

## PINE KNOLL SHORES COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

By Yvette Bannen

The April 12 meeting of the Pine Knoll Shores Board of Commissioners began with Mayor Ken Jones announcing that this is Volunteer Week. He read a proclamation to that effect and noted that Pine Knoll Shores is known for its volunteerism. The Team Member of the Quarter award was given to Dennis Tomaso.

The Chairman of the Community Appearance Commission (CAC) Dominic Baccollo gave the annual report of the CAC.

There were two public hearings, one to abolish the existing service districts that were used for the sand tax and a second to establish new service districts for the beach tax. Comments were made about whether it is necessary to have to pay a beach tax, the inequality of having two different rates, and suggestions that the whole community should vote by a referendum on whether to have a beach tax. One citizen pointed out that we have to look to the future because we are unable to depend on the state and federal government to pay for renourishment of the beach.

The Commissioners then voted to abolish existing service districts now that the 2002 bond has been paid. They voted to establish a new service district for oceanfront properties and another service district for non-oceanfront properties.

During the first public comment period on items on the agenda, there was support for a dog park in Pine Knoll Shores, support for paid parking at the beach accesses seven days a week and a comment that there should be only one tax rate for the beach tax.

There were five items under unfinished business, and the first was about paid parking at the public beach accesses. A vehicle count will be conducted this month. The commissioners still have questions about fees, hours of operation and the time period when paid parking will be in effect. It was pointed out that the citizens pay for access to the beach through their association fees. There will be paid parking at the public beach accesses; the issue passed by a vote of 3-2.

A map outlining "Lot C" adjacent to the Public Safety Building and its use was discussed at length. Part of the lot will be used for public beach access parking for the Dayton Place access site. The location of that parking would be at the far end of the lot, which would require people to cross at the traffic light at Pine Knoll Blvd. and then walk along Salter Path Road where there is no sidewalk. The remainder of the lot will be used to store yard waste and for a Fire Department training site. It was suggested that the parking could be at the beginning of the lot instead. That would allow people to walk on the driveway of the Public Safety Building and then cross over Salter Path Road to the beach access. Commissioner Edwards mentioned that there should be a warning light at the driveway for the fire trucks and ambulances as other towns have for fire stations.

Liability continues to be the chief concern relating to the dog park. Because the dog park will use town land, it will be considered a municipal park. The town's general liability policy would not cover this use, and there is no liability insurance available for a dog park. Volunteers will maintain the park and members will pay dues.

An electronic sweepstakes ordinance was discussed after the town adopted a temporary moratorium on the establishment of electronic and Internet gaming operations last June. Commissioner Corsello thought the ordinance was "premature" because the state is still considering proposed legislation about state-licensed video lottery operations. The matter was sent to the Planning Board.

The 2011 Annual Agenda is a recurring item, and a comprehensive strategic plan has been added.

There was one item discussed under New Business regarding a Pine Knoll Shores Historical Exploratory Committee. There will be a first reading of the proposal in May with possible adoption in June.



By Tom Powers

Most of the Cruisers have returned home, and I expect to hear many travel tales at our meeting this month. I haven't heard any disaster stories yet, so I guess that everyone had a good time.

Although we are one group with a common interest in RV traveling, we don't all RV in the same fashion. Some of us like to pull into an RV resort where there are lots of activities, cable TV hookups, a pool and usually a pool bar. Although we may set up our barbeque grill, it's mostly for show; the cooler next to it is what gets a workout.

Meeting new friends is easy, and we usually have a cocktail or two before heading out to try a local restaurant where we discuss the day's sightseeing, resort activities or shopping. Those who prefer roughing it often opt for a state park, which costs considerably less but doesn't have the amenities. It's all about relaxing and enjoying nature. This is back-to-nature camping where you might sit around a campfire at night rather than a TV, and although the days may include sightseeing, the emphasis is on hiking, climbing or fishing. Home cooking is the norm, and grills get a workout.

Whether resort types or state park types, many RVers return to the same campgrounds every year at the same time. Many reserve a specific site a year in advance so as to be near people they've camped with in the past. And if you want to meet new friends, it's easy. Just climb under your RV with your feet sticking out, and a small crowd will soon gather, asking if you need help. Some will even show up with an extra can of beer.

If you have an RV or are considering one, we welcome you to our dinner meetings, which are held the first Monday of every month at 6 p.m. For more information, you can call me at 240-3164 or e-mail [tom.powers@mac.com](mailto:tom.powers@mac.com).

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