



PACA News

January - March 2012

Volume 4 • Issue 1

Community management will be focus of 2012 speakers

By Jim Flateau
PACA President

The PACA Board of Directors is planning a wide range of speakers for our monthly meetings in 2012.

The speakers will all have one goal in common: they will focus on topics that help us manage and direct our HOAs, CDDs and condo associations.

The board is looking for even more ideas. PACA members are urged to make other program suggestions as well as to recommend speakers.

PACA will start off with a January program on the effective and cost-efficient management of the lakes and ponds in our communities. Most residents don't know the different types of lakes and ponds, or the state and federal rules affecting them. Our speaker will be Class B member and engineer Tonja Stewart of Stantec Inc.

Unfortunately, crime is a fact of life everywhere. At our February meeting, Deputy Ronald Buzzetto of the Pasco Sheriff's City-



PACA had a full house when attorney Steve Mezer (standing in center background, facing camera) discussed home foreclosure laws.

zens Support Services unit will discuss neighborhood watches and crime patrol programs.

In March, attorney James De Furio of Citrone & De Furio will discuss the ins and outs of how to properly revise and change HOA declarations, by-laws and other documents. He'll also discuss some HOA-related bills before the Legislature in 2012.

Parking is a challenge in virtually all of our member communities. The board has invited the Pasco Sheriff's Office and the county attorney to participate in an April or May panel on parking. We've not yet confirmed their appearance. We hope their experts can detail all the options and advise us on how to manage this complex but "quality of life" issue.

Raymond James Financial Services says it will discuss with PACA its long-term plans to expand in Pasco, create 750 jobs and possibly increase vacant homes sales – but only after it buys development lands in Wesley Chapel.

Here are some of the other topics the board is working to schedule as programs for our monthly meetings in 2012:

- Establishing budgets and reserve accounts: How do we determine how much to set aside for future needs such as in capital investments? How much in emergency funds?
- What laws will get passed in the 2012 legislative session that affect community associations? We'd like a speaker after the session ends in March to offer a "report card" on legislative actions and the timetable implementing any new laws.
- Sinkhole insurance is a major financial burden and concern for Pasco homeowners. We're looking for a speaker who can offer creative solutions to a problem the state created.
- How do we pick community association and district management companies? What is the most effective process? What resources exist that allow us to evaluate them as part of the pre-bid or bid-awarding process?

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Welcome, new PACA members!

PACA welcomed several new members to our ranks since the last edition of the PACA News went to press. New Class A (organizational) members are:

- Caliente Apartments Condo Association, represented by president Bob Popetz, vice president Jim Weber, secretary Nancy Mach, treasurer John Cropsey and director Alice Mical.
- The Pines of New Port Richey HOA, represented by president Eugene Pietrowski, secretary Pat Laethem and treasurer James Welsh.
- Valencia Gardens HOA, represented by president Gail Spector, vice president Angelo Vrissis, secretary Sue Young and directors Stacy Wilson, Billy Edmonson and Jose Castellanos.
- Wyndtree Villages 11 & 12 Association, represented by president Dave Arlen, vice president Bill Appelt, secretary Norma Brooks, treasurer Clara Harrington and director Brigitte Beer.

PACA also welcomed Class B (individual) members Flore Jean-Pierre and James Easterday.

Members vote to support Ridge Road extension

The majority of PACA members present for the Dec. 8 meeting voted to endorse the proposed extension of Ridge Road.

A copy of a draft letter of endorsement had been emailed to all PACA members the week before the meeting. The email urged members to attend and express their opinions.

Email is the quickest and most immediate way for the PACA board to reach members. Members are urged to ensure they keep their email addresses current with PACA treasurer Jerry Lynn, who maintains the list.

The letter endorsing the Ridge Road extension is addressed to the Army Corps of Engineers, which took comment on the proposed extension until Dec. 28.

Here's PACA's letter, dated Dec. 9:

"The Pasco Alliance of Community Associations, representing more than 70 homeowner community associations, voted at its meeting last night to endorse the limited-access extension of Ridge Road by 3.4 miles to the east to connect with US 41 and on the west by 4.2 miles to join the Suncoast Parkway.

"Our county's population increased by 119,932 residents, or 35 percent, between the 2000 and 2010 census, severely increasing the pressure on our traffic patterns, including those in west and central Pasco. Our county's overall traffic needs would also benefit from an east-west connector between SR 52 to the north and SR 54 to the south. Additionally, the Ridge Road extension would provide a critical west-to-east evacuation route in times of emergency need, such as in the event of a hurricane or tropical storm.

"We appreciate that the greatest opposition to this extension is on environmental grounds, concerns that we share and agree must be addressed. This project would affect 59 acres within the 6,000-acre Serenova Preserve, a wilderness area set aside to offset the 200 wetland acres taken for the construction of the Suncoast Parkway. If the Ridge Road extension is approved, the Pasco Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is committed to offsetting this taking of 59 Serenova acres by preserving 221 acres of swampland near Starkey Wilderness Park. In addition, the BOCC is committed to preserving one of three other tracks that range in size from 519 acres to 881 acres. That means the taking of 59 acres will be more than offset

by the protection of up to an additional 1,102 acres.

