

MINUTES OF MEETING

ST JOHNS COUNTY CIVIC ASSOCIATION ROUNDTABLE

MEETING; January 14, 2013

TIME; 9:00 AM TO 11:00 AM

Location:

LOCATION; St Augustine Airport Conference Center

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

FINANCIAL REPORT

PROGRAM SPEAKER

DR. JOSEPH JOYNER

ST JOHNS COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

STATUS OF ST JOHNS SCHOOLS

Education roundtable topic

by Handly Caraway

Dr. Joseph Joyner, St. Johns County Superintendent of Schools, addressed the roundtable on the status of public education in the county. He is beginning his tenth year as superintendent.

Joyner noted that St. Johns County students have led the state for several consecutive years in FCAT testing, and that Florida's schools have recently been rated as sixth best in the nation by *Education Week* magazine, trailing other states only in funding. The four year graduation rate in our high schools is over 93 percent. He attributed this success rate to the excellence of our teaching staff and the many options available to students, including career academies.

He listed three focus areas for schools: high expectations of student achievement, education and training that has a vocational focus leading to employment, and an emphasis on character.

"Character Counts" training emphasizing trustworthiness, caring, respect, responsibility, citizenship, and fairness, prepares students to become good citizens who will contribute to society and lead productive lives.

Joyner said that our school district, with an annual growth rate of 700 to 900 new students, is the fastest growing in Florida. We have built ten new schools since 2005.

Funding continues to be a challenge, due primarily to the devaluation of real estate.

School security issues were addressed by Joyner. He said that he was scheduled to testify in Tallahassee before a Florida Senate committee on school safety on the day following his presentation to the roundtable. Since the tragic New Town, Connecticut school shooting, school districts everywhere are evaluating security measures. St. Johns County schools are also examining measures to protect students. In addition to increased security at the schools themselves, Joyner mentioned seeking more

communication between the schools and law enforcement, including direct communication from school buses.

County School Board Vice-Chairman Bill Mignon accompanied Joyner to this meeting of the roundtable. Also present were County Commission Chairman Jay Morris and Assistant County Administrator Jerry Cameron.

A copy of Dr. Joyner's power-point presentation is posted on the Roundtable website, <http://www.sjcroundtable.org>

This was the first meeting of the roundtable presided over by Rick Lofgren, 2013 president. Outgoing president Tony Bosco announced that a new cultural activity, Paseo Pastel, a display of sidewalk chalk art, will be held in the vicinity of the parking garage March 22 - 24. Information is at www.staugustinechalkwalk.com.

In other business;

1. Roundtable will host another Dining With Dignity evening for the Homeless on January 17, 2013. President Lofgren invited members to come and help serve.
2. Sarah Bailey shared a Constitutional amendment Petition regarding dedicating funds to acquire and restore Florida Conservation and wetlands. The intent of the amendment is to use 33% of the net revenues derived from the existing excise tax on documents resulting from a real estate transaction. The Roundtable requested more information as to how these excise taxes were presently allocated before continuing discussion on the issue.
3. The Treasurer reported a balance of \$2,563.94.

The next meeting of the roundtable will be Monday, February 11, with Cathy Brown, Executive Director of the Council on Aging, as guest speaker.

Roundtable monthly meetings begin at 9:00 a.m. in the St. Augustine Airport Conference Center, 4730 Casa Cola Way every second Monday of the month. All meetings are open to the public who are encouraged to attend and participate. For more information Call Rick Lofgren at _____ or go to www.sjcroundtable.org.

Officers:

Rick Lofgren, President,

Tony Bosco, Vice President

Ed Olsen, Secretary

Mary Saunders, Treasurer