Dear Neighbors, February, 2016

As an update on our beach efforts, I wanted to let you know about several recent events. An October 27th joint meeting with Hillsboro Beach, Deerfield, Boca, and DEP gave us hope that a cooperative solution could be reached for the damage to our beach from the Boca Inlet and Deerfield's groins. As per verbiage in Deerfield's state permits mandating it is Deerfield's responsibility to mitigate down-drift damage caused by their groins, we were specifically looking to engage in constructive dialogue with Deerfield. Unfortunately, Deerfield was not willing to engage in dialogue of any kind, and the joint meeting led nowhere.

Next, based on state statutes and Deerfield's unwillingness to come to the table, Hillsboro Beach took action at the January Commission meeting, invoking F.S. 164 – Conflict Resolution between Government Entities. (Public support for this move left standing room only at the meeting.) F.S. 164 is a process required by law prior to filing litigation against another municipality and is the final effort to avoid litigation. The process takes about three months. The first F.S. 164 meeting was held February 3rd; however, Deerfield's focus was on trying to intimidate us, not working towards a resolution. The next meeting as required by F.S. 164 is tentatively scheduled for March 1st or 2nd.

Hillsboro Beach taxpayers have spent the equivalent of $27.3 million on sand that repeatedly washes away at an unnatural rate because of Deerfield's groins and issues at the Boca Inlet. The Town still owes five years on a 2010 loan for sand that's been gone since 2013. Another nourishment was just completed in April, and history indicates that yet another one will be needed before the 2010 loan is paid off. Although the legal process is arduous, we simply cannot afford to continue buying sand while Deerfield continues to trap sand that would rightfully come to us. Our sand checkbook is overdrawn. We have no choice but to take a stand on enforcement of the terms of Deerfield's permits.

On a more positive note, oversight at Town Hall has improved dramatically in the past six months as a result of hiring Bob Kellogg as our Interim Town Manager. Mr. Kellogg has been instrumental in saving the Town **$959,000** since August. For the upcoming March 15th election, there will be a referendum on the ballot asking to make this position permanent. Please support this referendum! The inefficiencies and waste we have endured for years have been clearly curbed by having competent daily management at Town Hall.

Also on the ballot will be two open Commission seats. We're fortunate there are two candidates with extensive professional expertise in the areas we need most. For many years, ***Irene Kirdahy*** served as Senior Vice President of Facilities Engineering Management and Operations for a large New York corporation. Her project management skills will be invaluable for the major projects on the Town's horizon. Likewise, with experience as President and CEO of a notable New York financial company, ***Don Taggart*** has banking and financial management skills the Town sorely needs. Both Irene and Don have been influential in their fields. Lucky for us, both are willing to commit time, energy, and effort as Commissioners for Hillsboro Beach.

Please mark your calendar for the March 15th election. If you will be out of town that day, please request a "Vote by Mail Ballot" by calling 954-357-7055 ASAP. **EVERY SINGLE VOTE IS IMPORTANT!** Last year, 36 votes determined the winner of a seat.

In closing, once again I want to thank you for your continued support. It's wonderful that so many residents have recently become involved in Town issues. Please contact me anytime with your input and concerns. It is my honor and my pleasure to serve the taxpayers of Hillsboro Beach!

Sincerely,

Deb

Deb Tarrant
Vice Mayor
Email: dtarrant@townofhillsborobeach.com

Funded by Deb Tarrant

May 2016

Dear Neighbors,

It's been very busy around Town in the three months since my February quarterly newsletter! Belated congratulations to new Commissioners Irene Kirdahy and Don Taggart, and also to the Town's first official Town Manager, Bob Kellogg. The new team hit the ground running after the March election, and immediately started workshops to discuss a long-range (5-year) fiscal plan. These workshops will be held regularly until the plan has been finalized. Dates for the workshops will be posted on the Town website, and anyone interested in providing input is welcome to attend. This long-range planning process is a first for Hillsboro Beach!

Another first is the "Town of Hillsboro Beach Information Guide." Hopefully you received your copy earlier this month via snail-mail. This little booklet is meant to facilitate communication between residents/property owners and Town Hall. Included are interesting facts about our town, as well as important contact information and a gorgeous aerial view of "Florida's Magnificent Mile." If you did not receive a copy, please stop by Town Hall.

