

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF VOLUSIA COUNTY

THE *VOTER*

Sept - Oct
2020

www.LWVVC.org

P.O. Box 9695, Daytona Beach, FL 32120

President's Remarks:

On August 18th, we commemorated the 100th anniversary of Women's Suffrage. Passage of the 19th amendment was a major milestone in America's ongoing struggle to expand the vote. It came about because thousands of women and men persisted for 72 years despite threats, hostility, and turmoil. Today, we realize that the suffrage movement was not perfect. The marginalization of Black suffragists for political purposes was a grave mistake and one that we must recognize and learn from as we move forward to create a more just society. The League remains committed to protecting the right to vote for all eligible Americans and ensuring no unnecessary obstacles prevent voters from making our voices heard at the ballot box.



Throughout our history, there has always been resistance whenever groups of citizens pushed for their right to vote. We should remember, however, that after 1920 many Americans continued to be disenfranchised due to prejudice, Jim Crow era laws, and other suppression tactics. Our work to prepare voters and to protect the right to vote remains central to our mission today. While currently unable to hold face to face events, we have been able to find creative ways to continue our important work. Through virtual technology and social media, we have provided educational programs; continued our monthly board and action team meetings; conducted a candidates forum; completed an electronic Voter Guide; and promoted our message to the public.

In addition to our voter service activities, LWVVC action teams are working on a variety of local issues that affect our community. Those issues include:

- Supporting Census 2020;
- Assisting the LWVFL postcard campaign to encourage returning citizens to vote;
- Participating in the ECHO/Volusia Forever Campaign;
- Studying the impact of poverty on educational opportunities in Volusia's public schools;
- Beginning the effort to engage with other organizations to promote diversity and begin a dialogue about social inequities.

You can learn more about what our action teams are doing in this edition of *The Voter*. We encourage all members to become involved with our League in whatever way meets their needs.

To learn more about what we are doing, visit our webpage at lwvvc.org.

Thank you for your commitment and support.

In League,
Nicki Junkins, President

Sept 10 Thursday Virtual Social Activity

LWVVC Social

**What's Happening at LWVVC?
&
Informal Conversation among Members**

Watch for more info via e-mail.

Week of Sept. 13 Virtual Hot Topics Meeting

**“Providing Shelters of the Homeless
in Challenging Times”**



presenters

Harry Robinson

Neighborhood Center for West Volusia

James Buck

Hope Place

&

Victoria Fahlberg

First Step Shelter

5:30-6:30 p.m.

Date will be announced

Sept 16 Wednesday Virtual Board Meeting

LWVVC Board Meeting

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Sept 26 Saturday Virtual General Meeting

**“Ballot Measure for
ECHO and Volusia Forever”**



Week of Oct. 11 Virtual Hot Topics

“Know What is On Your Ballot”
*Overview of Constitutional Amendment
Proposals on the General Election Ballot*

Presented by

LWVVC Voter Service Team

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Date will be announced

Oct 21 Wednesday Virtual Board Meeting

LWVVC Board Meeting

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Oct. 24 Saturday Virtual General Meeting

Joint Meeting with AAUW

“Knowing to Remembering”

by

Professor Trent Tomengo

Seminole State College, Humanities Dept.

10:00 a.m. - Noon



UPCOMING MEETING NOTES

Sept 10, Virtual LWVVC Social:

Join us for a brief update on What’s Happening at LWVVC followed by informal conversation with our members.

Week of Sept 13, Virtual Hot Topic:

“Providing Shelters for the Homeless in Challenging Times”

Representatives from three agencies providing services to local homeless populations provide information and insights. Homeless shelters are facing new challenges with COVID and the hurdles service providers face as resources are disrupted.

Sept 26, Virtual General Meeting:

“Ballot Measure for ECHO and Volusia Forever”

The campaign is on to renew funding for ECHO (Environmental, Cultural, Historical, Outdoor Recreation) projects and the preservation of critical green spaces through Volusia Forever land acquisition. The program will outline how these programs came about, achievements made possible through their funding and the impacts to quality of life in Volusia County.

