

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
5:30 P.M., WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL COMPLEX
96135 NASSAU PLACE, YULEE, FL 32097**

AGENDA

**CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Any member of the audience wishing to speak on any beach related concern.

CONSENT ITEM(S):

Tab A Approve minutes from the April 11 and April 17, 2019 meetings.

DISCUSSION ITEM(S):

Tab B Discussion of the Committee's task and procedures.

Tab C Discussion of issues raised at the April 17, 2019.

Tab D Discussion of emails and questions submitted to the County Manager from April 17 through May 10, 2019.

Tab E Discussion of beach camping and beach driving in other coastal counties in Florida.

Tab F Discussion of future meetings dates and locations, following the May 30, 2019 meeting scheduled for the James S. Page Governmental Complex.

INFORMATIONAL ITEM(S):

Tab G Citizen concerns and comments submitted prior to the first Beach Community Working Group Meeting held on February 26, 2019 that were never included on an agenda once the meetings commenced.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEM(S) AND COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

- Any other items to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in this program or activity should contact 548-4660 or Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (v) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) at least seventy-two hours in advance to request such accommodations.

UPCOMING MEETING(S):

Wednesday, May 30, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

James S. Page Governmental Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, FL 32097

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019 – 5:30 P.M.
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL CENTER, 96135 NASSAU PLACE
YULEE, FLORIDA**

A noticed meeting of the Beach Community Working Group was held on May 15, 2019 at the Commission Chambers, James S. Page Governmental Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida.

Committee members present were Michael Mullin, County Manager/County Attorney (departed 6:36 p.m.); Taco Pope, Assistant County Manager; Butch Osborne, Sheriff's Office; Douglas Podiak, Facilities Maintenance (arrived 6:22 p.m.); Gil Langley, Tourist Development Council; and Mac Morriss and Lowell Hall, Ex-Officio members. Also present was Peggy Snyder, recording secretary.

Chair Langley called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. He advised that this was the fourth public hearing for the Beach Committee Working Group. The recording secretary called the roll noting that Doug Podiak, County's Facilities Maintenance Director, was absent. It was noted that County Commissioner Aaron Bell, District 1, was in the audience. Due to the audience attendance being standing room only, Chair Langley advised that public comment would be limited to three minutes. Chair Langley acknowledged receipt of the public's e-mails and assured the audience that each committee member has read the e-mails received.

There was consensus of the committee to approve the minutes from the April 11 and April 17, 2019 Beach Committee meetings.

Mr. Mullin discussed the Committee's tasks and procedures. He advised that some time soon, the committee members will start discussions as a committee after taking input from the public. He clarified that the next meeting is Thursday, May 30, 2019, not Wednesday as stated on the agenda. The committee must decide the dates and times for their committee deliberations on possible recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Tonight will be further public comment. He requested that if anyone in the audience has spoken before, not repeat or restate the same information as provided at a previous meeting. If an audience member has more to say than time permits, they can e-mail additional comments to the committee members.

The following audience members came forward to express their concerns regarding beach issues:

- John Egbert – Addressed the rising population of the County. He offered ideas to add 100 parking spaces to the parking lot at Peters Point. He pointed out that on Saturday there is 140 cars parked on the beach with two cruising lanes on the sand. He suggested turning the cruising lanes back into open beach for blankets, lawn chairs, and beach volleyball.
- Glenn Gsell – Had spent his career policy-making, developing rules, and regulatory policy making. He suggested the County identify changes that need to be made and develop rules and regulations to help alleviate the problems. A beach issue with cars is parking versus driving. When the parkers become drivers and do not follow the rules; the problems begin. Ignoring the problem would affect health, safety and general well-being of the homeowners on the beach and the general citizens that uses the beach. To abolish all cars from the beach would be a disservice to the law abiding citizens who wish to park on the beach. Camping on the beach has no controls in place to regulate. With no permits in place, there could be an unlimited number of campers with a lot of garbage, bonfires, alcohol, parties, and limited bathroom facilities.

- Steve Sherman – Frequent beach walker. Was on the beach the day that the girl got run over by the Jeep. Cars were parked three rows deep which limited spaces for people to sunbathe on the beach. He noticed that the prime driving offenders seem to be from Georgia.
- Tom Polito – He walks the beach daily and frequently sees tire and donut tracks in the non-authorized driving areas and in the dunes. Sheriff's deputies work hard but cannot be everywhere. He has seen damage to the protective dunes and turtle habitats. He mentioned a turtle nest on Scott Road that was intentionally run over by a vehicle. Driving should be restricted and require a permit for all beach drivers. There should not be camping where there are no restroom facilities. Camping should require a permit for everyone.
- Mike Jomant – Came here 13 years ago to retire, buy a Jeep and drive on the beach. He and his friends own Jeeps and like to drive on the beach. They are respectful of the beach and do beach cleanups.
- Nancy Kingsley – In 1973, the organization, Citizens for Public Beaches and Shores, was formed. She pointed out how different life was in 1973. There were far less four-wheel drive vehicles. It is the responsibility of Nassau County citizens to protect the environment and human life. She has seen people come so close to getting run over. Vehicles and people do not mix on the beach.
- Jake Shuford – Decided to retire to this area because of the freedoms and very little government oversight. He pointed out that if a child gets run over on the street, they do not close the street. He mentioned the large resorts closing access points to the beach because of their money. At his age, he needs the ability to bring his beach items close to the beach. He does not drive on the beach; he drives to a parking spot on the beach to enjoy a family day. He urged the committee not to kill the allure of this wonderful area.
- Sue Girard – She moved here in 2002 and immediately bought a 4x4 to drive on the beach; one reason she retired here. She was grateful for the ability to drive on the beach to take her 92 year old father-in-law and her disabled brother to enjoy the beach. She suggested spot checks to ensure the out of county people have permits to drive on the beach. Camping is the most she has ever seen this year. Mr. Hall inquired if Ms. Girard wanted the ability to park on the beach. He stated that the phrase "beach driving" be removed from the vocabulary and replaced with "beach parking." He suggested designated driving lanes and designated on-beach parking areas within the defined parking areas.
- Nick Cline – Moved here from Minnesota. Enjoys the traditions of the area and the ability to park on the beach. Having bonfires on the beach is something he can do with his family. He is fighting for the little bit of freedom that law abiding citizens still have.
- Mary Duffy – She referred to the turtle nest that was intentionally run over on Scott Road during the night. She stressed the importance on no night driving.
- Chip Ross – Addressed the methods by which the City of Fernandina Beach was handling the trash on their portion of the beach. Trash cans were relocated from the beach to the beach entrances. The new trash containers are larger and emptied more often which prevents overflowing. He requested that the County embrace the City's program and he suggested a different company to clean the beach and, through the TDC, pay for it.
- Ray Devettere – Recently had a stroke and is disabled. The ability for disabled people to be able to take a vehicle to a parking area on the beach is a tremendous asset to their lives. Chair Langley advised that the County's Facilities Maintenance Department is adding more Mobi-Mats which provide wheelchair access to the waterfront.
- Laura Linynsky – Explained that from her home, she has a firsthand view of what happens on the beach daily. She also owns to mean high/low tide line which creates liability issues especially when there is talk of "driving lanes" on the beach being considered. Serious injury and loss of life should not be an accepted outcome because people want to drive on the beach. She has had property damage to her steps and family members almost run over. She suggested people not drive on the beach but be directed to parking spaces on the beach at Peters Point. In addition, with the projected growth, there needs to be additional parking areas and public transportation to

