

WEST GALVESTON ISLAND PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION

MEETING WITH GALVESTON CITY MANAGER

August 2, 2002

In attendance:

City: Steve LeBlanc, City Manager; Dianna Puccetti, Council Member; Police Chief Bob Pierce and Captain Brian Reidel of the Police Dept; Brandon Wade, Asst. City Manager and Director of Public Utilities; Angelo Grasso, Public Works; Mike Dricks, Traffic; and, Barbara Sanderson, Parks & Recreation.

WGIPOA: Jerry Mohn - WGIPOA; Kathie Harty – Sea Isle; Wanda Greer and Doug Eibsen, Terramar; Marty Baker – Pirates Beach; Peggy Rapp – Condos; and, Dan Daigle – Spanish Grant - Bay

Topics of Discussion

1. Public Safety: Most of the time was spent on ways to increase police visibility and response time for the West End. With the current budget deficits, the City has not been able to hire more officers as was indicated in the April meeting. Overtime costs have been maintained at a minimum. The planned fuel tank at the 12 mile road Fire Station was never implemented due to the cost reductions. This would save the officer's time, up to three hours sometimes, in going back to the 53rd street station or downtown for re-fueling. Chief Pierce indicated the estimated cost in April to install the tank was \$25,000.

Steve LeBlanc advised at the meeting that the City will commit and invest the \$25,000 to install the tank at the 12 mile road Fire Station as soon as possible.

Rather than going to the 53rd street or the downtown fuel depot, the tank at 12 mile Road will allow the policemen on the at least 2 to 3 hours additional time to patrol the West End.

The police lack of response to telephone calls and the non-issuance of tickets to violators was discussed. It was mentioned by members that when an officer does respond, violations are not written. The Chief will make available the log book to determine what was done. Both the Chief and the City Manager suggested that residents could help the police department by becoming their eyes and ears, similar to a deputy. If an incident is prevalent, get the license number and call dispatch and request to speak to an officer.

Take videos, pictures, etc., and use the information as a witness.

In a subsequent e-mail, the City Manager, Steve LeBlanc, advised the following:

"Wanda and Jerry, I know that you and the rest of the west end residents are frustrated and we all share that frustration. I do think that if we follow the suggestions (video, pictures, being personal witness) that we came up with yesterday that we can jointly stop the undesirable behavior. That in turn will increase property values, bring more tax revenue so that we can run the city better. This is the upward spiral we all should desire so that our quality of life improves.

Think about it, if someone from the West end calls in a complaint, by the time the

officer gets there, the action has stopped or they saw the police coming. The officer is in the situation where they have a complaint without hard evidence. The officer is left with the choice of giving a verbal warning or issuing a ticket based upon hearsay. If he issues the ticket, goes to municipal court, the judge will have a hard time making a case. If the person gets away with violating a law, after going in front of the judge, then my feeling is that they will feel even stronger about getting away with it again. In addition, we would have wasted your time, the officer's time and the judge's time without accomplishing anything. If we are going to stop west end problems, we can spend more money on more officers increasing visibility. This is probably the most expensive option without the effectiveness that we want. What I think is much more effective and something that we can do now is to ask the citizens to collect hard evidence that can not be refuted by anyone!

Jerry, I am asking you to please notify all West Enders to help us by proceeding with the recommendations that we discussed yesterday. The West End is long and sparsely populated relative to the east end of the island. This makes it more challenging to provide police protection (along with every other city service). We have to stop being afraid to get involved if we are going to make a difference. I think that if we are all united in doing this, then we will most certainly make a difference. Get me the evidence and we will follow through. In fact, if we have the evidence, I don't see that we have a choice but to follow through. And Wanda, as you say, once the word gets out, the behavior will stop!

Let's punish the violators!"

The Board explored the subdivision's hiring off-duty police officers, similar to what is occurring on the East End. Actually, the Chief revealed the idea was modeled after the Bermuda Beach and Sea Isle subdivisions, which started using off duty officers long ago. The City would provide the off duty officers with a police car and gas. They will still be employees of the City and the obligation of any subdivision is the direct payment to the officer plus obtaining a workmen's compensation insurance policy (the cost is being investigated). The cost would be \$25 per hour with 4 hour shifts. Captain Brian Reidel provided the following information:

"If you pay the officers \$25 per hour, \$100 per 4 hour shift, it would depend on how many shifts the residents wanted to fund.

I would recommend having your shifts in the evening when most of the residents are available to speak to the officer patrolling the area. This opens up communication between the residents and the officers, which is very important. I would also recommend starting out with a few shifts at key times and seeing how it works out.

I am sure some residents would be interested in having patrols on the weekends to handle the influx of problems that weekend visitors and residents bring with them.

Depending on how many shifts the residents want, it is usually easier to staff a shift that starts at the end of a patrol shift, or ends at the beginning of a shift. The patrol shifts are 6a-2p, 2p-10p, and 10p-6a. The detectives work 8a-4p.

We would be glad to support any detail with available patrol units and fuel. Please let me know what you need."

