a natural phenomenon that occurs cyclically, but the right combination of winds, waves and currents brings the Sargassum closer to shore. It is not unusual to see small pieces of Sargassum float up on Caribbean beaches, particularly in July or August. As currents intersected with the edges of the Sargasso Sea, parts of the Sargassum mat broke off. The currents then carried the weed along with them, eventually sweeping it eastward into the Caribbean islands, where local currents carried it ashore. Unfortunately, Sargassum is slow to decompose, resulting in foul smells and an aesthetically unpleasant view for beach-goers.

The Sargassum eco-system is one of the most unique and important in the world. Floating Sargassum mats provide food, shelter and protection for a wide diversity of animals and plants, including species of algae, nudibranchs (sea slugs), shrimps, crabs, tubeworms, fish and other invertebrates, some of which are endemic (not found elsewhere) to the Sargassum ecosystem. The mats also serve as rich nursery areas for a large variety of juvenile sea turtles and fishes that are associated with the mats. This diverse nursery eco-system also attracts important commercial and game fish. Ashore, the inhabitants of the Sargassum mats serve as an important food source for many seabirds and crustaceans. The decomposing algae also add nutrients to the beach.

We have been able to monitor the Sargassum and let the coastline know when it is coming. We are looking at forecasting software where anyone can look at the movement of Sargassum.

Dead-end for Sargassum where there is a use for it on a permanent basis. Dr. Figlus has been working on a research grant with Dr. Tom Linton. We are able to track the Sargassum. There are very few natural dunes on the island. The idea is to use the Sargassum as a way to incorporate it into building dunes. Come up for a scientific way to pick up the Sargassum, to bale it or build it into blocks and build dunes with it. It should provide a basis to build the dunes. Texas A & M will start a Pilot Dune Project to build a dune approximately 800 ft. and study it. In the summer of 2014 on the east end of the Island a test project will occur.

Other:

Paid Parking – more people are coming out to the west end. At Hersey Beach, the Parks Board placed two port-a-potties and installed bollards at the base of the dunes to handle the large overflow.

Windstorm – increasing rates by 5% at the first of the year. At the next meeting will include a presentation on Flood Insurance. Pre-firms will be badly affected on flood insurance.

Survey of the west end of the island – it was supposed to be done in June but the City slipped and now it is supposed to be accomplished by October. There will be depth of closure readings as well as the five survey points the WGIPOA did last year to show the migration of the beach. The City of Galveston will be doing the survey each year after by late May or early June each year before hurricane season.

September 21 Meeting – Interim Chief Mike Wisko will give a presentation on the Galveston Fire Department.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Susan Gonzales

Recording Secretary