take people to the beach. She did not want to have the liability for someone being hit on the beach.

- Beverly Egbert – She spoke at the last meeting at American Beach and she has since been brainstorming for ideas. She looked at the City of Fernandina Beach ordinances to see if there was some way to have common ground and found three ideas that may work: (1) keep the camping at the State parks; (2) during the season, restrict the horse trailers in the parking lot at Peters Point; and (3), ban parking on the beach from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. and gate the entrance. Turtle nesting is at night along the high water mark which is where most people drive; therefore, she suggested stopping night driving.
- Helen Sessions – Beach parking and driving is not good for the beach or the fragile beach habitat. Camping is a problem on the beaches as there are no regulations. Campers are leaving behind trash and other items. Without enforcement, there can be no compliance. She suggested the permitting process and the fines for enforcement.
- Frank Lewis – All he has heard tonight is rules, rules and rules for the beach. The beach he moved from was overly restricted and his family never wanted to go back. He enjoys the ability here to park on the beach and use the beach.
- Rick Burkett – Retired to Fernandina Beach 14 months ago because of the traditions here. He enjoys the ability to park on the beach to fish and have bonfires at night. He enjoys driving on the beach when it is not crowded during the winter. His community bonfires on the beach have been a great way to meet people. In his last mail to the committee, he suggested recommendations to control the beach problems. He noted that more people are impaled, injured or killed by flying umbrellas on the beach than are injured by beach driving.
- Marilyn Green – She questioned Mr. Hall's earlier statement that the committee has already planned driving lanes and parking areas, Mr. Hall responded that he, as the President for the Citizens for Public Beaches and Shores, was proposing this idea to the committee at the appropriate time. In her e-mail to the committee, she stated that a study needs to be done for peak use parking. They cannot rely on a study conducted in 1989. Until the study is completed, she would like to see a moratorium on beach parking other than for elderly and handicapped that need it. A friend explained to her that the reason the kids from Georgia do not use the beaches there is because of the toll to get onto the island. Camping should only be at Fort Clinch and the State park. The fees for beach parking should be \$500.00 per year or \$25.00 per day. With all the cars parked towards the ocean, she did not see how a Sheriff's deputy could read the beach driving permits to be displayed on the dashboard. She suggested the beach driving permits be an identifiable tag mounted near the license plate of the vehicles. She suggested use of the one percent discretionary sales tax collected by the County for increased law enforcement on the beach. Chair Langley stated that the committee welcomes suggested proposals for their consideration as Mr. Hall has done with his group. The committee is still in the process of gathering information.
- Denny Lee – There is only a small area to park on the beach and suggested that this area be left alone. He sits every morning in his Jeep on Sadler Road and watch the ocean before work which is a wonderful experience.
- Lisa Reese – There are many more people in the County using the beach; without restrictions, it is a free-for-all. Changes must be made in order to make the beach safe for locals and tourists alike. Peters Point has enormous crowds trying to use this small section of beach. She requested that the comments from all groups tonight be respected.
- Helen Sessions – She inquired who on the committee represented the people like her that believe driving on the beach is hazardous to the environment and human health. Chair Langley advised that everyone on this committee will be involved in the recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Morriss provided his credentials for the record.
- Marion Phillips – She is Vice President for Citizens of Public Beaches and Shores. She thanked those who want to protect the traditions of Amelia Island. She wants the committee to preserve

the rich history and traditions. The beaches in Nassau County are like none other. She requested that the accesses to use the beach and parking not be taken away.

