



PACA News

October-December 2009

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Meeting Info

Second Thursday of

Every Month

at 7pm

Land O'Lakes

Community Center

5401 Land O'Lakes

Boulevard

(US Highway 41)

Website

www.mypaca.org

BRIDGEWATER: "Driving change & finding community"

By Mark Spector, Bridgewater Community Association

Bridgewater is a Wesley Chapel community located off Curley Road just east of the highly rated Wesley Chapel school complex. It is composed of 760 single family, single story and two story residential homes. One of the most appealing features is our abundant lakes. Nearly every home site backs up to natural areas or water. We have a playground area and one of the only dog parks in Wesley Chapel.

Bridgewater was built during the housing boom of 2004 to 2007 and has both a Homeowner's Association (HOA) and Community Development District (CDD).

Like many, our community has had its challenges. Lennar Corporation, the original

now a self-managed community. The property transfer fees and capital contribution fees the Board enacted provides sufficient income to fund nearly our entire operational budget and has the effect of placing the burden on the banks which helped to create this situation.

The HOA is now strictly enforcing our rental guidelines, requiring Board approval of all tenants and lawn care contracts to be in place. Additionally, we place unkempt homes on forced lawn care. In an effort to place the burden of responsibility on violators, curing fees have been set so as to make this a self-funded activity.

Bridgewater has turned a corner this year. In the last quarter of 2008, the HOA collection rates were only 25% and our dues peaked at \$168 per quarter. Today, collection rates are at 55% and we've dropped our dues to \$70 per quarter with further reductions planned. We now have an estimated 60% owner-occupied homes. Additional amenities are in the works which may include a clubhouse in about a year's time when it can be paid for in full.

Other activities include an active crime watch, which has made a significant impact on undesirable activities. We're planning a large Fall Festival in November. We are coordinating with the Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce and several other significant groups throughout Pasco County and have commitments from over 70 organizations to participate. Recently, we contracted with a public relations firm to help promote purchasing by owner-occupied buyers.

Within a year's time, the HOA Board is aiming for enough votes to amend our covenants to no longer allow rentals within our community.

What I've found through all of these activities is a genuine community I always knew existed within Bridgewater and in Pasco County through our membership in Pasco Alliance of Community Associations (PACA).



developer, sold ~60% of our homes to investors, of which, many have been foreclosed on. Financially, Bridgewater's HOA was nearly bankrupt a year ago. Our Board has worked exhaustively to correct the situation and now enjoys a financially secure future.

The first step in correcting the downward spiral was through negotiating the cancellation of the Brighthouse bulk cable contract, converting the community to individual accounts. Next, we replaced two attorneys who were clearly catering to our Property Manager's needs over those of the HOA's. We have been averaging nearly \$30K in monthly collections on delinquent accounts vs zero with the previous attorneys.

In the three plus years I've been President, we've removed two property managers and are

Program Committee

By Wayne Mooney, Program Committee Chairperson

July 9, 2009

During Mr. Oakley's presentation, he gave an overview of the water management system in Florida that included what they do and how they are planning for the future. Ed Hobin, who has worked for SWFWMD for 22 years, gave a presentation on the Green Swamp which is the head water of four major rivers, SWFWMD responsibilities during the dry and wet seasons, their regulatory responsibilities, and how they manage 400,000 acres. During the question and answer session, Mr. Hobin and Chris Dewey, from the Pasco Extension Service, explained the impact that the new Senate Bill 2080 that became effective July 1st will have on HOAs. The bill states that HOAs may not prohibit a homeowner from applying Florida-friendly landscaping to their property or create any requirement or limitation in conflict with state law.



Ronald Oakley (second from left) and Ed Hobin (third from left) talk to PACA members after their Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) presentation.

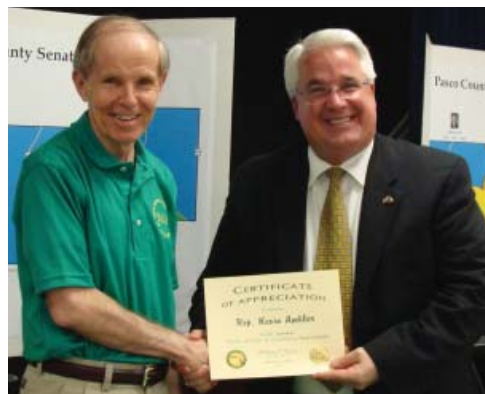


August 13, 2009

State Senator Victor Crist explained to the PACA members the difference between the Senate and House of Representatives. This included how the bills in the Senate go through the committees and how the Senators often change their positions as the bill may change. He talked about the programs such as Health and Human Services, Education, and Transportation that take up the largest part of the budget. He also talked about what the legislature is doing concerning gambling as it relate to the state revenue and the impact it has on local business near the gambling institutions.

