

CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION OF PALM BEACH

Serving Our Residents Since 1976

NEWS & VIEWS



COUNCIL INCREASES PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE PAY

A few weeks ago, the Palm Beach Town Council took action to make the pay of police and firefighters in the town of Palm Beach competitive with neighboring municipalities, as first reported by the Palm Beach Daily News.

The Council decided to position public safety workers' salary ranges at the 75th percentile of the jobs in the public sector in Palm Beach County. The Council used data collected by Consultant Evergreen Solutions,

This means that the pay ranges for those jobs will be adjusted so that Palm Beach is in the top 25 percent of highest-paying public agencies in the county.

Raises would be given to public safety employees whose pay currently falls below the midpoint of the new salary ranges.

Bringing all public safety workers' pay up to the 75th percentile will cost \$500,000, according to Human Resources Director Danielle Olson.

Most of the pay changes are expected to take effect at the start of the next budget year on October 1, Town Manager Kirk Blouin stated.

Medical Education Council of the Palm Beaches

Dr. Michael Dennis, President and Director of the Medical Education Council of the Palm Beaches recently sent out a **2019 Medical Guide** containing valuable information regarding local hospitals, doctors, ALF's, urgent care centers, etc. in our area.

If you are interested in receiving one of these guides, please visit their website at www.mededcouncil.com or Google search Medical Education Council of the Palm Beaches.

HURRICANE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS



Palm Beach is implementing new programs and technology in advance of the 2019 hurricane season as first reported by the Palm Beach Daily News. The 2019 hurricane season will officially begin on June 1 and run until November 30.

According to PB Police Sgt. Paul Alber, the town established a Hurricane Re-entry Pass Program to speed up re-entry onto the island in the case of a mandatory evacuation. Under the new plan, passholders, such as residents and business owners, would be able to access the island in dedicated traffic lanes at security checkpoints after returning from an evacuation,

Business owners, residents and building managers can apply for the pass at the Police Department's Crime Scene Unit or online at townofpalmbeach.com. No more than two (2) passes per address will be issued.

Predictions by Colorado State University show that the Atlantic basin will see 13 named storms, 8 tropical storms, 5 hurricanes, and 2 major hurricanes this season.

The town is also developing a new civic alert system, said Fire-Rescue spokesman Sean Baker. The new system will not require residents to sign up like they currently have to on the town website. The new format is expected to roll out before the beginning of hurricane season and will allow the town to send alerts to landline phones in Palm Beach.

WPTV meteorologist Glenn Glazer stated one of the improvements for the 2019 hurricane season will be smaller, more precise "cones" which show the projected path of the center of a storm. He also suggested that residents should check the local news for storm predictions before checking the Weather Channel.

Remember to get your Hurricane Re-Entry Pass now and avoid the rush when a hurricane is approaching!

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

By Bobbie Lindsay, Town Council Member

Bobbie Lindsay, one of our Council Members, spoke recently at one of our “Talk of the Town” meetings about Palm Beach’s environmental concerns. In addition to the more publicized issues of sea level rise, more intense storms, seaweed blooms and greater beach erosion, she focused on what she sees as a less visible, but equally important threat. Bobbie views the impacts of synthetic fertilizers and chemicals routinely placed on our properties as a growing concern for our residents, pets, birds, bees, and our ecosystem in general.

Since the mid-1970’s, corporations trying to improve crop yields have created a buffet of toxic chemicals to control (kill) crop-eating insects. Homeowners are sold many of the same products to place on our lawns, our gardens, and our trees and shrubs to kill every kind of insect or fungus that may contribute to a brown spot in the lawn, an infestation of our exotic ficus hedges, as well as weeds or wildflowers other than grass sprouting up around our well-manicured properties.

The problem is we don’t “see” these chemicals and we don’t understand that they are harmful to far more than the “targeted” insect or weed. In fact, treating white fly on our ficus hedges kills not only whitefly, but every other insect that may be nearby (most are beneficial) including our critically important pollinators. Most chemicals are applied by spraying, drenching or injecting into the roots, or spread as granules, appearing like bits of fertilizer. Have you heard of Weed N’ Feed?

Bobbie is concerned residents don’t understand how these chemicals are ingested into the plant, often making the entire plant toxic to all insects. Some chemicals contaminate and remain in the soil for years, and rain and storm water runoff cause these toxins and synthetic fertilizers to end up in our oceans, aquifers, and waterways, causing harmful effects to much larger populations and species than the intended targets (including humans). When we walk on recently treated “toxic lawns”, we track the chemicals into our homes on our shoes!

Bobbie believes Palm Beachers are naturally good stewards of the environment and are too smart to be hoodwinked by a few pesticide companies trying to sell our property managers regular treatments of unneeded toxins. She made some simple suggestions about how to be better stewards of our properties:

- ◆ Require your pesticide company to list the chemicals used on your property, including the chemical names, the frequency and type of application, the location and the purpose. (She can help you research their effects).
- ◆ Ask what they are trying to kill.
- ◆ Are chemicals being applied prophylactically or only when needed? Are you on a monthly or quarterly system? (BAD IDEA!)
- ◆ Assume you need no pesticides, herbicides or fungicides, but if you must treat an out of control situation, USE ORGANICS and do it as needed.
- ◆ Get rid of your *Ficus Benjamina* hedges gradually if too expensive to do at once, and replace with a native such as Coco Plum, Green Buttonwood, Seagrape or Simpson Stopper.
- ◆ Weave more native plants into your handsome landscapes. They require no chemicals, are salt and drought tolerant, and feed our native wildlife!