- Jake Shuford - There seems to be a lack of education regarding the enforcement Nassau County is doing on the beaches. He was at a meeting recently where the officer shared that Nassau County has written over 200 citations recently. Enforcement is being done.
- Cathy Cline – She was at the beach on the day of the alleged incident where the girl was run over by a Jeep. She was very aware of Jeeps and four-wheel drive vehicles as she was trying to help an elderly couple get towed. She was never interviewed by anyone that day. She did not want to see the beach driving stopped because of any misinformation.
- Sue Girard – She explained that there is a one-year waiting list to camp at Fort Clinch. There are very limited areas to camp on Amelia Island.
- Joe Shiver – Retired here from the Coast Guard six years ago. He stated that if beach driving is taken away, he'll end up divorced if he had to carry all his family's beach items to the beach. He respects the beach and the environment, and the people who live on the beach who have to experience these issues. He wanted to retire here because of the beach environment and lauded the police enforcement at the beach.
- Dale Shed – Pointed out that whatever is decided, it must be enforced. He suggested having undercover agents in unmarked vehicles with video surveillance during peak hours who could take direct, immediate action against the offenders. A small percentage of the users of the beach are the abusers of the beach. Better enforcement of the laws already established would be better than new laws.
- Berta Arias – Wondered if there was a way to poll residents to see what the population wants. Chair Langley advised that this is the third public hearing where there is standing room only. The committee has heard over ten hours of testimony from hundreds of people. There is another public hearing scheduled for May 30, 2019. Once the committee gathers all the comments, they will work as a committee to develop rough ideas to address the issues. There will be several public meetings following that to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to respond to the ideas.
- Yvonne Fenn – Building a home on Scott Road. She urged the committee to do a study to research other beach towns, states and countries to determine their beach regulations and what has been successful.
- Eugene O'Neill – Is a Jeep owner and enjoys beach driving. As a retired state trooper, he searched for an area and Nassau County fit his needs. He expressed concerns with changes to the area. He felt that punishing all of the citizens for the actions of a few offenders was unfortunate. He added that most people will comply with the law while others will need enforcement.
- Francis Lott - He agreed with the concerns of the people. The enjoyment of the beach is being compromised by a small percentage of the people. He suggested a gate at the entrance to Peters Beach with a photographic device to take pictures of the license tags of cars going onto the beach and a nominal fee to park or camp on the beach. Anything that is free is not appreciated.

Mr. Langley thanked everyone for attending. He explained that the committee has solicited information from every beach county in the State of Florida as well as good practices from 33 state parks that have beach related camping including recreational vehicle and primitive camping. He requested that if anyone in the audience had additional information to send it to the committee by e-mail.

Mr. Morriss inquired if there was some place in Nassau County that could deal with the homeless population currently on the beach at Burney Park. He added that the homeless population consists of women as well as men. In addition, he pointed out the problems associated with the Mobi-Mats when a wheelchair bound person tries to come back up the mat from the beach. He also congratulated Taco Pope for his new position as Assistant County Manager and pointed out that every year, Mr. Pope raises the bar.

Mr. Hall explained that trying to put a plan together to please everyone has been difficult. His hope was to have a plan that will please the vast majority of the people and it may have to be implemented in phases. Funding is crucial for the implementation of any plan.

Deputy Osbourne explained that his deputies are doing their job patrolling Peters Point. He pointed out that last season, his department wrote 279 summons on that beach in the summer months for open containers, glass containers to nudity. Mr. Morriss explained that once the word got out that the beaches are patrolled, the citations decreased. Deputy Osbourne explained that it is the officer's discretion whether to write a ticket or educate the offender.

Chair Langley adjourned the meeting at 7:13 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 30, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Commission Chambers.

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2019
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL COMPLEX
96135 NASSAU PLACE, YULEE, FL 32097**

AGENDA

**CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL**

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Limited to 3 Minutes Per Person

- Any member of the audience wishing to speak on any beach related concern.

CONSENT ITEM(S):

Tab A Approve minutes from the May 15, 2019 meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEM(S):

Tab B Discussion of remarks by Mike Mullin as to future meetings and process.

Tab C Remarks by Mike Mullin regarding Senate Bill 1577 and Final Judgement.

Tab D Discussion of future meetings dates and locations.

Tab E Discussion of emails and questions submitted to the County Manager from May 9 through May 30, 2019.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEM(S) AND COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

- Any other items to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in this program or activity should contact 904-530-6010 or Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (v) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) at least seventy-two hours in advance to request such accommodations.

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2019 – 5:30 P.M.
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL CENTER, 96135 NASSAU PLACE
YULEE, FLORIDA**

A noticed meeting of the Beach Community Working Group was held on May 30, 2019 at the Commission Chambers, James S. Page Governmental Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida.

Committee members present were Michael Mullin, County Manager/County Attorney; Taco Pope, Assistant County Manager; Butch Osborne, Sheriff's Office; Douglas Podiak, Facilities Maintenance; Gil Langley, Tourist Development Council; and Mac Morriss and Lowell Hall, Ex-Officio members. Also present was Melissa Lucey, recording secretary.

Chair Langley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Mullin commented that the Tourist Development Council (TDC) has created a spreadsheet containing a synopsis of all the public comments that were received from previous meetings. He noted that the spreadsheet will be provided to the Board of County Commissioners for their review. He recommended setting additional meeting dates in order for this committee to start the discussion toward making a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners that will include addressing possible changes to the current beach ordinances. Mr. Mullin suggested that this be the last meeting where the focus is on public comment, because this committee has an understanding of what all the beach issues are. He advised that at the end of each future meeting the public will have the right to comment on any items that were discussed.

Next, Mr. Mullin stated that the parking and driving on the unincorporated areas of the beach is controlled by Senate Bill 1577, and the Final Judgement issued by the Circuit Court. Those documents do not mean that the Board of County Commissioners cannot regulate the hours, parking, traffic lanes, etc. He noted that the City of Fernandina Beach does not have the same controlling documents and are regulated by the City Commission. Mr. Mullin explained that it would require a special act of the legislature in order to amend Senate Bill 1577.

Mr. Mullin commented that there are six (6) County Ordinances that need to be reviewed in order to create one (1) comprehensive Ordinance that addresses changes recommended by this committee. Mr. Langley responded to an inquiry from Mr. Mullin that he recommends waiting until the end of the meeting to address additional meeting dates.

