

# St. Johns County Civic Roundtable

## Minutes of Meeting

January 9, 2017

President Lofgren called the minutes of the meeting to order at 9:05am

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the December 12, 2016 meeting were accepted as read.

Treasurer's Report: \$790.82 reported as our bank balance.

President Lofgren introduced Linda Chambliss, Vice President of the South Ponte Vedra/ Vilano Beach Preservation Association. The Association formed in 2006 and has been the leading advocate for beach preservation since that time.

Ms. Chambliss said the beach community needs seawalls, sand and beach nourishment. Since 1989 the coastal areas seriously eroded has continually expanded. Hurricane Matthew's impact resulted in the loss of 50' of dune in the affected areas. Linda noted that a large number of homes and seawalls were damaged or destroyed. Public access areas also were dealt significant loses. Even homes with light damage

often lost septic systems, some without space to rebuild them.

Linda Chambliss said there will be no “Great Wall” linking the affected properties. Our beach is considered “private” because of the high residential concentration in our area. 130 to 150 seawall applications are being processed. Temporary seawall is 4’ down and 4’ up with no caps. Permanent seawalls may be made of steel, wood, or plastic and usually have concrete caps. Fish & Wildlife Department regulations usually limit seawall construction to 20’ from the residence. After the May 1<sup>st</sup> start of turtle season beach construction is not permitted.

Ms. Chambliss pointed out that the next nor’easter could destroy many homes. The need for sand is very urgent and many avenues are being explored to bring that about. The cost is high and an increase in the “bed tax” has been suggested as a revenue source. Cooperation between Federal, State and local government plus residents will be required in this effort.

The roundtable discussion centered on the digital billboard issue and the May Street barriers to the side streets.

A motion was made to send a letter from the Civic Roundtable supporting the contract renewal for St. Johns County Administrator Michael Wanchick, in view of his exceptional leadership. The motion was seconded and passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Froio, Secretary