

WEST GALVESTON ISLAND PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CITY OF GALVESTON OFFICIALS

October 10, 2000

Participants:

From the WGIPOA: Al Birdwell; Dan Daigle; Sidney McClendon; Jerry Mohn; Peggy Rapp; Jim Steinbeck; Sharon Turnley

From the City of Galveston: City Manager Steve Leblanc; Councilwoman Dianna Pucetti; Acting Police Chief Robert Pierce

The WGIPOA Board of Directors all considered the first meeting with the City Manager, Steve Leblanc, was a big success. The City is interested in addressing our concerns and Steve encouraged us to have future meetings again. We believe it would be advantageous to meet with the City Manager at least on a quarterly basis. The Board of Directors spent approximately two hours with the City Manager on October 11. The first hour was devoted to discussing police activities on the West End and the second hour was devoted to various matters of concern. We provided a list of topics we wanted to discuss, which are summarized as follows:

1. Police Response Police Patrols: The West sector of Galveston Island has 10 permanent slots with 3 shifts (three police officers per shift) with one supervisor. The ideal situation for the West End would be 5 police officers per shift but availability of new police officers and budget constraints will keep the current 3 man shifts. There are 100 officers in the police department and the West End has 10% of the total. However, only 1% of the calls emanate from the West End. Of 117,000 calls for the entire Galveston Island, only 281 calls came from the West End.
2. 911 calls: Response time could be slow if you use a cell phone for a 911 call. The cell phone goes to the nearest tower and most calls are transmitted to the mainland. Unless you advise this is a Galveston call or you ask the dispatcher to connect you with Galveston dispatcher, the mainland will take the call and route it to Galveston, which could take extra minutes and time. Again, if you use a cell phone for a 911 call, ask for the Galveston dispatcher. Direct land line 911 calls go to the Galveston dispatcher. There is a direct non-emergency line to the police dispatcher: Tel: 797-3702. If you need to talk to a police officer, he will call back or stop at your house to visit.
3. Patrolling Subdivisions: There is no pattern. There are two cars working all the time each shift. As of June, 1999, a new direct feed radio system was installed in all cars to talk to each other including the Jamaica Beach and Sheriffs Police Departments. The wear and tear and maintenance on West End cars are twice the cost than on the cars used in the City. When there is an arrest, the officer must bring the individual to the downtown police station, fill out paper work, etc, before coming back to the West End.
4. Loud noise from near by bars/clubs: This complaint is being addressed as legally as allowed. The police look for repeated violations to issue citations and to close down these various type facilities.
5. Replacing Faded Street Signs: The City has a machine that can print out new signs with a 10-year non-fade guaranty from the manufacturer. The City believes they have replaced all the faded signs but if there some they missed to please Email Steve Leblanc at leblancste@cityofgalveston.org and advise the location of the faded sign. The excessive "parking for disabled only" signs at the 11-mile road beach access was not authorized by the City and any extra signs should be removed.
6. Replacing Ballard's on Beaches: The City street department will replace any missing Ballard's and to Email the City Manager with the location.
7. Utility and Infrastructure Problems: The Water Department plans to install a new water package plant that will double the capacity of the Terramar plant. A new water tower was recently completed near Spanish Grant and Lafittes Cove. As of March, 2001, the City will no longer use well water and this will reduce and hopefully eliminate any sulfur type smell. Areas without a city sewer system will be upgraded as funding becomes available and the City Manager stressed how important it is to increase the tax cap in the early 2001 vote. The construction and hook up of the sewer system in the Sea Isle subdivision is ongoing.
8. Matching Funds for Hike and Bike Trails: Some subdivisions would like to collect and allocate funds for a hike and bike trails. The City has no matching funds program for hike and bike trails. It was suggested that the subdivisions apply for grants with a matching fund program.

9. Street Paving in Subdivisions and Adjacent to Subdivisions: The City ran out of bond money for street repair. The last bond program was in 1994 and these funds have been exhausted. The City is investigating a \$3.5 to \$7 million bond issue that will not affect the current tax cap.
10. In Kind Services – Utilizing City Vehicles, etc: Depending on the use of the vehicle, the City will allow a subdivision to use City vehicles and drivers for specific projects such as beach sand renourishment.
11. Code Enforcement: Debbie Stark (Tel: 797-3600) handles the code enforcement for the City and to advise her of any violations. The biggest problem with code enforcement on the West End are with rental properties. The owner's or rental agencies need to provide the renters with the significant code requirements to follow such as trash disposal and pickup. The wind on the West End is severe at times and blows over the trash containers. At times, the trash container is stuffed and extra trash bags are placed adjacent to the container where dogs rip open bags and spread the contents on the ground. The City Manager would like the property owners to purchase an extra container from the City and to buy or build a rack to secure the container.
12. Animal Control: There is a leash law in the City and on the beach and should be enforced. Everyone should become aware of the law and real-estate agents and rental property owners should advise the renters.
13. Fire Response Time: If there is a delay in the fire truck arriving to a scene, it is usually a result of the firemen not being able to locate the residence. There are a number of homes on the West End that do not have a visible number to read on the outside of the house. The City Manager encourages all property owner associations to advise the residents to have a clear and readable number on their house in order for an EMS or fire unit to locate the address without delay.
14. Emergency Evacuation: William Sigorsky ("Ski") is the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City: Tel: 797-3710. Acting Police Chief Pierce indicated after an emergency or evacuation of the West End for any storm related events, the police will not allow cars back into the area unless the car or the person has proper identification. A sticker on the front car windshield with a subdivision name or the City of Galveston will not be sufficient and the police will require a driver's license or information to verify property ownership. The police would accept the subdivision name with the year on the sticker.