October 11, Virtual Hot Topic:

“Know What is on Your Ballot”

LWVVC Voter Service Team will provide an overview of the Constitutional Amendment proposals that will appear on the General Election ballot.

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Sandra Horikami, Voter Editor

LWVVC Board Meets in July to Set the Direction for 2020-2021

In July, our board held its annual planning retreat which was held virtually due to COVID-19. During the retreat, the board reviewed our 2019 – 2020 achievements, set goals and priorities for the coming year, mapped out our meeting and hot topics calendar, and welcomed new appointed board members. The board approved 4 goals for 2020-2021:

1. Educate and empower citizens in preparation for the upcoming elections.
2. Commit to listen to and amplify underrepresented voices, educate ourselves and our community on historic and ongoing systemic racism.
3. Provide education and advocate in the areas of public education, election integrity, social justice, juvenile justice, health care (including mental health), natural resources, governmental restructuring, and growth management issues.
4. Expand our communication with diverse groups.

Other board action included:

- Created of a new action team (Social Justice and Diversity Team) led by Vickie Presley to develop implementation strategies for goals 2 and 4.
- Welcomed 4 new LWVVC appointed board members whose terms will run through June, 2021. Appointments included Pat Drago, Judy Gordon, Vickie Presley and Ann Smith. *Note:* The board approved a 5th appointed director, Amelia Maulfair, at its August board meeting. Their pictures and bios follow this report.
- Discussed expanding our college student outreach initiative and the impact COVID-19 may have on any outreach efforts.
- Identified possible dates and program topics and speakers for our general meetings and hot topics. Programs will be held virtually until the board is confident it is safe to resume face to face meetings. Program topics are aligned with those priority areas designated in Goal 3.

Nicki Junkins, President

LWVVC Welcomes Five Appointed Directors to Our Board **Pat Drago**



Pat is a Florida native who retired from the Volusia County School District in 2009. The position she held with the school district was Executive Director of Facilities. In that role she directed school site acquisition, planning, design, construction, renovation and maintenance for 10,000,000 square feet of educational facilities. She was also fortunate enough to supervise 350 employees and a \$750 million construction program. Volusia County is her home so this was a rare privilege, indeed. Pat was first hired by the school district due to her advocacy on behalf of the Volusia League of Women Voters. She has been a member of the league since 1980 and has served as local league president and on the state board in the '80's. Her interests are education, land planning and natural resources, and governmental organization. Formerly, Pat served as LWVVC president and LWVFL board member. Currently, she serves as Education Action Team Chair.

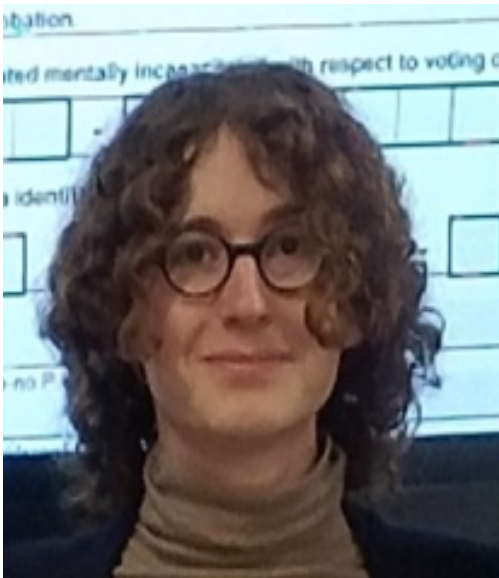
Judy Gordon

Judy, a native of New Jersey, moved with her family as a child to Tampa, Florida. She was a member of the first graduating class of the University of Florida School of Nursing. It was there that she met her husband Travis. They moved to New Jersey after both graduated where he worked for AT&T and she began a varied career. They have two children, Gregg and Mark living in New Hampshire and Virginia. There are three grandchildren.