The Board would like to see many of the subdivisions participate. Subdivisions that are near each other can share the costs. The Board will review at the next WGIPOA meeting on August 17 the possibility of the Association starting the operation and paying for the first month or two until the subdivisions are organized to begin the program. The subdivisions and condos that currently hire off duty policemen find a major advantage in protecting property and people.

Infrastructure: Sewers: Brandon Wade advised the West End requires \$26 million for sewers with \$13

million for sewer plant and trunk mains and \$13 million inside the subdivisions to connect the homes to the lines. The West End can wait for the IDC bonds to be paid off in 2015 to obtain funds or each subdivisions institute a PID (Public Improvement Program). The City does not have the funds to perform any of the needed operations.

Streets: Several subdivisions are requesting repairs and paving for the streets. Some areas are in the budget while others will not receive any services the coming year due to budget constraints. The City has a new paving crew in the budget and adding 7 people. Brandon Wade suggested if the subdivision will pay for the material, the City will provide the labor and equipment. A copy of all the requests for infrastructure problems with subdivisions was given to Angelo Grasso for a response if it was not already handled during the meeting. The infrastructure matter was handled subdivision by subdivision as follows:

Sea Isle: Streets: The complaint was the roads were not prepared properly after the sewers were installed. The Public Works Director advised the roads will be surfaced with San Jacinto scheduled in the next two weeks. They will investigate the sunk holes around Burnett Street. They probably will patch it as they are doing repairs on the other streets. The idea in using a sump pump or flood gates to drain the water was discussed and rejected.

Sewers: It was indicated the City is behind in sewer repairs and installation it will be completed by October 1. San Jacinto is scheduled in the next two weeks.

Terramar: Streets: Wanda Greer provided a lengthy list of street repairs and Angelo Grasso will review and revert.

Sewer Plant: The request by the subdivision was the schedule and site layout for expansion of the plant. The TNRCC buffer zones have been approved and now the City will move forward with a final design. The plant expansion is targeted at \$2 million and a new revenue bond program is necessary. Not all the information is available yet but the overall cost for a complete new plant and overhaul is \$20 million that will require a sewer rate increase, which City Council may not approve. The landscaping and rubbish currently around the plant will be addressed.

Indian Beach: The main request is for the bayside (North of FM 3005) of the subdivision streets to be repaired and resurfaced and more street lights. Brandon Wade advised the City feels the number of residents in this area is basically without traffic and does not warrant any services until more homes are built. If the traffic has increased then a study would be conducted.

Karankawa: The main problem with the drainage system is that the water drains to FM 3005 and there is no where for the water to drain and floods the area. Both Brandon Wade and Angelo Grasso advised there is no quick fix to the problem. The main problem is when the town homes were constructed the contractor never installed a pipe under the driveway. In addition, the ditch from the town homes common driveway to their real line adjoining the subdivision was filled in. The City believes digging out the ditches will not alleviate the problem and flooding will still occur. The subdivision has been working with TEXDOT to get the ditch on the south side of FM 3005 regraded, approximately a 2 block section. The City believes the water needs to drain to the Bay The City has included the problem in the Master Plan that will be presented to consultants for a solution.

Spanish Grant Bay: Dan Daigle raised the Anchor Bay development issue and the impact on the environment and wetlands. The Corps of Engineers has delayed approval of the application until September 1 in order for the subdivision and other organizations to provide data to support the concerns. The major concern is the double pontoon bridge the developer plans to use in building the 275 lots. The bridge is ready to collapse and cannot be used.

Hunting: The current City ordinance needs to be changed. In order not to injure property or people, dove hunters in then area cannot shoot in excess of 150 yards. However, people have been hit by pellets. This matter will be investigated.

Laffite's Cove: Nature Preserve: The Laffite's Cove Nature Preserve would like the City to stop mowing the grass next to the water plant, which is located adjacent to the preserve. Mike Dricks advised the best way is to install a no mowing sign so the people will know what to do. He will pursuethematter and have a sign made.

11 mile Road: The request is to expand and resurface. The City advised the road is already narrow and there is not sufficient property to claim for a right of way.

Eckerd Drive Extension: This needs to be addressed especially if the Developer, Blackard, is willing to fund a portion of the road project.

Cove Lane: Street lights are slated to go up at Cove Lane and Stewart Road but there is a moratorium in installing any currently.

Hike and Bike Trail: Nothing has been done and a Task Force will have to be formed to pursue the project.

Palm Beach: Water line repairs caused problems with the roadway and several large holes resulted. The City is in the process of patching the holes and repaving the streets in the near future.

Bermuda Beach: Pabst Road at FM 3005 on the Southside has a few holes in the road that needs patching. This is no problem and the City will fill in the holes with asphalt.

3. House Numbering: The City would like to emphasize to all home owners to have a house number that is readable from the street. The Police or EMS or Fire Department has trouble locating an address if there are no house numbers or if the numbers are to small. Please attach a house number that will be readable from the streets.
