

WEST GALVESTON ISLAND PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION

MEETING WITH GALVESTON CITY MANAGER

August 23, 2005

City Managers Meeting

August 23, 2005 Room 204, City Hall 3:30 – 5:15 PM

Attendance:

City: Steve LeBlanc - City Manager; Chief Ken Mack – Police Department; Wendy O'Donohoe – Planning Department; Brandon Wade - Public Utilities Department

WGIPOA: Jerry Mohn; Rick Heiberg – Pointe san Luis; Wanda Greer – Terramar; Claire Reisweg – Sand 'N Sea; Peggy Zahler and Lucy Rangel – Spanish Grant Bay

Topics of Discussion

1. Public Safety – Police Patrols

- a. Not enough patrols of the West End
- b. Response time is slow
- c. No follow up when police are called

Results: Chief Mack reviewed the program for the west end. There are 8 officers assigned to patrol the west end: 3 on days, 3 nights, and 2 early mornings. The police department is up to maximum strength now with 168 officers but resources are allocated based on need. Through July, there were 40,000 calls to the police department and only 1000 calls came from the west end. Usually, the police department receives 60-65,000 calls per year and only 3.2 to 3.7% of the calls come from the west end. The police patrol and assignment needs for an area are dependent on the ratio of calls to service; as a result the west end receives minimum service. The police department makes every effort to provide a consistent, noticeable level of service to the area. The Chief emphasized that residents should call and report crime incidences because all calls are logged. All dispatches are recorded digitally. Cell phones do not give a home address and make certain when you call, the address.

The Police Dispatchers are civilians and not police officers. If you receive an unsatisfactory response from the dispatcher or any call for service, request that the "field supervisor" come out to explain the matter. If you ask the dispatcher for the supervisor on duty, you will be routed to the sergeant in the jail, which is not the supervisor that can come out to survey and address the concern.

- d. 5500 Association: The new beach access requirements in front of the 5500 Association are being ignored and the police are doing nothing to enforce the laws.
- e. Pointe san Luis: Need more police patrols and enforcement of existing laws to go after 4-wheelers, golf carts, and motorcycles that are crossing dunes, and driving recklessly.
- f. Golf Carts: Confusion still exists with the regulations and if they are permitted on the beach.

Results: A good dialog of the above (d, e, f) occurred during the meeting. The following was sent by Chief Mack after the meeting:

Attention All West End Officers:

This message is a brief synopsis of my conversation with the West Galveston

Island Property Owners Association today on several issues.

1. Violators parked in prohibited areas - If you get such a call, makes a legitimate effort to correct and resolve the problem. It has been reported that an inability to navigate the soft sands has been presented as a reason for not contacting violators. The argument was presented to me that officers always have the option of going to the nearest walk over or even private residence driveway, parking and making a short walk to contact blatant violators and accomplish the enforcement task.

2. Fires on the beach - The ordinance states no open fires. This ordinance is primarily aimed at large campfires and bonfires. Fires in or near the vegetation line are especially dangerous in dry conditions such as we have been experiencing.

3. Golf carts - The law allows for a golf cart to be operated on a public roadway if it is being driven directly to or from a golf course within a distance of not more than two miles. They are allowed on any public beach where motor vehicles are allowed, but are restricted in those areas where other motor vehicles are similarly restricted. They are not allowed to be driven on a public roadway for the purpose of getting to the beach unless the vehicle has been duly modified to meet the standards to be registered as a slow moving vehicle (lights, signals and such as well as the required "slow moving vehicle" placard). Even when so modified, the vehicle must still be operated by a licensed operator. (I did inform all at the meeting that within reason we were not going to be overly aggressive in enforcing this with the elderly or those with legitimate mobility challenges).

4. 5500 Area - With the changes in the beach access in and near the Area 5,500, there is a very strong demand for enforcement of the One Way designation in the affected area, as well as vehicles driving in prohibited areas in general. Regardless of how we may feel individually about any of the issues, for the residents these are critically important issues. The basic complaint is that there is no consistency in the enforcement of these laws and ordinances. A consistent enforcement effort that has tangible results will have the most positive impact on the perceptions in this area of concern. Your efforts and attention to these concerns are appreciated.

Respectfully,

Kenneth Mack

Chief of Police

2. Public Works and Planning Department:

- a. Trash Barrels: Please advise availability of trash barrels in order for residents to order additional. Please continue with extra pick ups during high season.

Results: The City has trash barrels again and if any property owner wishes additional, they are available at \$3.00 per month. The City will have a special pick up on Fridays of residential trash for property owners south of FM 3005 through 9/2/05.

