

# WEST GALVESTON ISLAND PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION

## MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 17, 2005

Jerry Mohn, President, called the Board of Directors meeting for the West Galveston Island POA to order at 9:00 a.m. Directors making up the quorum were Jerry Mohn, Wanda Greer - Terramar Beach, Sidney McClendon - Pirates Beach, Marie Garrett - Bermuda Beach - Treasurer, Tom Booth - Condominiums, Peggy Zahler - Spanish Grant Beach, Bill Moll, Spanish Grant Bay, John Shiller - Acapulco Village, Rick Heiberg - Pointe San Luis, and Marty Baker advisory to the Board. Susan Gonzales - CKM Property Management was also in attendance.

Jerry Mohn acknowledged Al Choate - Navigation District Commissioner and Candidate for County Commissioner, Pct 2; Eddie Janek, Jr., - Candidate County Commissioner Pct 2; Brian Lamb- Candidate for County Commissioner, Pct 2; John Grady running for Judge in County Court 2, and Dick McCaully running for District 6 City Council Member. Peggy Zahler - Corporate Sponsors with -Johnson Space Center Credit Union and Claire Reiswerg with Sand 'N Sea Realtors were also acknowledged.

Minutes: The minutes had previously been sent to the Board for review. Motions by Tom Booth, second by Sidney McClendon, the minutes of November 19, 2005 were approved by unanimous vote with the following resolution:

RESOLVED THAT, the Board approved the November 19, 2005, minutes as presented.

Treasurers Report: The Treasurers Report was reviewed by Marie Garrett. Cash on hand \$18,458 and total assets of \$19,208. Motion by Peggy Zahler, second by Wanda Greer, the Treasurers report was accepted by unanimous vote.

RESOLVED THAT, the Board approved the Treasurers Report.

### JACKIE COLE REPORT

The City of Galveston passed a bond with new budget, which includes sewer for Sea Isle and Terramar and water lines are gong to be put in. A stop light at Cove View and FM3005 will be installed. The meeting with TexDot was successful in beginning the process of elevating and addressing the low areas on FM3005 just West of the Seawall.

Broadway Beautification is on hold due to the Texas Historical Commission evaluation of the plan but the funds donated are safe and will be used. There are ADA issues that need to be addressed first before proceeding with any plan. Fiber optics will be installed along Broadway, which will allow the lights along Broadway to be synchronized to make it easier for motorist to travel along the street without constant interruptions of traffic stop lights.

The Parks Board of Trustees asked the City for management and control of land in front of pocket parks and the sole purpose is to do concession agreements. The Parks Board would like jurisdiction for concessions 500 feet each side of the pocket park but not in front of any subdivision area in which they would be excluded. Concessions will be placed along the beach area of the pocket parks.

Two considerations of the smoking ordinance ban will be going to City Council workshop in January 2006; the first is 100% smoking ban; and, the second is no smoking in restaurants or bars except free standing or

an area with adequate ventilation.

Jerry Mohn asked that Jackie Cole bring to the City the request to ban the discharge of firearms on the West End. Jackie Cole requested that we poll each Association and get a resolution to ban hunting. Those with conservation easements can post "no hunting" signs.

The Geo Hazard map of Galveston Island should be ready in January. This is really the first of its kind in the U.S. and will allow communities to access environmental impacts.

Program: Cheryl Johnson – Galveston County Tax Assessor-Collector: What can we do to stop the escalating property taxes for the West End?

Jerry Mohn introduced Cheryl Johnson – Galveston Tax Assessor Collector. Cheryl Johnson stated that the legislation met the last four years without a tax plan. Sixty-five percent of the property owners in Texas believe that school taxes are too high. Since 2000, home values in Galveston have increased 40%, tax value 10% and tax rates 66%. The effective tax rate for Galveston County should have been decreased 4% instead of the 1%.

Property taxes are based on market value, so as value goes up taxes should go down. Your voice needs to be heard. There are opinions that we need to reduce the homestead exemption. Do you support revenue caps? Do you support appraisal cap and giving a reduction for homestead?

Ms. Johnson recommended that when buying or selling a home though MLS tell them not to release sales prices. There is no law that says you have to provide the selling price of your home to the taxing authorities. In addition, every time you do an improvement to your house, a permit is issued and this triggers an increase. The GCAD collects all permits from the various entities in the County.

What can you do? Write letters, educate your neighbors, and send letters to legislators. Join [www.clout.com](http://www.clout.com) or [www.tftf](http://www.tftf), or [www.acc](http://www.acc).

The WGIPOA will create a task force to investigate legislation to propose for the 2007 legislative session such as tax caps, roll backs, etc. Most of the properties on the west end are second homes and the increases have been extremely high and we need a way to curb the escalations and a legislative effort will be necessary.

The question was raised about collecting the large amounts of delinquent taxes. The County uses a law firm to collect delinquent taxes and they receive 15% of the value collected. Cheryl Johnson stated another method the taxing authorities should use as a tool to collect delinquent taxes is in not renewing the property owner's vehicle registration, which she will propose for 2007.

When the GCAD appraises your property, there are three values used: Value on your financial statement, value when you list the house, value when you sell the house, and value in which you pay taxes on. Visit the GCAD every year and research the sales of homes in your area. When protesting taxes you should request: all the sales the appraisal district used to value your property; the value of the property on January 1 (note - if doing improvements pull the permit January 2, not January 1); take digital pictures of homes in your area; and, you need to get sales of other homes in your area. When meeting with the ARB, if you reduce your taxes by \$1 you get \$500 back. There is always a good chance in the ARB lowering your taxes.

When deciding which home to homestead, consider that the act of homesteading a property is the "intent". If you intend a home to be your home then use it as your homestead.

If you are 65 or disabled you are not obligated to pay taxes until you die.

When checking your taxes on line, look at the subdivision profiling. Are you on the beach, on a canal, off the canal? Property is classified and ranked. The appraisal manual has 24 class identifications for custom homes with the lowest at 2 to 3. If you receive a high classification, investigate the reasons. Taxes are based on the number of corners, the fewer corners the lower the value. The same holds for windows, more windows more value. Look at the property class and compare. Call and ask for the definitions such as what is MA or BA?? Appraisal notices are sent out in March and April.

The message: Protest, protest, and protest!

GARM: Claire Reiswerg, President of GARM (Galveston Association of Rental Managers) reported on the calls to the security service that is provided 24/7. There were 26 incidents of noise or loud parties; 8 incidents of parking violations; 18 unlocked properties; 5 back ups to the Galveston Police Department; and, 8 miscellaneous such as animal problems. For any rental property problems, please call GARM at: [409-682-3603](tel:409-682-3603)

### SEAWEED STUDY – TOM LINTON

Dr. Linton from TAMUG provided a slide show on his progress on the study showing the effects of seaweed on the beach. Five samplings stations have been established at Pocket Park 2, Pirates Beach West, Sea Isle, Pirates Beach and the Galveston Island State Park.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

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