"During the time that the Corps evaluates and decides this application, Pasco's population will continue to grow. As the economy eventually improves, we hope to see more existing homes sold and new ones built. Therefore the pressure to improve traffic patterns in Pasco County will only continue to increase, making the Ridge Road extension even more important and critical to our future.

"PACA believes the BOCC has demonstrated its commitment to expanding the protected acreage of wetland, wilderness and other open areas within the county. PACA also agrees tradeoffs that increase net wetland set asides, such as this one affecting Serenova Preserve, sometimes have to be made – in order to accommodate increased population, business development and heavier traffic in our ever-growing county.

"Thank you for the opportunity for PACA to be heard on this important issue."

Anyone wishing to see a copy of the actual letter will find it on our www.MyPACA.org website at the Useful Information tab. A copy of the *Tampa Tribune* and *Laker* articles plus an op-ed from the *Tampa Bay Times* on the letter are posted at the News Links tab.

Members' issues ...

Continued from page 1

- HOA liens and fines: what exactly are they? When can they be assessed, and how? What are our options for implementation and collection?
- Engineers, landscape vendors and attorneys: Communities use their expertise in different ways to ensure compliance with various laws and to help save money. What kind of cost-effective services can they provide and how do we best evaluate bidders?
- Short sales are a difficult subject and members have asked for a crash course: what they are, how do they work, how do they affect what HOAs can do in recovering fees owed, how can HOAs impact the process, and what options do HOAs have during a short sale?

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as PACA Secretary

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

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

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Steve Mezer

Expert unravels complexities of foreclosure laws

Steve Mezer, an attorney with BushIRoss, specializes in legal issues pertaining to homeowner and condo associations.

His October presentation to PACA on new state laws contained in HB 1195 is available on www.MyPACA.org at the Useful Information tab.

He told PACA that he is well aware of the difficult problems that HOA's face.

He noted some have foreclosures "with weeds up to there" and squatters living inside.

He said there are also homes rented by owners where the owners are pocketing the rent and not paying HOA fees. One strategy is for HOAs to place a lien on the property, foreclose on it and collect rent until it loses the title when the mortgage foreclosure case is completed, which he said now takes two years.

He recommended HOAs seek full payment of arrears. He said if the HOA is willing to accept less, that word will spread and lenders will try to undercut even that reduced level of payment.

County leader wants Pasco to be more than a bedroom community

County administrator John Gallagher says Pasco's goal is to upgrade the county from its status as a bedroom community to one offering good, high-paying jobs within short commuting distances for its growing workforce.

He said at PACA's November meeting that goal is producing "the most exciting time in my tenure – it's like trying to build a new county," said Gallagher, who has served in his post for 30 years.

He said county commissioners brought in the Urban Land Institute to provide a professional outsider's view of how Pasco can plan a better and brighter future for its residents.

"They said you have to get people to build where you want them to," he said.

He noted T. Rowe Price's long-term plan to create 1,600 jobs along SR 54 in Land O' Lakes, while Raymond James Financial Services wants 750 positions by 2024 at SR 56 in Wesley Chapel.

"You dream about getting big companies with good jobs moving into your county," he said. "In Pasco, we are now doing exactly that, and we plan to continue" those efforts.

At the same time, the county has revised mobility fees to entice residential and business construction in the corridors where the county wants it.



John Gallagher

Zoning/Codes administrator discusses "street trees," foreclosure registry



Debra Zampetti

Pasco zoning/code enforcement administrator Debra Zampetti attended the December meeting and detailed the county's new "street trees" ordinance and its foreclosure registry.

Ms. Zampetti said the county is not requiring any community to remove any trees, just as it did not order the original planting of "street trees" or determine their species.

"Tree removal is a local decision, but we hope communities look first at alternatives to removing trees," she said. HOA/CDD documents control who pays for replacement.

PACA has posted on the Useful Information page of www.MyPACA.org the documents she provided on the tree ordinance as well as documents on alternatives to removal, and how to best select replacement trees if removal is the option chosen.

Ms. Zampetti also discussed the foreclosure registry. It is designed to ensure lenders accept their responsibility to maintain and secure properties in our communities that enter foreclosure. She said violations should be reported to her office for enforcement action.

Programs for this Quarter

January 12
Managing Lakes & Ponds
Engineer Tonja Stewart

February 9
Local Anti-Crime Programs
Deputy Ronald Buzzetto

March 8
Updating HOA Documents
Attorney James De Furio

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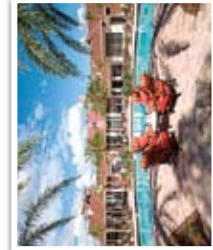


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