

West Galveston Island Property Owners Association

March 15, 2025

0900 Call to Order – Craig Vance

0903 Introduction of Board Members

The WGIPOA meeting was held on March 15, 2025, at Marriott Courtyard on the Seawall. The meeting was called to order by Craig Vance, President. A quorum was established with the attendance of Craig Vance – Terramar; John Lightfoot – Pointe San Luis, Pat McAlester – Spanish Grant Bay; Boyd Carr – Isla del Sol; Rosemarie Gonzalez – Acapulco Village; Peggy Zahler – Spanish Grant Beach; Guy Sullaway – Pointe West; Chris Lauer – Bermuda Beach; Kim Van Camp – Condos; Sarah Hawkes – Sportsman’s Road; Doug Little – Pirate’s Beach and Lafitte’s Cove; and Joe Trum – Dunes of West Beach.

0906 Introduction of Elected Officials and Corporate Sponsors

Our district representative Marie Robb was in attendance as well as multiple members of the Parks Board (Kimberly Denassi, Vince Lorifice, Sheryl Rozier, and Tony Lyle). Special thanks to our corporate sponsor in attendance, Wellby Financial.

0908 Approve nominations of Property Owner Associations in WGIPOA.

Peggy made a motion to keep the executive board in its current state (Craig as President, Peggy as Vice-Resident, Chris as secretary, and John as Treasurer) and Rosamarie seconded.

POA’s eligible for reelection to the WGIPOA Board with a term of March 1, 2025 through February 29, 2028 were identified. Marie Robb made a nomination to accept the terms and they were seconded by Bob Baker. This was followed by unanimous approval from the fellowship of the meeting.

0910 West End Police Report - Lt. Sean Miguez.

GPD was tracking plans social media for senior skip day (March 7th) and its change from San Luis Pass to Jamaica Beach. GPD had local officers along I-45 and Blue Water Highway. The cloud cover was low, so air support was not feasible. Instead, a mobile support station was reposted in Jamaica Beach and the County Paddy Wagon was brought down to aid in support.

People are allowed to meet and have fun in peaceful manners. Regardless of what was written in newspaper articles, there was a traffic management plan and crowd control teams were deployed strategically. The crowd was effectively managed with quite a few incidents, but with minor consequences.

GPD is looking for an area to utilize as a wrecker lot during these high attendance events. The would prefer an area near Pirate’s Beach.

If you see something, say something. For issues that affect your immediate safety, please call 911. For all non-emergency issues, please call the non-emergency phone line right away at **409-765-3702**. Please call GPD prior to reaching out to Marie Robb. Getting the right information to the right people quickly is the best way to address your issues.

0942 District 6 Happenings – City Council Member Marie Robb

The budget season at the City is starting. Marie indicated that a bond to mill and overlay all roads in disrepair across the island. Currently, 8% of the city taxes are set aside for road maintenance activities.

The Galveston County Day at the state capitol was successful. Groups of students and adults met with all of the representatives and staffers in order to present issues in our county. Some of these issues include Port expansion activities, specifically rebuilding the Pelican Island bridge.

The Pelican Island Bridge construction project has increased the construction budget to \$236 million. The projected timeline to start is the end of 2027 or early 2028. The Port has already received a grant for an engineering design of the flyover exit from I-45 heading over Harborside to the cruise terminals.

The upcoming beach nourishment programs are beginning to kick-off. The dredge contractors are mandated by the Corps of Engineers to utilize 70% of the material for beneficial reuse projects. Marie is pushing to utilize more of this material for beaches.

Drainage projects continue on the West End and ditches continuing to be connected.

Marie is working with AT&T to increase the amount of fiberoptic lines in our neighborhoods.

Short term rentals (STR) provide money to the City through Hotel Occupancy Taxes (HOT). The City is in discussions to take over HOT fund collection and money appropriation. There would be a unified call center [(409) 797-4630 proposed in October] and taxes could be taken care of by the planning division. Some legislation is currently in place to utilize HOT funds for City maintenance and operations instead of its current use for tourism related costs (parks, beaches, advertising, etc.).

Golf cart permits currently require annual inspections. With the removal of inspections of other vehicles, this issue will be brought back up with the City Council.

If you have any questions or concerns, please text Marie Robb at (409) 256-4518 or email at Marie@MarieRobb.com, and she will answer and/or forward the issues to the appropriate agencies.

1015 Galveston Parks Board Updates – Kimberly Denassi, Vince Lorifice, Sheryl Rozier, Tony Lyle

The Park Board is funded primarily through HOT funds. This is utilized to manage 6 parks, lifeguarding services, marketing or tourism, and beach cleaning and maintenance. The Parks Board is made up of the following departments: administration, coastal operations, coastal projects, and Visit Galveston.

