

ST JOHNS COUNTY CIVIC ROUNDTABLE

MINUTES OF MEETING

December 11, 2017

The meeting was called to order by President Lofgren at 9:00am.

The Minutes of the meeting of November 14 were accepted as read.

The Treasurer reported a balance of 785.68

President Lofgren introduced Neil Benson, Marketing and Development Director of ARC of the St. Johns. He noted that the ARC of the St Johns has received the highest rating in the state of Florida.

Mr. Benson defined the role of the ARC is to assist the intellectually and developmentally disabled. There are 258,000 disabled individuals in the state of Florida and the state has a matching funds program that assists in financing the programs. The ARC provides residential, transportation, training and employment opportunities for the developmentally disabled.

Neil stated that the ARC has 10 group homes and plans to build three more. The group homes help provide the

skills so that the disabled can integrate into the community. The William Young House provides hospice/nursing home care for those individuals whose family cannot provide the required care. There are currently about 300 employees providing care for close to the same number of disabled.

They offer a curriculum based program (Formerly Sheltered Workshop) providing skills needed to work and have the dignity of a job. There are about 120 working in the local community, many in restaurants, grocery stores and offices. A computer classroom was opened at a cost of \$70,000 completely funded by donations. It is important that instruction be provided in the tasks of every day life such as cooking and shopping.

Neil pointed out that many of the employees jobs pay minimum wage and the donation of gift cards to supplement that wage is sought and appreciated. That is especially important during the holiday season.

The ARC also works in conjunction with the St Johns County School System to provide education to children with autism and other disabilities. While funds are received from Social Security and Medicaid, donations are critical to the ARC budget. There is an endowment fund (3 million dollars) and contributions can be made to that fund. ARC phone # (904)333-6338

General discussion:

Suggestions for next years speakers was requested by President Lofgren.

Some ideas were:

Jane West

Cyndi Stevenson

Racial Issues

Tim Sutton, Opinion Page of Newspaper

Other discussion:

Doug Worth – A1A traffic survey

Bob Olson – Proposed bike/walking pathway west of A1A in South Ponte Vedra and Vilano

Tony Bosco – Roundtable membership committee with Dennis Froio, Tony Bosco, Yosi McIntyre and Ed Olsen to meet after first of year.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00am.