

## SEPTEMBER 11, 2003 – TOWN HALL MEETING

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, September 11, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. at the Freeport Community Center.

The following Board members were present: Larry Jones, Chair, Tim Pauls, Vice-Chair, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen, and Commissioner Ro Cuchens. Mr. Michael Underwood, County Administrator, and Attorney Gary Vorbeck, Director of Legal Services, were also present.

Commissioner Rees led with prayer followed by the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag.

Mr. Underwood opened the meeting with introduction of the commissioners.

Commissioner Cuchens welcomed his mother-in-law and father-in-law, Nancy and Bernie McHugh to the meeting.

Mr. Dick Southerland, Cedar Beach Cove resident, addressed problems regarding roads. He explained that the contractors are causing the damage and questioned if they can be held liable for the repairs. Attorney Vorbeck explained the law that states that if county property is damaged by anyone, they are accountable for the repairs. However, an investigation would have to be done to prove who is responsible. He stated that it would be a civil matter.

Ms. Nancy James questioned the Board about recent action taken regarding Summer's Edge Forth Edition. She stated that several of the issues to be heard that night were postponed due to erroneous advertising and questioned if Summer's Edge should

have also been postponed. Mr. Underwood advised that this was one of the projects properly advertised and was therefore voted on.

Ms. James also asked about the new process being used for individuals applying for appointed board positions. Mr. Ken Little, Citizens Service Director, explained that he has developed a new form to gather the requested information from those interested in serving on any board.

Mr. Kevin Chillcut questioned what actions are being taken to control the mosquitoes to help prevent the spread of mosquito borne viruses. Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, explained that the Mosquito Control Department is continuing to spray nightly and that they are continuing with their testing procedures. Commissioner Cuchens expressed his appreciation to the Mosquito Control Department for their work.

Mr. McHugh questioned what follow-up actions are being taken regarding the drownings. Commissioner Pauls spoke about a meeting he attended where they discussed implementing a new flag system and the development of additional education. He stated that a committee was developed to study the drownings in addition to the successful rescues in order to assess what could be done better. Commissioner Pauls stated that better education on the children's level is a key factor. He also stated that the county now has a rescue boat that will also assist during emergencies.

Ms. James commented on how proud she is that Commissioner Pauls is serving as Chair of the Transportation Planning Organization. Commissioner Pauls commented on the reorganization of the TPO and the additional seats that now allows four representatives from Walton County to serve. Ms. James questioned that status on the 4-laning of Highway 331. Commissioner Pauls stated that there is no new information and

that Walton County needs to continue lobbying at the State level. Discussion was also held regarding the proposed 331 Freeport by-pass, which is still in the planning stages and could be seven to ten years before completion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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

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