

OCTOBER 18, 2017 – WORKSHOP

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Workshop on October 18, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. at the Walton County Courthouse Annex in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner Cecilia Jones, Chairwoman; Commissioner W. N. (Bill) Chapman, Vice-Chairman; Commissioner Tony Anderson; Commissioner Sara Comander; and Commissioner Melanie Nipper. Mr. Larry Jones, County Administrator; and Attorney Sidney Noyes, County Attorney; were also present.

Chairwoman Jones called to order the Workshop to discuss beach management and possible revisions to the Beach Activities Ordinance. Discussion was held regarding the length of time allowed for each public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Chapman, second by Commissioner Nipper, to allow two (2) minutes per public comment. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Jones Aye, Chapman Aye, Anderson Aye, Comander Aye, Nipper Aye.

Mr. Brian Kellenberger, TDC Director of Beach Operations, distributed the Beach Code Enforcement FY 2017 Beach Activities Code Update and briefly discussed the process in which the suggested changes were compiled for consideration by the board. He went over the changes as recommended in the report. There was a suggestion submitted after the meetings were held recommending a change to lengthen vendor times during non-turtle nesting season.

Discussion was held regarding complaints filed in regards to tents, the storage of vendor equipment, and the timely removal of vendor equipment from the beaches during a hurricane.

Ms. Beverly Ottzen, Ms. Barbara Van Stavern, Mr. Tom King, and Ms. Sharon Maxwell voiced concern with the effects vendor equipment has on sea turtles and sea turtle nests.

Recommendations submitted were no items left at the toe of the dune overnight, and no ghost chair set-ups.

Ms. Laurie Reichenbach and Ms. Carolyn Zonia discussed noncompliant beach vendors and recommended the loss of registration/permit after three fines.

Mr. Robert Fuszner questioned if water could be furnished with the vending of the chairs. Attorney Noyes stated the current ordinance does not allow the vending of food and beverages on the beach.

Mr. Matt Houston stated his company has produced a phone app which would allow consumers to reserve areas on the beach. He compared it to reserving a seat on a flight.

Mr. Maunsel White addressed the right of the upland property owners to determine whether vendors are allowed to set up on their properties. He also discussed the future needs of beach restoration.

Ms. Tiffany Hughes discussed the lack of beach enforcement and information to the tourists.

Ms. Heather Cleveland, Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, discussed beach event permits and event lighting. She spoke in support of the annual permit allowed for resorts and stated the current regulations are vague. She said it would be beneficial to both the client and the resort to clarify the language. A brief discussion was held regarding the success of the annual permits.

Mr. Eddie Mitchell expressed his gratitude on the rules that have been implemented to protect the beaches and allowing the public to participate in the ordinance process.

Ms. Celeste Cobena voiced concern with the frequency the Code Enforcement vehicles traverse lesser populated areas such as Topsail State Preserve and Deer Lake. She suggested Code Enforcement target the areas with the highest complaints.

Mr. Noah Vickers discussed the vendor zones and voiced concern with the small areas allowed for bonfires.

Ms. Lisa Boushy addressed the issue of vehicles on the beach and tent congestion. She recommended banning all tents and placing signage at the walkovers indicating the location of private and public beaches.


Mr. Phillip Poundstone, South Walton Beach Services Association, discussed the successes of the association and the methods used for self-policing vendors.

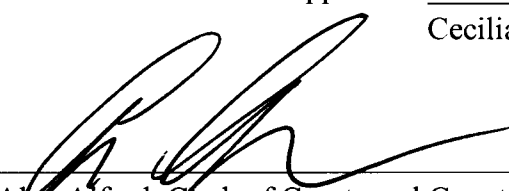
Ms. Mari Darr Welch addressed the service vendor permits and noted that with the increased use of cell phones as cameras it would be difficult to differentiate between professional and amateur photographers.

Ms. Betty Letcher discussed issues with bonfires on the beach and the number of vendor trucks on the beach during the recent hurricanes. She also raised concern with event houses using public parking for their private events.

Discussion was held to determine if the board wished to discuss each item. The board concurred to direct staff to compile the suggestions submitted by the public and the board and to present all the recommendations for discussion and consideration at a later date.

Motion by Commissioner Chapman, second by Commissioner Anderson, to adjourn the meeting at 3:57 p.m. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Jones Aye, Chapman Aye, Anderson Aye, Comander Aye, Nipper Aye.

Approved: 
Cecilia Jones, Chairwoman

Attest: 
Alex Alford, Clerk of Courts and County Comptroller