

## Tarpon River Civic Association

### General Meeting Minutes

Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Recorded and Submitted by Toni Ravelo, Secretary

Mission: *"To Improve the Quality of Life in the Tarpon River Neighborhood"*

**Purpose:** *Create a forum where issues impacting Tarpon River neighborhood in particular and the City of Fort Lauderdale in general may be discussed; where ways to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and the city may be agreed upon; and where appropriate action may be taken to implement what has been agreed upon.*

The meeting was held at the Southside Cultural Arts Center (SSCAC) and was called to order at **7:03pm** by Vice President Bruce Cummings. Also present was David Rose (Director), Janet Scaper (Director), Jay Schechtman (Director), Mike Stone (Associate Board Member), Cynthia Hatfield (Associate Board Member) and Marita Flam (Associate Board Member)

#### First order of business:

- I. **Police Report:** Welcome to our new FLPD contact! Officer Dan Gowans
  - **Vehicle Theft in River Reach** – 22 cars in one night in River Reach were burglarized, many vehicles were unlocked, and some windows were broken when valuable items were spotted inside vehicles. **Keep your vehicles locked and keep valuables out of vehicles.**
  - **1 vehicle theft** – person left keys on dashboard with car unlocked.
  - **1 strong arm robbery** – backpack and cell phone stolen in front of 25 NW 9<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Suspects of vehicle thefts have been identified and are being followed.
  - Homeless issue at Huzienga park and Broward Blvd is being addressed.
  - 2 incidents where children have gotten a hold of firearms, one child shot mom in foot and second child shot themselves in foot. Police Department is able to provide citizens with gun safes to those who need them. Please get a hold of Allison, so she may get them for you.
  - Please keep your eyes open and report any suspicious activity. Be a good neighbor not a nosey neighbor.
- II. **Presentation:** Ben Sorensen, Commissioner, District IV
  - Rob Hernandez Deputy City Manager joined us.
  - Alex Hifcock new to Ben's team
  - Why are infrastructure issues (sewage) happening: Sewage system is old -most is from the 1960s and 1970s, they should have been replaced but haven't and so now we are stuck with this. We have many sewage lines that are cast iron that have been broken by water, sand, and weather. The bottom of the pipes is the part of the pipe that's breaking. Plus, there was poor financial decision making that was not reinvested into our infrastructure. Money is now being reinvested into infrastructure; 200 million dollars bond every 5 years to get to 1.4 billion that needs to be spent into our infrastructure in total.
  - S&P rated Fort Lauderdale as a city - Triple A for the first time ever, meaning we get lower interest rates on our bonds.
  - **How is development tied to infrastructure?** – We were increasing certificates of occupancy by 1% a year. Infrastructure issues are not a cause of capacity issues - it is because of neglect. We do need to fight against bad development issues, for example AHF. Impact fees have been tripled, and above and beyond impact fees you need to pay for additional infrastructure fees.

- **Whiddon property** – Ben stated that he is not a believer from re-zoning from single family to high density. In Ben's dream world, we would buy and turn into city park. Ben will let Whiddon's know that now is not the time to go before city of re-zoning, looking to make a deal with Whiddon's for city park.
- **Storm Water** – Looking at different models on how we charge for storm water. A trips analysis is being looked at, why? There is a nexus between number of trips and number of ppl that live in a bldg., a way to create more parody between single family homes and condos.
- **Why is drinking water discolored?** – Water is safe to drink and bathe in. this discoloration is from some plant material. This can be removed but we don't have that capability right now. Our main water processing plant needs to be replaced, 300 to 400-million-dollar project. Ben looking to work with businesses to establish a public/private partnership. The city would then guarantee a revenue stream to private companies in exchange for them funding the replacement of our main water processing plant. This is 5 to 7 years away, till then we will still have water discoloration in our drinking water.
- Can you share why Tarpon River has not been included as an "impacted" community from the sewer spills? Tarpon River has been impacted significantly - specifically homes on the river and the long term impact of the sewer on the river that runs through our neighborhood. – none have been due to sewage
- **How good are the city's records with regards to the history of our pipes?** The city's records are horrible so we don't know how old each pipe is or what they are made of. Teams have been sent out to map out the current state of our pipes. Valves for redundant lines were not found and when found weren't working because they haven't been exercised in years. By early summer there will be a complete map of the wastewater pipes. And then a new assets management system has been put in place to keep an eye on these pipes. The same mapping approach is being done for potable water.
- **How do we slow development down until the city is ready?** – We need the money to pay for infrastructure. And developers have the money to improve the infrastructure needed around their development.
- **Tarpon River itself impact from sewage** – much has been settled at bottom of the river, and Ben has asked to asses the health of river. With survey / asset done then setting a plan to remove stuff off the bottom to help improve health of river. Survey results should be done in about a month, and will look at the bed of the river.
- **Education on what can and can not be flushed down our toilets.**
- **During Election year, what are your goals?** – Dealing with poop! 1. Improving our infrastructure. 2. Saying no to bad development projects. 3. Homelessness, going to other city's asking for support. 4. Transportation – scooters, bikes, walking trails – how do we make our traffic move better.
- **Lauderworks** – interactive site that tells you about projects ongoing in our city [insert link here]
- 954-802-3311 – Call, text Ben anytime! Nothing's too small.

### III. Updates

- **Free Event** – A courageous conversation about sex offenders. Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the
- Sidewalk on SW 6th St - Publix - Train Tracks – was completed - barricades and enhanced asphalt area is in place
- Mobility Plan – ongoing work with City staff is happening regarding Mobility Plan; several projects which were not completed in the fall will be focused on this spring – such as SW 8<sup>th</sup> Way/8<sup>th</sup> Ave Sidewalk; addressing traffic and speed issues on SW 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue; ongoing and updated painting on speed bumps throughout TR

- Whiddon Project – currently not scheduled for Planning & Zoning Board; Comments regarding development applications including the Whiddon land use plan amendment can be sent to [planning@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:planning@fortlauderdale.gov).

**IV. TRCA Updates**

- We need your help! If you are interested in being involved – fill out our volunteer form at: <https://forms.gle/gSzcwS553WsWoGpg7> (link is also available in the January newsletter)
- New website coming soon!

**V. Membership:** Open for 2020 – please see BOD with any questions! \$15 for single; \$25 for couple

**Upcoming events - hope to see you there!**

**Feb 13<sup>th</sup> – Neighborhood Support Night: 5:30pm to 8pm – Fort Lauderdale City Hall**

(family friendly event – meet city officials, learn about city programs, jobs and volunteer opportunities, live entertainment & refreshments!)

**Feb 27<sup>th</sup> – TRCA General Meeting – 7pm Southside Cultural Arts Center**

**Meeting adjourned at: 8:15pm**