Mr. Langley commented that the synopsis spreadsheet is for the first three (3) meetings, and the comments from tonight's meeting will be captured into the spreadsheet. He noted that the spreadsheet will be available on the County's website. Mr. Langley briefly addressed emails that have been received. He recognized Board of County Commissioner Aaron Bell, and City of Fernandina Beach Commissioner Chip Ross in the audience.

The following audience members came forward to express their concerns regarding beach issues:

- Pete Smith – Came forward to request that the committee consider future growth as a primary goal; create a plan that promotes safe and convenient public beach access for both the City of Fernandina Beach and County residents; immediate solution to reckless beach driving and primitive camping with no facilities; and he wants to understand the existing State Constitutional Laws that will impact the ability of the committee to make the incremental changes. He feels that

beach parking should be limited and reserved for County residents primarily at first. Mr. Mullin proved Mr. Smith with clarification regarding House Bill 631.

- Judy Hutchison – Requested that the committee not restrict beach driving and parking.
- Unidentified speaker – Came forward to recommend closing the beach between the hours of 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. He also addressed continuing to allow beach driving for disabled individuals. Chair Langley advised that the County's Facilities Maintenance Department is moving forward expeditiously on adding more Mobi-Mats which provides wheelchair access to the waterfront based upon the testimony that was received at the May 15, 2019 meeting.
- Chip Kirkpatrick – Commented that one major concern he understands was protecting the sand dunes. He briefly addressed an advertisement on the internet that showed a campfire on top of the sand dunes. He briefly commented on the Mobi-Mats for wheelchairs, recent vehicle accident on the beach, and requested more beach front access. He felt that restricting beach front parking would create additional safety hazards.
- Greg and Sandra Carter – Expressed concern with beach driving and camping rights being compromised.
- Randy Hall – Inquired whether the Customary Use Ordinance was still in effect. Mr. Mullin advised that the Customary Use Ordinance is in effect and that it has not been challenged in court.
- Bill Gordon – Advised that he does not want the beach access to be taken away, noting that it allows handicapped individuals the ability to visit.
- Ann Jennings – Commented that with the exception of people with disabilities, beach driving should be banned due to destroying natural habitat for the sea turtles. She addressed the recent hurricane damage and noted that American Beach was unable to install sand catchers to help develop sand dunes due to the vehicular traffic. She explained that driving on the beach is causing ecological damage to the beach by preventing natural protective barriers from performing; causing harm to the historic community; and creating unsafe conditions for the public.
- Tony Nelson – Requested that beach driving be stopped with the exception of those with disabilities.
- Terry Hoskinson – Recommended hiring beach monitors with full enforcement ability including issuing tickets to offset the cost.
- Allan Morris – Commented that there is a lack of personal responsibility from the way people treat their surroundings, obeying laws or rules. He suggested increasing law enforcement on the beach.
- Doctor John McKay – Addressed his concerns of living on the beach with criminal activity; reckless driving; camping; and littering that take place during the night.
- Kevin McDonald – Commented that this is a enforcement issue and removing beach access will not resolve the issue.
- Jeff Walukonis – Advised that he feels that this is an enforcement issue and pointed out that Walton County has funded a Sheriff's station at the beach that has been funded by the bed tax.
- Charles Duke – Also felt that this is a law enforcement issue and recommended that the committee consider placing porta pottys on the beach or improving restroom facilities and resolving the noise issue on the beach.
- Mary Kramek – Expressed concerns with the visitors outside of Nassau County coming to the beach and not respecting our beach environment, the turtles, and our children: She stands for handicap rights to drive on the beach.
- Steve Quarella – Felt that it is important for the residents who do not live on the beach; especially the elderly and those with disabilities to have the ability to continue to drive on the beach. He recommended placing a requirement that only allows for four wheel drive vehicles on the beach and for funding for law enforcement with available resources.
- Andrea Lee – Appreciates the ability to drive on the beach. She briefly addressed an issue with vehicles getting stuck in the sand, which she felt is a safety issue. She also felt that there needs to

be more regulations regarding who is coming on the beach and what type of vehicle is being driven on the beach.

- Reed Rucker – Came forward to request that the committee make a conscientious decision of the rights of driving and parking on the beach. He recommended implementing a permit system on four wheel drive vehicles for residents who live and pay taxes in Nassau County.
- Patricia Rucker – Advised that as a fisher woman and member of the Nassau Sports Fishing Association (NSFA), she has found a wonderful community of respect for the ocean here in Nassau County. She advised that the members of NSFA do drive on the beach to carry their fishing equipment and that some members do have physical restrictions that prevents them from carrying their equipment. She suggested providing access to the residents of Nassau County with the possibility of gates that restrict access and requires a code.
- Jan McKay – Recommended requiring permits for camping and removing the ability to drive on the beach.
- Becky Mulford – Inquired if the Nassau County Sheriff's Office report incidents that happens on the beach. Deputy Osborne advised that all incidents will receive a report for documentation and indicated that most of the incidents discussed tonight are transpiring at Peters Point.
- Lisa Reese – Felt that camping should be a managed campground with a fee, particular campsite, and for a specific length of time, and have adequate facilities. She recommended that anyone interested in more campsites on Amelia Island should contact the Florida State Park Services, and the offices of Senator Aaron Bean and Representative Cord Byrd to request help with funding for the campsites. The County needs to safely accommodate the increasing number of people in a way that maintains the health of the beach, dunes, wildlife, and respects both homeowners and visitors.
- Eugene O'Neill – Stated that he does not want to lose his ability to drive and park on the beach. He also commented that law enforcement does work and recommended that during the summer hours extra law enforcement be added to the beach. Mr. Morriss responded to an inquiry by Mr. O'Neill that his Facebook posting is for the purpose to start conversation and to receive feedback.
- Peg Dickinson – Does not support camping on the beach and recommends issuing a specific number of permits to help limit the amount of campers. She advised that she is on the fence on night time driving but it would protect the sea turtles and fellow campers on the beach.
- Agnes Lyden – Came forward to request the committee consider using bed tax towards supporting Nassau County's beaches; improving the beach access; and obtaining enforcement on the beaches.
- Mary Duffy – Thanked Nassau County and staff for placing four (4) post around the sea turtle nest that has been driven over two (2) times at Scott Road. She indicated that she will continue to advocate for restricting beach driving at night in Nassau County during the turtle nesting season.
- Amanda Peoples – Recommended setting up driving lanes for people accessing the beach and the requirement of having a four wheel drive vehicle; however, taking all access to the beach should never be an option to the residents of Nassau County.