The coastal operations department includes the coastal zone management team, beach patrol, and parks management.

The coastal zone management which includes beach cleaning across 32 miles of beach every day. They are also trained first responders to wildlife strandings. The Beach Patrol is made up of lifeguards who on top of lifeguarding activities, also help train future lifeguards from Texas, Mexico, and other J1 Visa collegiate students. The Parks Management team takes care of six parks on the island: East Lagoon Nature Preserve, East Beach (R.A. Apffel Park), Dellanera RV Park, Seawolf Park (free to Galveston residents with valid ID or utility bill), Seawall Urban Park, and Stewart Beach.

Coastal projects can take up to seven (7) years to research, permit, grant, and then construct. Current projects include beach nourishment projects at West Galveston Island (Pocket Park 1 to 13 Mile Road), Historic Stretch (12th Street to 61st Street), and Babe's Beach and a dune repair project at the Dellanera RV Park. These projects will move approximately 2 million cubic yards of sand.

Environmental Programs include:

- Washed Ashore - marine debris education through sculptures made of such debris;
- Beach Toy Borrow Box – wooden boxes for beach toys to be used and replaced;
- Up2U Galveston – boxes of branded potato/onion sacks for beach users to clean up trash;
- Galveston Beach Ambassador – training of locals to help clean up trash and educate the public while doing so;
- Seaweed Emergency Relocation – assistance to POAs when inundations of sargassum hit the island;
- Women in Coastal Science – additional education to grow the number of women in Coastal Science programs and jobs.

Visit Galveston is the tourism development department. They build marketing and public relations, sales to book overnight stays, and destination services like the Visitors Information Center. They bring in conventions and events during the week and in non-peak times that meet with the available assets on the island.

www.galvestonparkboard.org

1120 Chris Lauer – BMAC Report

There was a BMAC meeting on March 7, 2025.

Dr. Hal Needham gave a sargassum forecast for the season. There are larger and continuous sargassum deposits in the eastern and western Caribbean Sea. The amount of sargassum being observed in the transport system in the Gulf is currently lower than average, but is anticipated to increase later in the season.

So far, low amounts of sargassum are in the forecast for Galveston. Impacts to Texas are going to be relatively low for the next three months.

You can find additional information at www.sargassummonitoring.com. You can view or upload photos of accumulations at your leisure.

Heidi Whitehead gave a presentation for the Texas Mammal Stranding Network. She says Happy Dolphin Awareness Month!! Studies indicate that March is the month with the most strandings. If you see a stranded mammal, please do not try to push them back in the water, but call the following number.

1-800-9MAMMAL

(1-800-962-6625)

This largely volunteer supported organization supports the entire Texas coastline and is headquartered in Galveston. They respond to stranded, injured, entangled, or out-of-habitat marine mammals. They also provide rehabilitation, necropsies, conduct photo surveys, and disseminate data through educational materials.

They study marine mammals such as bottlenose dolphins to document behavior and health of these environmental indicator species. TMSN works with the Coastal Zone Management team and local supporters. Please do not feed or try to pet these wild animals.

Sheryl Rozier spoke about Capital Improvement Plans and Beach Project Updates for 2025. The Parks Board is currently in the design phase for three beach nourishment projects. Two of these projects are based on FEMA claims from Hurricane Harvey (Dellanera and Babe's Beach). The remaining nourishment project is being paid for out of CEPRF funds and will renourish beaches from Dellanera to 13 Mile Road.

Additional projects include offshore breakwater projects at the western edge of the seawall, annual beach survey studies, emergency ramp construction projects from the seawall to the beach, and constructing the beaches in the design phase above. The dredging of the Houston Ship Channel could be starting as early as May and sand could be trucked in this summer, but the schedule has not been set by the awarded dredging contractor.

Elizabeth Schneider Wala spoke about the Leave No Trace Ordinance. This is a result of BMAC reaching out to the City for an ordinance to prevent leaving materials on the beach overnight. Please reach out to those around you that this ordinance is in effect. Any unattended items picked up overnight will be taken to the Coastal Zone Management lot for disassembly and recycling.

Take-aways

- Reach out to your local representative for federal support for NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). They support our hurricane, sargassum, and marine mammal research and educational outreach programs.
- Please reach out to those around you that the Leave No Trace Ordinance is in effect.
- There is a Land Consecration celebration on April 5, 2024 from 4:30-7:30 pm for 141 acres of land purchased as part of Artist Boat's nature preserve.
- Nest Fest is coming up. Look for information at www.splash.com.

1130 Adjournment

The next WGIPOA meeting will be after Easter on April 26, 2025 at the Courtyard Marriott on the Seawall.