



Nassau County Growth Management
Department
96161 Nassau Place
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Taco Pope, AICP
Interim Planning Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 24, 2016

TO: Taco Pope, Nassau County Planning Director
Shanea Jones, Assistant County Manager

FROM: Matrell Everett, Planner I

SUBJECT: Balloon ban

Attachments: Balloon ban materials; Council Communication

Background:

Conservation and preservation of the natural environment is a core objective of Nassau County. Nassau County's beaches are home to many amphibious creatures such as sea turtles and jellyfish. Many of Nassau's sea turtles are federally recognized as endangered species and around the state of Florida, there has been a recent spike in sea turtle injuries relating to the release of balloons on public beaches. The improper use and release directly correlates to ocean litter, particularly with sea turtles ingesting them as deflated balloons resemble jellyfish, a common prey for sea turtles. Many coastal communities have taken initial steps to educating its residents of the environmental effects on improper balloon disposal.

Analysis:

The City of Fernandina Beach is in the process of formally reviewing a proposed resolution to discourage the use and release of balloons on the city's 3 public beaches as balloons are being used and released improperly. Local governments around the state are in collaboration with the Loggerhead Marine life Center whom provides free signage and educational materials to inform residents of the environmental impacts of using and releasing balloons. The Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center is a Florida non-profit education and conservation facility located in South Florida. Their objective is to educate local residents of marine life protection and balloon use. The proposed partnership bears no financial burden on Nassau County as the signage and outreach materials are provided by the Marinelifelife Center.

Recommendation:

In an effort to protect our natural species, it is recommended that measures be taken in alliance with the Loggerhead Marine life Center and join the City of Fernandina Beach in better informing our coastal communities the potential dangers of balloon use on beaches. Attached are sample promotional flyers and partnering information with the Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center. Mirroring Fernandina's outreach proposal, we recommend the "level 2" participation which includes free signage installation and educational materials distributed throughout the coastal community. This program requires no fiscal or administrative commitment to Nassau County.