- b. West End Water pressure: During heavy weekend use, water pressure is low to non existent. An update on the status of the bonds to improve the water lines and pressure for the west end.
c. Terramar and Sea Isle: when will the bonds be issued to install sewer lines and pave the roads?
d. 5500 Association: Since the Bay Harbor sewer and water line project is being delayed, the

5500 Association would like to replace them in the bond issue. The 5500 Association is directly across from Bay Harbor on the beach and they would like to get rid of the septic systems.

Results: If City Council approves bonds to be issued in November/December, approximately \$12 million will be for sewer lines and \$7 million for streets and paving in Sea Isle and Terramar and the 5500 Association. The water lines would go west from Jamaica Beach to the tower at Pointe San Luis area, which would double the capacity and greatly curtail water pressure problems. The bond proposal would also include paving of roads in Sunny Beach and Sportsman Road (Ostemeyer). In addition, the bond proposal will include sewers for the 5500 Association area. Once the sewers are in, the streets will be paved. Although a project is designed for Bay Harbor on the bay side, it will be delayed until rights of way are finalized.

e. Lafitte's Cove would like 11 mile road widened. Please update.

Results: The project is being designed in house by Charles Warner, a contract employee and former City Engineer. The project will involve a land swap in with the property owner on the east side of 11 mile road with City property in the 8 mile road area. The project will require US Army Corp of Engineers clearance since it involves wetlands. The street widening and paving project is included in the upcoming fiscal year budget.

f. Indian Beach:

1. The streets need to be repaired. Potholes exist but the entire subdivisions streets have cracks and grass growing on them.

Results: The Director described the streets in Indian Beach as ugly but not structurally unsafe. It would not be cost justified now to put in an overlay. As far as the potholes, these can be patched and the City will address the matter.

2. The lights have never been installed as promised.

Results: The City has discussed and resolved the transformer and sufficient power problem in this area with Centerpoint Energy and they are ready to proceed with installation of the lights. This should begin in the next few months.

e. Karankawa Beach area:

1. One recommendation at a meeting earlier this year with the Public Works Department suggested the one culvert on FM 3005 be blocked to prevent storm water from going back across FM 3005 to the subdivisions. This storm run off is one of the biggest sources of drainage problems for the area.
2. The storage facility across from Karankawa Beach was supposed to have a retention pond. There was supposed to be a drainage pipe to regulate the storm water flow to the north and it was never installed. A berm was to be constructed to direct to direct drainage from this facility toward a low area within the northern portion of the storage facility tract of land and it was never constructed. The subdivisions believe construction of these drainage supports would ease the flooding that occurs during heavy storms.

Results: Charles Warner, Contract Engineer, will do the study for both of the above. Brandon indicated the culvert is at a high spot in the road and he believes it may have been an old cattle crossing. It may have to be closed. Also, he speculated the storm water run off may be needed

to drain to the Gulf. The next major drainage evaluation project for the City is Karankawa and they plan to finish by December. Brandon also believed a pumping system is not necessary.

3. Two walkovers (east and west) at Karankawa Beach have been closed for many months. Requests have been made (via e-mail) that ramps replace the stairs. This would make them much more user friendly, including making it possible to accommodate wheelchairs. The residents would like the walkovers open again and putting in ramps instead of stairs would seem acceptable.

Results: The City is at a loss in what to do. They consider all the walkovers open now and stopped whatever projects were going on earlier this year when the residents complained. The City would like to know what the residents really want and will not do anything in the interim.

4. Seascape: At the front of Seascape entry there was a sink hole in the roadway shoulder for the past 6 months. The city/state has only put up an orange cone. The hole appears to be related to the city storm drain.

Results: The City will investigate and correct the request. They were not aware of the problem.

5. Sunny Beach:

1. The horse stable has a portable bathroom and lock it up at night. The public is unable to use the facility, they use the area around it. Besides a health issue, the behavior of the people is rude and very offensive. This could be a code violation. Either a fence should be placed or the portable bathroom should be placed by the horse stables on the beach.

Results: The facility meets all the requirements and it is not a City problem. The WGIPOA along with Sunny Beach should talk to the stable owners about the situation. One recommendation was to buy a port a potty to place near the area.

2. The City was to raise the question of artificial breaching of the pond for proper drainage with the GLO and US COE. Sunny Beach would like an update.

Results: The US Army Corp of Engineers do not care. The GLO along with the City tried breaching the beach a month ago and it did not do a good job. Brandon believes they did not dig a deep enough trough. He suggests when the ponds fill up is the time to breach the ponds. The City believes the drainage problem cannot be fixed unless you breach the ponds.

a. Spanish Grant Beach:

1. Septic Tanks: Ordinance needs to be changed that if a residence does not tie into the sewer line, the water will be shut off. Septic tanks are still in the subdivision when sewer lines are available.

