

## JUNE 10-TOWN HALL MEETING

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, June 10, 2004 at 6:00 p.m. at the Coastal Branch Library.

The following Board members were present: Larry Jones, Chair, Tim Pauls, Vice-Chair, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Ro Cuchens and Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen. Mr. Ronnie Bell, Interim County Administrator, and each department head were also present.

Commissioner Pauls led with prayer followed by the pledge of allegiance to the American flag. He welcomed the public to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Commissioner Pauls then introduced each commissioner and presented a power point presentation prepared by Mr. Ken Little, Citizen Services Director.

The power point presentation began by briefly discussing the mission and priorities of Walton County. Discussion regarding past and current road paving projects followed. Commissioner Pauls then turned the presentation over to Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, to discuss road paving projects in more detail. Mr. Barry presented some information and talked about road paving projects for fiscal year 2004. He also spoke about Public Works projects other than roads, such as bridge replacements and stormwater projects. The presentation was turned back over to Commissioner Pauls.

The power point briefly talked about economic development and described current projects that are occurring in Walton County. It also addressed the Planning and Development Division of the county. Commissioner Pauls asked Mr. Mike Lane, Planning Director, to inform the public about the different departments of the Planning and Development Division. Mr. Lane briefly talked about each of the three departments,

Planning & Zoning, Building, and Code Enforcement, and then turned the presentation back over the Mr. Pauls.

Commissioner Pauls concluded the presentation by speaking about different things that he feels preserves the unique environment of South Walton. He talked about the Tourist Development Council and mentioned several highlights in South Walton such as the Timpooshee Bike Path Trail, the library, and the South Walton High School. Commissioner Pauls expressed his appreciation to the other members of the Board for their help in the accomplishments in his district.

Commissioner Pauls opened the floor to public comments and questions. Ms. Debra “Spike” Alfassa addressed the Board and presented some information in regards to her proposal for a “Bark Park” in South Walton County. Ms. Alfassa is trying to get a dog park created in Walton County because she feels there is no place in the area dedicated to pets. One member of the audience said that she owns a dog cleaning business and the one of the major questions that her clientele has is, “Where can we take our dogs?”

Ms. Phyllis Wings expressed concern regarding the Noise Ordinance. She felt like there is a gap between the Code Enforcement’s authority and action that must be taken by the Sheriff’s Department. Commissioner Pauls agreed with her and talked about the challenge to “close” that gap. Commissioner Cuchens stated that discussion relating to this issue had previously been held.

Ms. Beverly Kraska, on behalf of the South Walton Community Council, reviewed a “wish list” consisting of several items that they desired from the Board. She

personally questioned the status of the Community Rating System. Mr. Lane updated Ms. Kraska with information regarding the issue.

Ms. Rebecca Howard questioned the status of permitting the use of golf carts on CR 30-A. Commissioner Pauls stated that currently golf carts are not allowed on county roads. He spoke in favor of a plan that would permit low speed vehicles, but said that it would require the cooperation of the Sheriff's Department also. Chairman Jones spoke about the concern of safety from those who are opposed to the idea.

Mr. Lowery spoke about the drivers of road graders delaying traffic that is behind them. Mr. Barry said that he would remind the drivers to pull off the road periodically to allow the traffic to pass.

Mr. Bob Hudson spoke about drainage issues in his subdivision. He also spoke about other issues that he is concerned about in the subdivision such as the covenants and no home owners association. He requested the Board's consideration of their concerns.

Ms. Nancy James asked if the Board had considered establishing a BCC with five single member districts and two at large members. Commissioner Pauls addressed the question. He said that his suggestion to citizens who are interested in the idea is that a referendum be placed on the ballot for the public to vote on. Commissioner Rees spoke about the information that he had found on the matter. Further discussion was held concerning charter counties versus non charter counties.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Larry D. Jones, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court