Mr. Langley thanked everyone for their input. He explained that the working group will start the process of taking all of the comments that were provided and work towards a solution. He addressed that the next upcoming sessions will be workshops and that the dates have not been set up but will be available to the public. He thanked the members on the committee, noting that they have been fantastic to work with and have taken extensive period of times out on the beach to look at the issues that were brought to this committee.

Mr. Pope advised that the next stage after the public engagement would be working with staff on these particular issues to start the process of goals, objectives and strategies. He explained that it has been his experience to address the assets and issues with the overarching goals that the working group would like to accomplish with creating the policy solutions. He recommends that the committee reach out to Sabrina

Robertson with their thoughts, assets, and issues for the working group to address at the next meeting in order to start forming guiding principles, objectives and strategies in order to achieve these goals.

Mr. Morriss commented that it was raised by several people that the type of vehicle that should have access to the beach does not resolve this issue. He explained that he spent several hours on Sadler Beach and witnessed multiple vehicles that clearly dictated that it is not the type of the vehicle but the knowledge of the driver. He pointed out that it is more complicated than just saying only four wheel drive vehicles should have access. He stated that they need more assistance determining a solution that would be beneficial.

Mr. Hall requested clarification on the Sunshine Law and if he could speak with the County Commissioners. Mr. Mullin advised that he can talk to any County Commissioner but cannot speak individually to any member of this working group that would be voting. Mr. Hall explained that with the amount of input that has been received over the past several months, he would like to recommend expediting or submitting amendments to implement certain rules. He explained that he would be in favor of placing a kiosk at the beach for parking, restrictions on camping and no night time driving during the turtle nesting season. Mr. Mullin advised that the working group cannot implement but can provide their recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners, as they are the only entity that can implement by Ordinance. Mr. Morriss advised that the working group should be planning for long term and work patiently towards the recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Langley concurred, noting that the whole goal of the working group is to implement one (1) comprehensive beach Ordinance that clarifies the laws that are enforceable and have a long shelf life for Nassau County.

Mr. Mullin commented that in order to set additional meetings, he would request Ms. Robertson to send possible dates to each of the committee members to review. He requested for each of the committee members to provide at least two (2) or three (3) dates that they are available and that they would be publicize for the public.

It was moved by Mr. Mullin, seconded by Mr. Morriss and unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2019 working group meeting as presented.

Chair Langley adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
1:00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2019
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL COMPLEX
96135 NASSAU PLACE, YULEE, FL 32097**

AGENDA

**CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL**

DISCUSSION ITEM(S):

- Tab A** Discussion of remarks by Mike Mullin and Taco Pope as to future meetings and process.
- Tab B** Set future meetings dates and locations.
- Tab C** Discussion of emails and questions submitted to the County Manager from May 24 through June 14, 2019.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Limited to 3 Minutes Per Person

- Any member of the audience wishing to speak on any beach related concern

COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEM(S) AND COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

- Any other items to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in this program or activity should contact the Office of the County Manager at 904-530-6010 or Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (v) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) at least seventy-two hours in advance to request such accommodations.

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2019 – 1:00 P.M.
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL CENTER, 96135 NASSAU PLACE
YULEE, FLORIDA**

A noticed meeting of the Beach Community Working Group was held on June 19, 2019 at the Commission Chambers, James S. Page Governmental Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida.

Committee members present were Michael Mullin, County Manager/County Attorney; Taco Pope, Assistant County Manager; Butch Osborne, Sheriff's Office; Douglas Podiak, Facilities Maintenance; Gil Langley, Tourist Development Council; and Mac Morriss and Lowell Hall, Ex-Officio members.

Adrienne Burke, Director, and Abigail Weiss, Planner, representing the Department of Planning and Economic Opportunity and Peggy Snyder, recording secretary, were also present.

Chair Langley called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. He advised that this was the fifth public hearing for the Beach Committee Working Group. The committee has received approximately 500 public comments. Mr. Langley pointed out for the audience that this committee operates under the Sunshine Law; therefore, all of their discussions occur within these meetings in an open forum.

Following discussion, it was moved by Mr. Mullin, seconded by Mr. Morriss and unanimously carried to set Beach Committee meetings for July 15, July 24, and August 1, 2019 to be held in the Commission Chambers at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Pope provided a PowerPoint presentation noting that all committee discussions regarding the beach will occur during his presentation. After the last meeting, he consulted with Ms. Burke, Ms. Weiss, and the planning team who had gathered all the data and research provided as well as the many hours of public comment and began creating a structure in order to get the committee to the point where they can have a bill consensus and provide a realistic recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The first part of his presentation will be to lay out the path; and secondly, starting the process of building consensus around broad-based principles and goals in order to lead into a discussion that will lead to objectives and strategies in order to produce a recommendation to the BOCC that is palatable and realistic.

