

St Johns County Roundtable Minutes April 12, 2010

ATTENDANCE: 27

GUESTS: Keith Fuller, Courtesy Horticulture Agent, St. Johns County Extension Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. David Dinkins, Florida Friendly Landscape.

TREASUERS REPORT: \$3,495.30 48 members, 34 not paid. \$51 paid to Old city for Web services.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Chairman Jim McLane expressed his thoughts on the education situation. The parties involved are micro-managing and decisions should be left to the Superintendent who has done a good job. He feels that students not up to standard grade level should be held back rather than move on. They hold up better students.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS: A1A repaving is just about complete. Vilano Beach project (Publix) may take longer to get final approvals. The bad properties have been demolished to make way for the Retail shopping project. The Professional Tennis Tournament in PVB just ended and the results were good. Sawgrass Development project is moving very slowly due to the economy. The Marriott Resort is bankrupt. Scenic Highway Group report that trees are being removed and cut down by Comcast and others and are in violation.

Our guest speaker indicated that Florida Friendly Landscape will contact in May all St. Johns HOA's to discuss how to better landscape your yards and work with developers on common Areas, retrofit irrigation systems.

The Master Gardener Program works with volunteers and donates approximately \$600,000 in volunteer time. All business's that use fertilizers by 2014 will be required to attend a class on fertilizers.

The Master Gardener Program also has a newsletter on tips to better landscaping. The Program has to help the economy, quality of life, and better the environment.

Soil moisture sensors are \$100-\$300 and save 50% over rain sensors. Pavers will reduce the size of retention ponds in new developments.

The speaker encouraged us to look at the web site: www.solutionsforyourlife.com. The loss of agricultural land in St. Johns County in the last 10 years went from 57,000 acres to 32,000 acres. The cost of community services is based on \$1.00 on

revenue costs \$1.16-\$1.19 in cost. Open Land costs .35 cents versus the \$1.00 in revenue. We need a balance.

Potato Research. Drip irrigation will be helpful to get around guidelines. Suggest that we buy local farmer products. This will keep them from selling out to developers.

In St. Johns County now, there are currently 13,00 acres for potatoes, 3,000 for cabbage, 1,500 for broccoli, and 500-1000 for squash and melons.

The organization is bringing in more intelligent folks to help farmers in our county make more money.

It takes a minimum 5-10 years to develop a water desalination plan.

**Motion to the County Board to rescind the current contractor of the program.
Passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 am. Next meeting at The Record at 9 am May 10, 2010.