Regarding the pending situation with Deerfield and our official request (made July 8, 2015) for the conditions in their groin permits to be enforced as mandated by the State when the groins were installed, **a mediation date of June 9th has been set.** This is the final effort to avoid litigation and the last phase of the multi-step process required by Florida Statute. This mediation is not open to the public, however, a recap will be posted on my website (www.debtarrant.com) as soon afterwards as possible. A recap via email will also be sent to residents who are on my email list. If you don't currently receive periodic email updates from me but would like to do so, please contact me at dtarrant@townofhillsborobeach.com. My list is independent of the list maintained at Town Hall and includes only people who have contacted me directly.

What happens next regarding the groins depends on the June 9th outcome. The Town has spent $27M (in 2015 dollars) on the beach since the groins were installed. Just since the 1998 nourishment, beach expenses have been over $17M, or roughly ***an average of $1M each year for the past 17 years***, on an annual budget of $5M to $6M - half of which covers the Police Department. We will continue to pay $1M per year through 2020 for the beach, nearly all of which will go towards loan payments for sand that's been gone for years. If it wasn't for Deerfield's groins artificially trapping sand that would otherwise come to us naturally, the 2011 nourishment may have lasted until the loan was paid off. Obviously we cannot continue to borrow money to buy sand that lasts only 1/3 of the time it takes to pay off the loan. This is why we've had to take a stand. The terms of the groin permits need to be enforced. Without a long-term solution, history will continue to repeat itself.

Please feel free to contact me anytime if I can assist you in any way. It is my honor and my pleasure to be serving as your Mayor!

Most sincerely,

Deb

Deb Tarrant
Mayor

Email: dtarrant@townofhillsborobeach.com

Dear Neighbors, ***August 2016***

It's been a busy summer here in Town, with the Deerfield situation as the main focus. On June 9 and July 18, the municipalities met with a mediator. Ultimately, Deerfield refused to acknowledge permit conditions that say Deerfield has responsibility for the erosion damage caused by their rock groins. As a result, ***mediation reached an impasse and was discontinued on July 18.***

We've spent a full year attempting to avoid litigation, culminating in this unsuccessful mediation effort. The Town Commission must now evaluate options as to how to proceed. While everyone agrees the beach defines our town and we need to protect it, given that Deerfield has chosen to be uncooperative, there will be no quick or easy fix. Once the Commission has determined a course of action, I will send an email update. If you do not already receive my email updates but would like to do so, please contact me at dtarrant@townofhillsborobeach.com.

On a more positive note, the Town is making progress in long-ignored administrative areas. First, our Town Charter is being reviewed, both for necessary changes to support our new Commission/Town Manager form of government, as well as for other recommendations to be made by a Charter Review Committee. ***As Charter changes require voter approval, the goal is to have recommended changes on the March 2017 ballot. Many thanks to residents Harry Ambrose, Joe Germano, Jane Reiser, Claire Schubert, and Rhea Weiss for volunteering their time to serve on the Charter Review Committee.***

Our Building and Zoning Code regulations are also being updated and will ultimately be available online. ***Commissioner Irene Kirdahy*** has experience in this area and will spearhead this monumental effort.

The Commission recently held a series of three workshops to consider long-term planning needs and "Wish List" projects requested by residents – things like burying power lines, laying a fiber optics conduit, adding sidewalks, adding parking at Town Hall, updating the building. Obviously however, first and foremost is the need to plan for costs relating to our beach strategy before moving forward with projects requiring capital outlay.

The replacement of our ancient water pipes is a project for which funding has already been designated. Construction is slated to begin soon. Ideally the work would be done off-season, but further delay was deemed imprudent given the condition of our existing lines. In addition, Broward County has agreed to replace our sewer lines, with construction slated to start in 2018. Water and sewer are on opposite sides of the road for safety reasons, therefore doing the projects separately will have the least impact on traffic. The end result will be a tremendous improvement to our aging infrastructure!

In May, the Town did a survey regarding the ordinance governing dogs on the beach. The proposed change was to allow dogs registered with the Town to be walked **on-leash** on the wet sand seaward of the high water mark (beyond private property) from 5:00–9:00 AM and 5:00–9:00 PM, using this area as a sidewalk. The survey had an excellent response rate of 52%. Of the 1188 responses received, 30 had no preference, 561 were pro-dog, and 597 were anti-dog – basically 50/50 as to whether a change in policy is warranted. While there has recently been a large shift to the pro-dog camp, there was no clear majority in favor of change; therefore, given there are already several difficult issues currently facing the Town, the Commission decided to put further consideration of this issue on the back burner for now. The national trend, however, is clearly in a pro-dog direction, with 54% of American households now owning dogs* and many young professionals opting for dogs in lieu of children. With so many more dog owners these days and without a safe place to walk a dog, some realtors say resale in Town is being affected. We will have to keep our eyes on this trend.