Mr. Pope explained that the BOCC directive to the committee is to "review current beach related ordinances for any updates or amendments and bring back to the Board." The first part of the roadmap was for the committee to engage the public and conduct observation and research. The next portion will be to gain consensus as a committee regarding guiding principles. As the committee works forward to the goal towards the end of this roadmap which is the committee's recommendation to the BOCC, the committee members need to all agree on the broad-based guiding principles in order to guide them through the process. Mr. Pope added that once the committee establishes the guiding principles and determines the assets and issues, they can work towards creating consensus around the goals. Each goal may have three or four objectives and associated strategies such as assignments and actions items.

Mr. Pope reviewed the guiding principles that staff had created dealing with long range planning, island-wide beach management policies and joint planning; safe and accessible public beach access; good stewardship of environment and natural resources; diversity of user, prioritizing County residents; and celebrating local heritage and culture. Under the guiding principle of safe and accessible public beach access, a goal could be to prioritize public safety. One of the objectives could be to increase beach enforcement and regulatory oversight. Under that objective could be numerous strategies to implement

those objectives; one of which could be to supplement Nassau County Sheriff's Office presence on the beach by hiring beach rangers or auxiliary officers and include the budgetary implications in order to make it a reality. When the committee agrees on a strategy, they will have to do assignments to investigate how to enact the strategy before presenting to the BOCC. The committee members agreed with this structure provided by Mr. Pope. Discussion followed.

Next, Mr. Pope reviewed the proposed guiding principles and requested the committee's approval. A lengthy discussion followed. Committee members made suggested changes to the following guidelines:

- "Celebrate" local heritage/culture" to "Acknowledge" local heritage/culture;
- "Take the 'long view' – 2045 planning horizon, growth and tourism trends" to "Take the 'long view' (*lens of sustainability*) – 2045 planning horizon, growth, and tourism trends."

It was moved by Mr. Mullin, seconded by Deputy Osborne and unanimously carried to adopt the guiding principles as stated.

Next, the group discussed Assets and Issues. Mr. Pope explained that from an asset-based approach, the list outlines things that people identified as being positive assets; the second part were issues that people identified as needing correction. Some of the items are both assets and issues such as camping on the beach. The act of driving on the beach at night is not the actual issue, it is the noise, loud music, ruts, and destruction of turtle nests from the vehicles that people find as issues. Mr. Pope identified the assets as identified by the public discussion. He inquired whether the committee members had changes or additional assets and issues. Discussion followed. Mr. Morris mentioned the educational opportunity for Scouts to camp on the beach as an asset. Following discussion, Mr. Pope identified these additional assets as "Educational Opportunities", "Non Profit Non-Government Organization (NGO)/Access and Utilization", and "Collaborated Approach to Beach Renourishment".

Ms. Pope addressed the category of Issues adding that access capacity will be an issue as the County analyzes growth projections as well as trends and tourism. There were many nuisances identified including trash, litter, human/animal waste, excessive noise (vehicle and music) and alcohol consumption. Mr. Pope further reviewed the Issues. An issue mentioned was the parking stalls that are taken by commercial enterprises on public beaches as well as beachfront parks.

The next category Mr. Pope addressed was "Setting Goals". He advised that it was best to not set a lot of broad-arching goals because each goal would have multiple Objectives and Strategies. The five goals were listed as "Prioritize public safety on the beach"; "Ensure public access to beaches"; "Preserve local heritage/culture and lifestyle"; "Protect environmental and natural assets of the beach"; and "Explore funding opportunities for beach management." Discussion followed regarding interfacing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Mr. Pope explained that there is no adopted Master Plan at this time. The copy on the County's website is a six year old draft and the County is working with Dr. David Barth of Barth Associates, LLC to create a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the County with a targeted completion date of mid-2020. Mr. Langley advised that the draft version of the Master Plan on the County's website contains great resources.

Mr. Hall wanted to ensure that steps were being taken to handle the on-beach parking, camping, and night driving issues in the interim while the committee drafts an ordinance to take to the BOCC. Mr. Langley remarked that the length of time to draft an ordinance is inordinate as the committee spent a great deal of time taking public comment. He added that small steps have been taken where there has been the ability to address those. As an example, he advised that as a result of public comment, the County has instituted a program whereby Mobi-Mats were installed at every beach access for people with disabilities. Other opportunities are being explored such as cameras on the beach. Mr. Pope inquired if the committee was comfortable with these goals. There was consensus of the committee members to approve these goals as written.

Mr. Langley pointed out that going forward, the goals of this committee will require skillful management; therefore, he requested that Mr. Pope serve as a committee member; not staff, in order to participate in the committee discussions. Mr. Pope explained that in order to move this beach committee forward, he was happy not to be a facilitator and he will speak with Sabrina with the County Manager's office to find a replacement facilitator.

It was moved by Mr. Mullin, seconded by Deputy Osborn and unanimously carried to adopt the goals in the order presented.

Mr. Pope explained that the committee's homework is to take the five goals keeping in mind the guiding principles and come up with objectives. He recommended not more than three or four objectives per goal because each objective will have numerous strategies. Discussion followed regarding public safety and education. Deputy Osborn explained that during the summer months when school is out, the Sheriff's Office utilizes the School Resource Officers to help assist with beach patrol. He explained that the more deputy presence, the less problems are encountered. His hope is that whatever ordinance this committee brings forward, it will be solid and enforceable.