Results: Spanish Grant would like the ordinance to be changed to shut off the water in 6 to 12 months if a homeowner with septic does not connect when sewers are available. Public Works can say yes or no and should require the homeowner to change to sewer. A health hazard exists if the septic tank overflows during storms.

2. The drainage problem in the subdivision is serious. Water drains currently to the Gulf and it needs to drain to Spanish Grant Boulevard and then across FM 3005,

which is all uphill. Before a shoreline restoration project can be constructed on the beach, the drainage needs to be corrected first.

Results: A study for the east side of Spanish Grant is now 95% complete. The cost is estimated at \$20-30,000 to raise the roadway and to look at the ditches more carefully and to keep them cleared. For the west side, the cost will be approximately \$200,000, which is not budgeted for the next fiscal year. The project will require property acquisitions for the piping and an easement from the property owners.

a. Pointe San Luis:

1. City water has a smell this far west and Pointe San Luis would like to know the reason and how it can be corrected.

Results: Brandon advised the smell could be three situations: 1) It is blended well water with surface water but the City stopped this procedure in 2001. 2) It happens when the chlorine residual decreases, which is rare and not possible. 3) No chlorine in the system line, but highly improbable since the lines are checked constantly. The City samples the water weekly and is at a loss with any smell. Brandon suggested for the homeowner to drain the water heater once a year. If there is a problem with smell, please call Public Works Department and report it.

2. Need beach access signs and bollards.

Results: When Centex development has residences and more homes constructed, the beach access program for Pointe San Luis will be enacted.

3. The drains on the Laguna side have not been cleaned. The city was going to clean out have not been cleaned, particularly the one on Intrepid near the swale adjacent to Centex.
4. The drains that the city was going to clean out have not been cleaned. Especially the one on Intrepid near the swale adjacent to Centex.

Results: The problem is the US Army Corp of Engineers and the permit process, which is being worked. This will require a few more months to negotiate. In the interim, the City will work with Centex to clear the ditches.

a. Bermuda Beach:

1. There is a drainage problem on Bermuda Beach Drive on the West side. The drains need to be cleared of sand that has blown in and filled them. That alone may alleviate part of the drainage problem.

Results: The City will investigate the matter and revert.

2. The other problem area in Bermuda Beach is on each end of Bermuda Beach Drive. People go in and cannot turn around without turning into peoples driveway, knocking down mailboxes etc. We would like to see the turn around area rebuilt, especially on the East side which would also shore up that area that is prone to erosion. Some of that good "stuff" they used for our road shoulder would be great and we would like to have it marked "No Turn Around", or "Dead End - Local Traffic Only". Some type of sign has to be installed to keep people from just cruising to the dead-end. Bermuda Beach would like a sign similar

along the frontage road as you come off the 61st exit to keep people from short cutting through the neighborhood. We have a lot of people putting ropes over the driveway but unfortunately the people just drive in the yards.

Results: The City will place additional signage to read "Dead End". The type of sign requested cannot be handled since the beach access plan allows certain areas of Bermuda Beach for the public to park vehicles.

1. Parks Board of Trustees:

- a. The West End would like to see the City increase its funding to the Parks Board to \$75,000 for trash pick up of the west end. The Parks Board has inadequate funds to clean west end beaches and the City needs to increase funds in the upcoming budget cycle to meet the demands and growing population of the west end.

Results: The City has increased the payment to the Parks Board of Trustees from \$30,000 to \$35,000. In addition, the City has agreed to pick up trash on the beaches for holiday weekends and a crew and truck will be assigned to the task. The City has requested the Parks Board of Trustees to raise the parking fees in the Pocket Parks and Stewart Beach to increase the revenue for trash pick ups. The City is also picking up a portion of the Mardi Gras expenses and they believe they are making more contributions than the \$75,000 that we requested.

The group emphasized again that the west end represents 37% (until the new 2005 figures are certified) of the City of Galveston Tax base and they should help with the trash pick ups with additional funds to the Parks Board.

- b. Trash Barrels: Need more trash barrels in front of subdivisions and continue with more trash pick ups during the high season.

Results: The City has trash barrels again and if any property owner wishes additional, they are available at \$3.00 per month.

- c. Bermuda Beach: Trash cans trash cans on the beach are picked up during high tides but less and less are being returned.
- d. Pointe San Luis: Garbage Collection on the beach. Some of Pointe San Luis Barrels are missing and since they get a lot more traffic on their beaches (at least until they are closed to vehicular traffic) the garbage on weekends is not only an eyesore but it stinks and gets blown around the area.

Results: This responsibility for the above are the Parks Board of Trustees and not the Cit. The above will be forwarded to the Parks Board of Trustees.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerry Mohn

President

West Galveston Island Property Owners Association
