Dear Hillsboro Beach Neighbors, ***May 2019***

Well, with significant difficulty, we have made it to approximately the half-way mark in the County's sewer replacement project. The project was stalled near 1063 (Ocean Grande) due to the extreme depth of the existing lines in that location. Crews had to work 18'+ underground with water constantly being pumped out of the work pit. In an effort to keep the project on time, the County and the contractor brought in yet another crew to begin installation of a "redundancy line" in the north end of Town, causing a one-lane road-closure in addition to the full road-closure at the main-line work further south. The redundancy line is being installed in case an emergency ever shuts down the main line. The main line is located on the east side of the road all the way through Town, and by completing the redundancy line on the west side of the road (working from north to south) before the main-line work gets to that point, the hope is that the need for a full road-closure can be minimized as the main part of the project comes north. By the time you receive this newsletter, everything from 1063 going south to the bridge should be completely finished and the full road-closure should have moved up to Town Hall. Crews will then work in both directions from Town Hall. The County has stated that if/when there is an opportunity to have a one-lane closure rather than a full road-closure at any point, they will do so. **Town Manager Serda** and the Commission continue to challenge the County (pretty much daily) to provide relief for our residents as soon as possible and in any possible way.

You may recall from the February newsletter, mediation with Deerfield regarding the beach issues was scheduled for mid-March. Mediation began on March 12 and was adjourned after nine hours. The adjournment was agreed to, as opposed to declaring an impasse, in order to allow further discussion in hopes of reaching a viable settlement. All parties agree a settlement would be preferable to a protracted legal battle. The key, of course, is that a settlement must address the issues presented in the litigation. In order to allow mediation to continue and because it is not possible for counsel to prepare for trial at the same time they are engaged in mediation, the court date that was slated for early May has been pushed to August, in the event that mediation ultimately ends in impasse. Because mediation is privileged, further details cannot be shared.

Another beach-related topic of discussion recently has been the amount of trash on our beach as well as the major influx of seaweed Mother Nature has been delivering to us twice daily. The Commission has agreed we need to address both issues. Currently, individual property owners contract with the Beach Raker for beach maintenance, however, there are several problems with this arrangement: 1) Not all property owners use the Beach Raker's services; 2) Much of the trash that accumulates on the beach is located in the dune area, which is not an area maintained by the Beach Raker because to clear the trash requires hand-picking; 3) Often times, the amount of seaweed seems to be more than the Beach Raker can handle. Because individual property owners' rights extend to the high-water line, the Town cannot contract on behalf of individual property owners for maintenance of the beach west of the high-water line without securing easements. This would be very difficult since many folks are leery of granting an easement on their property for any reason. Accordingly, the Commission has agreed to drafting an Ordinance specifically requiring maintenance standards for the beach/dune area. Currently, there is no Ordinance allowing Code Enforcement officials to take action for properties that neglect their appearance beachside. The new Ordinance relates to the privately-owned portion of the beach. For the State-owned portion of the beach, east of the high-water mark and including much of the rogue seaweed, the Town is researching options and considering a line-item in the 2019/2020 budget. In the meantime, **resident Stephanie Steinberg** has suggested that a citizens' task force be organized to "Fill a Bucket" with beach trash. The group could also help identify problem properties. If you have interest in being part of this beach-combing group, please contact Stephanie at stephstein@msn.com.

On another note, the Town was notified that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has finalized their list of projects for the revenue from the penny sales tax approved by Broward County voters in November for transportation needs. The intersection of Hillsboro Boulevard and A1A has been prioritized at #11 on the list. That's the good news. Unfortunately, the projects on the list won't begin until 2025. At least, however, after four years of being a squeaky wheel, it looks like we will eventually get some oil…

In closing, on behalf of myself, **Vice Mayor Irene Kirdahy**, and **Commissioner Vicky Feaman**, I would like to thank our fellow Commissioners for re-instating us in the offices of Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Treasurer, respectively, at the March 19 Reorganization Meeting. The entire Commission is at your service. Please don't hesitate to contact any one of us to discuss Town issues at any time!

Sincerely,

Deb

Deb Tarrant
Mayor

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