The following audience members came forward to express their concerns regarding beach issues:

- Joan Schmitt – Inquired how the County would be providing good stewardship of environmental and natural resources. Mr. Pope responded that this is one of the guiding principles; the objectives and strategies of how to implement that will be included in the committee's upcoming work over the next few months.
- Pete Smith – Agreed that the plan provided was excellent; however, as a beach property owner, the committee missed one high level guiding principle which is to ensure the "peaceful use and enjoyment of property." Discussion followed regarding night beach driving as an example of the root cause of a number of other problems.
- Brenda Singer – Suggested that the protection of the environment be higher up on the priorities. Mr. Morriss pointed out that the environment will be protected once the beach regulations are enforced.
- Nathan Parker - Suggested having the beach horse riding included under Beach Safety due to the frequency of riders and inexperienced riders. Mr. Pope explained that under User Conflicts, animals, human and vehicle conflicts are addressed. Ocean sloughs are fun for children to play in; however, the horses have been known to relieve themselves in those areas.
- Dianne Banaszak - Expressed her concerns with safety at night on the beach when people want to walk. There are cars driving with no lights and leaving ruts in the sand.

Chair Langley thanked everyone for participating and advised that the next committee meeting will be held on July 15, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Commission Chambers. There being no further business, the committee meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
MONDAY, JULY 15, 2019, 5:30 P.M.
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL COMPLEX
96135 NASSAU PLACE, YULEE, FL 32097**

**CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL**

CONSENT ITEM(S):

Tab A Approve Minutes from the May 30 and June 19, 2019 meetings.

DISCUSSION ITEM(S):

Tab B Introduce Brian D. Teeple, AICP, as the Committee's discussion facilitator.

Tab C Facilitate conversation amongst committee members relating to the Committee's Goals, Objectives and Strategies.

Tab D Define Committee's next steps.

Tab E Discussion of emails and questions submitted to the County Manager from June 17 through July 15, 2019.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Limited to 3 Minutes Per Person

- Any member of the audience wishing to speak on any beach related concern

COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEM(S) AND COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

- Any other items to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in this program or activity should contact the Office of the County Manager at 904-530-6010 or Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (v) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) at least seventy-two hours in advance to request such accommodations.

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, July 24, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 1, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

**BEACH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2019 – 5:30 P.M.
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
JAMES S. PAGE GOVERNMENTAL CENTER, 96135 NASSAU PLACE
YULEE, FLORIDA**

A noticed meeting of the Beach Community Working Group was held on July 15, 2019 at the Commission Chambers, James S. Page Governmental Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, Florida.

Committee members present were Michael Mullin, County Manager/County Attorney; Taco Pope, Assistant County Manager; Butch Osborne, Sheriff's Office; Douglas Podiak, Facilities Maintenance Director; Gil Langley, Tourist Development Council; and Mac Morriss and Lowell Hall, Ex-Officio members. Also present was Heather Nazworth, recording secretary

Chair Langley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Mullin, seconded by Deputy Osborne and unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the May 30, 2019 and June 19, 2019 meetings as presented.

Mr. Mullin introduced Brian D. Teeple, as the committee's discussion facilitator. Mr. Teeple came forward and introduced his colleague, Blair Knighting, to assist him. He commented that public policy development requires a thoughtful process and his goal is to have full participation from all the committee members.

Mr. Teeple provided a handout (Attachment "A") to the committee members for review and feedback. He reviewed Goal Number 1: Prioritize Public Safety at the Beach and inquired if the members had any additional objectives to be included. The group suggested ocean rescue, beach cams for security surveillance, and an onsite beach manager to live at Peters Point. Regarding any additions or eliminations the group discussed jurisdictional boundaries, presence of law enforcement officers, and increased awareness of the public. Mr. Mullin addressed his concerns regarding the process to put some of the requests in effect due to the budget and legalities. Mr. Teeple reminded the committee that with the review process there will be short, mid, and long range processes that will be made.

Next, Mr. Teeple reviewed the first objective: Increase Beach Enforcement and Regulatory Oversight. The committee discussed the creation of a consolidated ordinance with a clear direction for law enforcement; increased presence of law enforcement and budget constraints; and creation of permit systems. Mr. Mullin explained that regarding the turtles in the area according to the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection lists two of the species as endangered; however, Federal Department of Environmental Protection lists three species as endangered. Through research, the county will have to get an Incidental Take Permit from the Federal Department of Environmental Protection in order to keep beach driving during the turtle nesting season in the day time only; however, without the permit there is a risk of a Federal Order to prohibit all driving until the permit is obtained. The group continued discussion regarding beach rangers, speed limits; vehicles lanes of travel; location of parking and driving on the beach; limitations for camping; access control for driving or parking on the beach; horseback riding guidelines; and fines for beach policy violations. Mr. Mullin responded to an inquiry from the committee that the designated driving areas on the beach were designated by State Legislature.

Mr. Teeple reviewed the second objective: Reduce User Conflicts. The committee discussed creating designated driving lanes and as well as the enforcement, the redesign of the beach parks ingress/egress, and possibility of off-site parking.

Mr. Teeple then reviewed the next objective: Maintain a Partnership with City of Fernandina Beach to provide Ocean Rescue and Improve Recruitment and Retention of Lifeguards. Mr. Mullin commented that Nassau County has a contract with the City of Fernandina Beach regarding the lifeguards and the City determines the salary figures. The group discussed time length for need of lifeguards.

Finally, Mr. Teeple discussed the fourth objective: Increase Regulatory Education. The group discussed updates to the beach signage; and an educational public outreach campaign process and strategy.

Mr. Teeple advised that he and Ms. Knighting will summarize what was discussed tonight. It was the consensus of the committee to continue further discussion at the next meeting.

The following members from the public came forward to offer comment:

- Mary Duffy requested clarification regarding the Incidental Take Permit Process. Mr. Mullin responded that the permit would have to be in the process, then you can proceed with the driving restriction from May 1 to October 1 with no nighttime driving on the beach.
- Brad Clemons inquired regarding the ban on night time driving hours. Mr. Mullin responded that there will be definitive times.
- Charles Illi expressed concern regarding the beach parking and the loud music played on the beach.