September 10, 2009

Although State Representative Kevin Ambler's District 47 is not in Pasco County, PACA invited him to give a presentation at the September meeting because he drafts HOA legislation. His presentation focused on House Bill 27, a piece of HOA legislation in the last session that would have helped all residents, association managers, and directors of deed restrictive communities throughout Florida. He explained that in 2008 Governor Crist vetoed similar Legislation (House Bill 679) because of an amendment in the bill that did not have anything to do with HOAs. Rep. Ambler got the amendment removed, but time ran out for this session before he could get it through the Senate. During the next session, House Bill 27 will get



State Rep. Kevin Ambler

a new number and have some changes as Rep. Ambler is constantly revising it. For example, during the meeting, PACA's Government Affairs Committee Chair-

person asked Rep. Ambler to include an amendment to the bill that will ensure if a unit is damaged by a fire, hurricane, or some other disaster, the proceeds from the insurance will go to rebuilding the unit to prevent what happened in Oakstead (see page 3 of last two issues of PACA Newsletter). Rep. Ambler responded that he would include this amendment in the bill. The bill is currently 102 pages long and addresses management companies, borrowing money, assessment recovery, special reserves, tenants, responsibilities, and new rules for mediation and arbitration. All PACA members are encouraged to follow the work of such legislation and be prepared for discussions of the pros and cons of each issue.

Programs for Next Quarter

October 8
Debra Zampetti
Zoning/Code
Compliance Administrator

November 12
Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite
5th Congressional District

December 10
Annual Meeting with Election
Census Bureau/Board of
Education Speakers

Government Affairs Committee

By Fred Krauer, GAC Chairperson

County Maintained Roads

An issue that I have just started to work is the county taking over the maintenance of the roads in a community. Recently, a PACA member mentioned that the builders of their community had an agreement with the county for them to take over the maintenance of the roads when the community was built out. Now that the Boards are resident-controlled and the community is built out, the Board has asked the county to take over the roads. Although the community has made the required changes to the roads to bring them up to Pasco County Code, the county has not taken them over. I am looking into this issue and talking with other PACA members to see if they have a similar problem.

Sportsplex USA

I am monitoring the Sportsplex USA project closely, as it will have quite an impact on Pasco County. The configuration for the approximately \$11 million complex has not been finalized, but preliminary discussions include five baseball and softball fields, a soccer arena, batting cages and two restaurants. The county commissioners have approved \$270,000 for a consulting company who is looking at the options of where to locate it. Because of the restraints of a reduced budget, the county would like to have the land donated. So far, three developers have agreed to donate land. These include Starkey Ranch, New River Township, and Pasco Town Centre. The consultant will be looking at these three plus others such as Connerton and Wiregrass

Signals Traffic

There was a recent traffic death at the S.R. 54 entrance to Oakstead. The traffic signal has a green arrow to turn, but when it goes



out, people think they can still turn. During a meeting with Commissioner Mulieri, I explained that there are people using this signal to take their children to elementary, middle, and high schools in Oakstead, including young high school drivers. I asked her if the traffic signals at Oakstead, Sunlake Blvd, and the new one at Ballantrae could have a red, no turning light. She immediately set up a meeting with the State Department of Transportation to discuss the matter. The State did a traffic study, but it indicated that a change was not required at this time. After a second accident, Commissioner Mulieri readdressed the issue with the state. The outcome of this is still pending.

Damaged House Legislation

In the last two issues of the PACA newsletter, I provided information on what I was doing to get legislation drafted to protect PACA members from having a house in their community damaged by a disaster such as a fire or hurricane, the owner collects the insurance, and then walks away to let the HOA deal with the issue. I am still working with State Representatives Ambler and Weatherford as well as State Senator Crist to get legislation passed this next session.



of what is known as Long Lake Ranch. The T. Rowe Price Complex will be about 450,000 square feet in three buildings. The interesting aspect of them moving to Pasco County is the cooperative effort between our state representatives and county commissioners that resulted in about \$30 million in incentives. Pasco County has recently extended the construction deadline for the first building from 2013 to 2015 so they will still remain eligible for the first \$1 million of the county's economic development grant.

T. Rowe Price

Another economic bonanza for Pasco County that I am watching very closely is T. Rowe Price moving to Pasco County. They will be transferring 425 jobs from their office in Tampa and adding 1,200 more jobs with an average salary of \$47,000. On July 1st, they paid \$13.5 million for a 94-acre portion just off S.R. 54

If PACA members have any issues that they cannot find a solution to and would like PACA to help, they can email PACA President Bill Parsons at BParsons@mypaca.org or Government Affairs Chair Fred Krauer at FKrauer@mypaca.org.

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