

**Burnt Store Isles Association, Inc.**

**General Membership Meeting**

**March 10, 2015**

The meeting was held at Twin Isles Country Club and was called to order by President Doug Rhees at 7:00 P.M. All members were welcomed and a special welcome was extended to our new members.

The Pledge of Allegiance, led by Rick Doll was recited by all present.

President Doug expressed appreciation to and recognized former Presidents of the Association who were in attendance: Bob Armstrong, Bill Hughes, Chick Petrosino, Joe Sababino, Charlie Council, Gene Murtha (absent), and himself. Doug named all Board members and introduced those in attendance: Jayne Perkins, Mary Drummond, Don Hallman, Mirko Vlcko, Lori Gurr, Kathy Williamson, John Forr, Judy Vanderweele, and Melissa Lockhart. Absent were Connie Higgins, Doug Paquin and Gene Murtha.

Doug spoke of the history of Florida and Punta Gorda and reminded us that we need to be willing to change with the times, as each generation pursues its dreams. Doug introduced Nancy Prafke, our City Council representative. Nancy said that the City is in the planning stages of redoing its website so it is mobile-device friendly. She said that Howard Kunik has been our City Manager for the last 10 years and is doing a great job, as he is very open to questions and suggestions. Howard gave a brief summary of the City's budget, reserves, and financial status and named its sources of revenues. Property values are rising again (4% last year), with permits for 100 homes having been issued in 2014 and probably a similar number this year. Burnt Store Isles comprises 14% of the City's tax base. Howard presented many of the City's projects already underway that are being funded by the 1% optional sales tax: improvements to Harborwalk West, the sea walls, Gilchrist Park, Punta Gorda Pathways, the City website, City's information technology, and ADA-compliant crosswalks where road repairs are made. Then he addressed projects that are on the list for completion during the next 5 years. Plans are still being made for the reverse osmosis water plant. The City is awaiting news of possible additional grant funding (\$900,000 is already in hand), but the project is on go regardless of whether or not additional funds are granted.

Doug asked Mirko Vlcko, the BSIA's legal liaison on the Board, to present the three proposed amendments to our organization's bylaws. Doug announced that a quorum (members representing at least 47 households) was present at this meeting. There were 198 people attending the meeting. Mirko noted that each member received notice of the proposed bylaws amendments by mail in timely manner as required by our bylaws. Each proposed change was read and addressed individually.

The first proposed bylaws amendment was read:

Article III, Section 1 is amended to read as follows:

Section 1. The Officers shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Each officer shall be elected for a term of two years. No officer shall serve for more than four consecutive years in

the same office. Officers are expected to be routinely available to meet their day-to-day responsibilities and accessibility to members.

Rick Doll moved that we accept the motion as read and it was seconded by Charlie Council.

Discussion followed regarding staggering the terms of board members. This change will be effective immediately if approved. Bob Armstrong called the question. Voting for the amendment, by visual indication, was a substantial majority of those voting (two opposed). A count of those voting by proxy/absentee ballot indicated that there were an additional 57 members in favor and 2 in opposition to the proposal. The motion carried.

The second proposed bylaws amendment was read:

Article V, Section 3 is amended as follows:

Section 3. The Board of Directors shall meet as often as deemed necessary to conduct the affairs of BSIA. Any Board Member may attend and vote at any meeting of the Board electronically (by either video or audio conference or by telephone).

Buzz Dressel moved that we accept the motion as read, and it was seconded by Bob Armstrong.

Discussion followed, and Mirko suggested that because of changes in technology since the bylaws were originally written, we need to keep up-to-date and allow Board members to attend meetings by means other than their physical presence (i.e. electronically). There were no opposing votes at the meeting, and proxy/absentee ballots had a count of 54 in favor and 5 opposed. The motion carried.

The third proposed bylaws amendment was read:

The following Article X is hereby added to the bylaws:

#### Article X

##### Notice

Anything contained in these Bylaws to the contrary notwithstanding, wherever any notice to the members is required under these Bylaws, such notice will be sufficient if provided by e-mail to those members who have provided their e-mail address to the Association, unless any such member provides written notice to the Association electing to receive notices only by regular mail. Notice shall be sent by regular mail to those members who have not provided their e-mail address to the Association or who have given written notice to the Association that they elect to receive notice only by regular mail. The form of the notice shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors, and all time frames applicable to such notice, as provided in these Bylaws, shall be equally applicable to notice by either e-mail or regular mail.

Charlie Council moved that we accept the motion as read, and the motion was seconded.

Again, there was discussion, but Mirko said this change is another attempt to modernize the bylaws and allow us to use email to communicate rather than USPS if it suits the member. There were no opposing votes at the meeting, and proxy/absentee ballots had a count of 55 in favor and 4 opposed. The motion carried.