There being no further business, the committee meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Goal #1 - Prioritize public safety at the beach:

Objectives:

1. Increase beach enforcement/regulatory oversight

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Adopt clear and enforceable ordinance for law enforcement that includes definitive penalties.
- b. Clearly identify Jurisdictions/jurisdictional boundaries
- c. Increase Sheriff's presence at the beach/designated beach patrol officers
- d. Supplement NCSO with beach rangers/auxiliary officers
- e. Coordinate enforcement capacity/coverage between City/County enforcement officers
- f. Introduce traffic control and enforcement on the beach
- g. Provide access control to the beaches [gates and booths]
- h. Beach camping program/oversight [reservation system, limited/designated camping sites, management, etc.]
- i. Improved regulations of horseback riding
- j. Improved regulations for dogs at the beach
- k. Adopt more stringent penalties for violating beach policies
- l. _____
- m. _____
- n. _____
- o. _____

2. Reduce user conflicts

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Create driving lanes/designated parking areas on beaches and establish vehicular access control
- b. Redesign beach front parks' points of ingress/egress to separate conflicting users
- c. Provide more stringent regulations surrounding horseback-riding and dog access
- d. Improve regulatory oversight/enforcement
- e. _____
- f. _____

3. Maintain partnership with COFB to provide Ocean Rescue and improve recruitment and retention of lifeguards

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Analyze regional wages for ocean rescue team members
- b. Identify career opportunities in the field and related training/retention tools
- c. _____

4. Increase regulatory education

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Brochures handed out by tented at booth/at permit pick up
- b. New, simplified, signage

- c. Execute a public outreach campaign
- d. _____
- e. _____

5. _____

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

6. _____

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

7. _____

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Goal #2 - Ensure public access to beaches:

Objectives:

1. Analyze beach capacity proportionate to growth/tourism projections at a planning horizon of 2045

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Establish maximum capacity for vehicles at each beach front park and cap daily vehicles accessing the beach as necessary
- b. Establish park and ride facilities to access the beach
- c. Establish a FREE island wide trolley/tram system
- d. Seek to purchase non-beach front lands for parking areas within walking distance to the beach
- e. Seek to obtain via exactions or via purchase lands adjacent to the ocean to provide additional public beach access points
- f. Repurposes/redesign publicly owned oceanfront properties for more efficient access/parking
- g. Create specific horse trailer parking areas and prohibit the parking/loading/unloading of trailed vehicles in passenger vehicle parking areas.
- h. _____
- i. _____
- j. _____

2. Develop systems which allow pedestrian access to the beach on a 24/7 basis

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Expand park lot access hours
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

3. Prioritize County residents' access to the beach

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. If capacity limits dictate, restrict beach driving/parking to County residents
- b. Fee for non-county residents parking in beachfront parking lots
- c. Lottery system for non-county residents for beach driving
- d. _____
- e. _____

4. Maintain or improve ADA accessibility to public beaches

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

5. **Improve restroom use/access**

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Improve cleaning schedule and quality
- b. Provide restrooms at all beach from parks/access points
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

6. _____

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

7. _____

Notes for Strategy formation:

- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

Goal #3 - Preserve local heritage, culture and lifestyle:

Objectives:

1. Maintain and defend the customary use doctrine and access to dry sand portions of the beach

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Maintain family friendly atmosphere at beaches/peaceful enjoyment of ocean front property

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Increased regulatory oversight/law enforcement presences
- b. Introduce traffic control on the beach
 - i. Define driving lanes and parking areas
 - ii. Introduce access control [gates/booths at points of ingress/egress]
- c. Increase penalties for alcohol possession, littering, failure to secure permits, failure to pick up animal waste, and urinating/defecating outside of a restroom
- d. Limit night driving/parking during turtle nesting season
- e. Beach camping program/oversight [reservation system, limited/designated camping sites, management, etc.]
- f. Improved regulations of horseback riding
- g. Improved regulations for dogs at the beach
- h. _____
- i. _____
- j. _____

3. Maintain safe and responsible vehicular access to the beach for County residents

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Increased regulatory oversight/law enforcement
- b. Introduce traffic control on the beach
 - a. Define driving lanes and parking areas
 - b. Introduce access control [gates/booths at points of ingress/egress]
- c. Require 4x4/all-wheel drive vehicles
- d. _____
- e. _____

4. Provide regulated and responsible beach camping for County residents

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Create beach camping management program [reservation system, limited/designated camping sites, management, etc.]
- b. Limit camping to areas only directly in front of public parks with restroom facilities
- c. Limit camping reservations to County Residents
- d. _____

5. Maintain regulated and responsible horseback riding access to the beach for County residents

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Provide specific regulations for horseback riding
 - i. Limit hours of access March - October
 - ii. Define ingress/egress locations
 - iii. Limit riding to westward of the mean highwater line March - October
 - iv. Prohibit riding in tide pools or in water March - October
 - v. Require manure catch bags be worn at all times in all seasons
 - vi. _____
 - vii. _____
- b. Require all commercial outfitters desiring to use public beach access points and parking areas to acquire a license to operate in a public park.
- c. Limit the number of commercial outfitters licenses issued each year
 - a. Annual lottery system
- d. Create separate trailer parking area that does not reduce the number of passenger vehicle parking spots at beach front parks
- e. _____
- f. _____

6. Maintain responsible access of dogs to the beach

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. More stringent penalty and enforcement of leash laws
- b. More stringent penalty and enforcement for failure to properly dispose of animal waste
- c. _____
- d. _____

7. Maintain ability for responsible shore fishing including night fishing

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Allow night access via driving or via parking in beach from parks 24/7
- b. _____
- c. _____

8. Where feasible, develop regulations which consider local heritage while ensuring the public safety of all beach goers

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. Clearly identify growth issues which have an impact on traditional usage
- b. Analyze traditional usage of the beach and its current relevancy
- c. _____

9. _____

Notes for Strategy formation:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____