In closing, please know it is truly my honor to serve as your Mayor. I welcome your thoughts on the many topics that impact our Town.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Deb

Deb Tarrant

Mayor

Email: dtarrant@townofhillsborobeach.com

*Source: American Pet Products Association 2015-2016 National Pet Owners Survey

Dear Neighbors, ***November 2016***

Our snowbirds are in the process of flying south, and we're looking forward to a great winter season. Thankfully Hurricane Matthew passed by us with minimal damage, however, northeastern winds typical for this time of year are once again taking a toll on the beach. The hardest hit area is where Deerfield's groins (rock piles) trap sand, thus maintaining Deerfield's beach but causing intensified erosion in Hillsboro Beach. Regarding our beach situation with Deerfield, the Town Commission voted in September to move forward with the next step in preparing a legal case addressing the groins. This involves the installation of nearshore wave gauges to document the damage in the most ravaged area. Installed in late September, these gauges must be in place for three to four months. If the situation with Deerfield remains unchanged, a final decision concerning litigation will be made after that time.

Shifting to the south end of Town, we are once again experiencing flooding from the autumnal King Tides. In October, a section of A1A was closed intermittently during a five-day period when the Tides peaked. Experts anticipate King Tides will return November 12-18 and December 12-16. We need to be prepared for possible road closures during that time. Driving through the flooded area is extremely hazardous as evidenced by a near-fatal drowning incident last month when a car hydroplaned into the Intracoastal. The driver was saved only because a gentleman in a passing car was brave enough to enter the water and pull her to safety as the car was sinking.

For many months, the Town has been asking the Florida Department of Transportation to address the flooding on our southern mile. This effort has been spearheaded by **Commissioner Irene Kirdahy**. A feasibility study for raising the road was conducted, however, FDOT decided no work will be done until a ***complete*** overhaul for all of A1A is presented by the Town and scheduled into FDOT's regular budget process, currently planning for 2024. According to the agency, this overhaul is required by State law to address not only the flooding, but also provide for cyclists and possibly pedestrians in selected areas of high population density. In other words, if we want the flooding eliminated, we need to come to an agreement with FDOT on these other issues. FDOT says the State owns enough right-of-way on each side of the road (20' from the center line) to make an overhaul plan feasible. The problem, according to agency reps, is that over the years both condos and single-family homes have encroached on the State's right-of-way with plantings, parking, and driveways. FDOT will be doing a property-by-property assessment of the situation. The sooner we begin discussions with State officials regarding the specifics of a proposed plan, the sooner we will get on their schedule and the sooner the flooding can be addressed. Once we're on their schedule, given that the project has a public safety component, hopefully we can move up in the queue.

Now for some good news... Recently our Police Department went through an evaluation by the Florida Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation. I'm happy to report the investigator in charge ranked our Force at the very top of all the police departments under her evaluation authority. Receiving and maintaining accreditation at this level is not easy, requiring every officer to meet higher-than-average standards of training and readiness, and requiring the Department as a whole to meet very specific administrative standards. **The Town can be proud of Police Chief Tom Nagy, Major Jay Szesnat, Sergeant James Pugliese, and all our Hillsboro Beach police officers and dispatchers. We owe special thanks to Eileen Casagrande,** who serves as our accreditation liaison on a volunteer basis. When you see Eileen and members of the PD at the station or around Town, please congratulate them on a job well done!

Having finally gotten through the general election this month, we can now turn attention to our March 14, 2017 local election. On this ballot, you'll be seeing several proposed amendments for the Town's Charter. These changes are primarily housekeeping in nature, necessary to make our Charter more relevant. Also on the March ballot will be candidates for three Commission seats. I've been asked by a number of people whether I plan to run for re-election. I'd like to take this opportunity to let you know that, yes, I've decided to seek re-election, and hope I can count on your continued support. The Town has some tough initiatives to deal with – things that are not quickly or easily rectified. It's my intention to stay on top of these complex undertakings and keep them moving forward.

Like every municipality, we have issues to address, however, we're extremely fortunate to live in such a beautiful little town – an oasis in South Florida. I am honored to serve as your Mayor and welcome your input at any time!

Sincerely,

Deb

Deb Tarrant
Mayor

Email: dtarrant@townofhillsborobeach.com