Sources

- ◆ [https://beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/GoodHealthHarmed%20\(1\).pdf](https://beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/GoodHealthHarmed%20(1).pdf)
- ◆ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/27/magazine/insect-apocalypse.html>
- ◆ <https://www.tcpalm.com/story/news/2018/07/18/floridas-polluted-waters-algae-eating-fish-linked-als-and-alzheimers/791158002/>

GOOD NEWS & BAD NEWS



Florida's 2019 Legislative Session ended on May 3rd with not a lot of change to report for community association residents.

There is good news in the form of some relief for older high rises who had been facing the prospect of installing an Engineered Life Safety System (ELSS) by the end of 2019. Thanks in large part to CALL's efforts, these buildings will now have some breathing room in the form of additional installation time found in HB 7103. This bill passed the House on 5/3 and has already been sent to the Governor. Governor DeSantis will now have fifteen days to act on the bill by either signing it, vetoing it, or allowing it to become law without his signature. We have every belief that the Governor will sign HB 7103 into law.

While full opt-out rights were NOT achieved, assuming the Governor allows HB 7103 to become law, older high rises (75 ft. or higher) will now have until the end of 2023 to install an ELSS. This will give some of those communities time to marshal the resources to begin installing an ELSS and, for those communities who wish to continue the fight, awareness that if the data pull required under this new law (a report on the number of impacted communities must be delivered to the Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the House by September 1, 2020) does not support the narrative that ELSS installations will cost billions of dollars statewide, the willingness of Florida legislators to continue staving off the retrofitting will come into question.

CALL's lobbyist on this issue, Becker Shareholder and former State Senator Ellyn Bogdanoff, has vowed to continue to pursue legislative relief from ELSS installations as long as impacted associations are willing to join the fight. CALL will be providing more information on this targeted advocacy initiative in the coming months.

The bad news to report is that Senate Bill 1128, which would have criminalized fraudulent emotional support animal (ESA) requests, was withdrawn from consideration and did not pass. The purpose of this important piece of legislation by Senator Manny Diaz was to reduce the number of people misrepresenting their pets as assistance animals. The average high-rise building with pet restrictions spends at least \$2,500 per year in legal fees evaluating ESA requests that are questionable at best and blatantly fraudulent at worst. Not surprisingly, many boards, managers, and residents have grown weary of one-sided FHA policies and we had been hopeful that 1128 might pass.

CALL will be reaching out to your policymakers over the coming months to determine why the bill was withdrawn from consideration and to urge a reboot next year. For each of you who has taken the time to contact me with requests for information or to share messages you've sent to your legislators in response to a CALL Alert you read, thank you for your involvement! For ALL of our CALL members, you have some homework to do over the coming months. Please reach out to your State Senator and State Representative and make an appointment to meet these folks in their district offices to introduce your community to them in person.

By having these in-person conversations well in advance of the 2020 Legislative Session, your legislators will be able to put a name and face to your call or email thereby injecting even more meaning into your communications next year.

Very truly yours,
Donna DiMaggio Berger, Founder & Exec. Director
Community Association Leadership Lobby

CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION EVENTS

| <u>Date/Time</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Speaker/Guests</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| May - 5/16 | Hurricane Preparedness | Chief Baker | So. Fire House 2185 S Ocean |

AROUND THE TOWN EVENTS

| | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| 6/7/19 - 8a | Cup of Jo W/Bo Huggins - Mthly Undergrounding Update | | So. Fire House - 2185 S. Ocean |
|-------------|--|--|--------------------------------|



WORK.
MEET.
NETWORK.



From the Solo to the Maestro,
Luxurious Offices & Suites for 1 to 21


**SYMPHONY
WORKPLACES**
*Orchestrating the Best Workplaces
since 1988*

ON THE OCEAN IN PALM BEACH • 2875 SOUTH OCEAN BLVD. • 877.539.5100

NOTES OF INTEREST

- ◆ Sherry Jacobs, wife of Steve Jacobs who is the General Counsel for the Citizens' Association, was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Palm Beach Cultural Council.
- ◆ Congratulations to the Nicholas Caristo, newly appointed Police Chief, who stopped by the Citizens' Association Board of Directors' meeting on 5/6 and stated he is looking forward to working with our organization. He addressed a series of concerns facing our residents: pedestrian and bicycle safety, cooperation between respective county and town Police Departments, hurricane procedures and code enforcement issues.
- ◆ New lamp poles along S. Ocean Blvd. (expected before the end of summer) will be installed soon as part of the undergrounding project which will improve street lighting.
- ◆ Citizens' Association Directors, Dick Kleid and Ron Matzner, will be part of a sub-committee on pedestrian safety and will work closely with Chief Caristo in researching safety options such as new signage and possibly crosswalks. The State of Florida would also be involved because the street is a state roadway.
- ◆ Community Relations Director Michael Grodnick is available to do a security survey (at no charge) for any building interested in this service.

Thank you to all of our 2018-2019 sponsors for their support!



Chris Knapp, CFP®



Mission Statement: To educate residents about issues that affect our quality of life, to encourage civic participation, to advocate for the best interests of our entire community, and to protect and enhance the character and beauty of our environment.

Contact us at 561-655-5466 or email Sandra at sandra@citizensassociationofpalmbeach.org