

# ST JOHNS COUNTY CIVIC ROUNDTABLE

April 9, 2018

The meeting began at 9:04am

Secretary's Report: The minutes of March 9, 2018 were accepted as read.

Treasurer's Report: Our account currently contains \$615.47. Several members have not yet submitted their dues for 2018.

President Lofgren introduced Cindi Stevenson, Florida State Representative from the 17<sup>th</sup> District. The 17<sup>th</sup> District encompasses north and central St. Johns County including the cities of St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach. Rep. Stevenson served as a St. Johns County Commissioner for 12 years prior to being elected to the Florida Legislature.

According to Rep. Stevenson the current legislative session gave a great deal of attention to the recovery process from the hurricanes Matthew and Irma. She pointed out that the evacuation routes were slow, but still got our citizens to safety. The more recent hurricane caused a lack of power that led to 12 nursing home deaths and caused severe damage over the whole state. She commended the rapid recovery and

commented even the hard hit Florida Keys are open for business.

The Parkland school shooting that took the lives of 14 high school students and 3 faculty members, was a major factor in passing legislation to protect our student population. 400 million dollars was allocated to harden schools, improve mental health services, provide Sheriff trained, armed and deputized school staff, and improve the surveillance and reporting system.

Bump Stocks that transform semi-automatic weapons into automatics were banned in Florida.

Baker Act: Judge may order the removal of weapons from a person's property for up to one year from citizens demonstrating mental health problems suggesting they may be a danger to others or themselves.

Rep. Stevenson said she was not in favor of disarming law abiding citizens.

Other topics and areas of interest covered by Rep. Stevenson:

- 1) Rental property tourist tax.
- 2) State purchase of land from willing sellers to prevent floods

- 3) Stop looting of public lands of historical artifacts (arrow heads etc.)
- 4) \$400,000 for west St. Augustine sewers.
- 5) Increase Flagler Hospital Medicaid.
- 6) Expand powers of Florida State CFO.
- 7) Ensure contract fulfillment for State of Florida.
- 8) Tighten up grant oversight
- 9) Homestead allowance increase. This was done to keep the allowance in step with inflation. Unintended consequence is the loss of \$10 million dollars to the St Johns County budget.

Our May 14, 2018 speaker will be Hunter S Conrad, Esq. Clerk of the Courts in St Johns County.

We will be seeking an alternate venue for our June 11, 2018 meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11:10am

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis R Froio, Secretary