Doug asked Association member Ed Minzer to update the Association in regard to the dredging of Alligator Creek. He gave the group a little background on the project. With the help of our congressman, Tom Rooney, the project is finally moving forward, and it is a certainty that the dredging will be approved by the end of the year at the latest. Ed is hoping that the approval can be expedited, but there is no guarantee that will happen.

Doug introduced Gary Brewster, Chairman of the BSI Canal Advisory Committee, to discuss widening of the entryway to Alligator Creek. The contract should be completed within 60 days after the contractor's bid is approved. We are not certain what this removal of posts to widen the entryway will do to boat traffic during the period of removal. The bathymetric survey has been completed for the consideration of dredging of the perimeter canal. The future lack of staging areas for materials for seawall repairs and reconstruction are still a concern once our neighborhood is built out. The material that is removed when our canals are dredged is required by the EPA to be used to fill the deep holes in our canals. There have been complaints from residents about this practice, but the EPA is adamant at this point about continuing disposal of dredge material in the same manner.

Doug presented the BSIA's treasurer's monthly report. Doug, in Connie Higgins's absence, noted that BSIA is healthy and that there would not be more substantial dues income until next fall. There were no comments or questions from the group.

Doug asked some of the Board members to comment on activity in their realm of responsibility.

Judy Vanderweele, Social Committee Director, commented that the Ponce Park picnic is March 28, and encouraged members to attend. Sue Bareither is in charge of a Venice dinner and theater outing in May, so please consider participating in this event.

Doug encouraged members to please be attentive to the condition of the cul-de-sac near their homes. If an area needs weeding or a new planting, please help take care of it. These are community projects and it reflects on our neighborhoods if we do not care enough to keep the cul-de-sacs looking attractive. Doug also mentioned the first median at the Monaco entryway to BSI. The Board is not blind to the fact that it is not attractive. There are concerns regarding why plants are not thriving in that area. The City is helping investigate this since they suggested the initial specific plantings.

Doug suggested that many of the items that John Forr, Planning Director, will address are just ideas in an information-gathering stage. Doug asked members to please complete the questionnaire provided on the tables. This is an opportunity for members to suggest their ideas and give the Board feedback on ideas we are actively considering. John stated that we are considering placing security cameras at the entrances at Monaco and Madrid and at the entrance to BSI canals from Alligator Creek. This would act primarily as a deterrent to criminals and could possibly give the Punta Gorda Police information if a crime occurred within our community. He said the Board is also looking into new or revamped monuments at our entryways to update their appearance. John showed slides of several attractive monuments in other communities and is suggesting that perhaps a committee could be established to look into ideas and the expense of such a project.

Doug asked Lori Gurr, Membership Director, to speak. She introduced the newest members in attendance. There are currently 470 active members (properties) who have membership in BSIA. Let Lori know if you have new neighbors and she will deliver a welcome packet to you to give the new

resident because we are all on the Welcome Committee, as members of BSIA. The 2015 BSIA directories have been mailed. Please let her know if you did not receive yours in the mail. Doug reiterated the importance of growing our membership numbers. We need to get all residents involved.

Doug introduced Chick Petrosino, Chairman of the BSIA's Underground Wiring Feasibility Committee, to update us on the status of the Committee's research work. Chick thanked Doug Holmes for putting together a power point presentation. There is very little of BSI that has underground utility wiring, but those areas that have no poles are much more attractive. The move for underground wiring in Punta Gorda first began in 2001, but that attempt failed. There are many considerations, but there is renewed interest among our members in BSI for underground wiring. The committee is trying to determine if there is genuine interest first among BSIA members, then among all of BSI residents. An engineering study would need to be completed before any commitment to installing underground wiring. Cost of this study would be approximately \$75 per property which currently has no underground wiring. This study would need to be approved by a straw ballot vote (cost to be underwritten by BSIA) of all BSI residents who do not currently have underground wiring (approximately 1266 properties). The entire cost of the project, if approved, would be approximately \$7 million, according to FPL. This could be repaid over 15-20 years at a nominal annual cost per property (without underground wiring). We have a unique opportunity to beautify and enhance property values in our neighborhood. There were various questions posed. The very tall power poles which were recently installed in BSI have been a planned installation by FPL to "harden" the system in the event of a bad storm and because of construction of many new homes in our community. Nancy Prafke said that if the engineering study is approved by BSI, the \$75 cost of the survey per property (without underground wiring) would be billed as an assessment on our property tax bills. Doug thanked the Committee for all of their work and time in doing the research.

Doug asked members to please complete the questionnaires provided because the Board really needs your input.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Drummond, Secretary