Judy has held several different positions in nursing. First as a clinical nurse, then in education, consulting, and, finally, in different management positions in hospitals and agencies. Her last and longest position was as Director of Home Care and Hospice at the Atlantic Health System in Summit and Milburn, New Jersey. Judy holds a PhD in Nursing Research from New York University. Currently, Judy serves at the LWVVC Membership Co-Chair.



Amelia Maulfair



Amelia is in her junior year at Stetson University, where she is studying political science and philosophy. Currently, she is the Director of Stetson Votes, a non-partisan organization whose members joined the League last season. During her time in this capacity, Stetson Votes has won multiple national grants, hired five new student employees, as well as forming the partnership with LWVVC. Other work experiences include six months developing civic engagement and political advocacy training materials for various volunteer organizations as well as two years as a legal researcher at the Law Firm of Mahshie and DeCosta. She spends her free time reading philosophy or other theory related materials. Her pronouns are she/her/hers. As a LWVVC board director, she will support our college student outreach initiative and other efforts to engage younger citizens.

Vickie Presley

Vickie J. Presley is a retired area superintendent with Volusia County Schools having served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal and Director of Human Resources. She is a member of The Daytona Beach Chapter of the Links, Incorporated where she served as program chair for four years and works with a group of high school students, Rising Stars -Young Achievers. Vickie volunteers at different schools and serves as a liaison between designated schools and Food Brings Hope where she also serves as a volunteer. Vickie is a member of the National Association of Colored People (NAACP) and works tirelessly at Allen Chapel A.M.E. church. Joyfully, she is the Nana of two beautiful girls, has one daughter and is married to Tyrone. Vickie is serving as the LWVVC social justice and diversity team chair.



Ann Smith



Ann Smith is a graduate of Florida State University with a BA in English Education. She taught in the Volusia County school system for 34 years as an English and speech teacher primarily in grade 7. She was the 1985 Volusia County Teacher of the Year. Ann was a proud member of the teachers' organization her entire teaching career, holding numerous offices including teacher representative, president, and chief negotiator. She represented the state organization in Washington on the National Education Board and also served as the chairperson of the NEA Human and Civil Rights Committee for many years. Ann has been a member of the League of Women Voters of Volusia County for over 30 years. In addition to many different leadership roles, she is a past president, former voter service chair and currently serves as parliamentarian and speakers bureau co-chair.

Voter Service Team Report

This election season is different, however, we are being creative and in partnership with other teams we are accomplishing our goals of assisting and educating voters.

Sandy Horikami and her team did a great job with the Voter's Guide on Vote411.org. Susan Bayley led a team who made phone calls to encourage more participation from candidates and it worked. If you checked it before the Primary be sure to return for the General Election to see all of the candidates on the November ballot.

Voter Service Team is promoting the guide. Along with our t-shirts and bumper, Nicki has done a fabulous with Facebook posts.

This year, for the first time, we are using posters to promote Vote411. We have given them to Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Bethune Cookman University, Daytona Housing Authority, all of the Libraries and will continue to find locations for the posters. We are also using our small cards at the colleges.

We will not have the fun of going to the schools but our past efforts created inclusion of our basic program into the curriculum of the schools. Despite the challenges the schools are going to continue educating students about voting virtually and assisting with online registration. Niki helped create a virtual replacement for our part in the process.

The effort to register returning citizens has been a complicated by endless court challenges. A few of our members are involved in calling a list of ex-felons who do not owe fines. Jeanne Tanke who chairs the Amendment 4 team has about 30 volunteers who will be sending post cards. We have not given up!

Our new Diversity Action Team has begun work on a video promoting outreach to diverse groups as well as promoting voting. Watch for its rollout in the coming weeks.

The Education Action Team and Ann Smith put together a wonderful candidate forum for School Board, District 2. Wes Lewis got the video up for voters to see it. Ann is working with other groups on future forums.

What you can do

- **Repost** information about the coming election from our Facebook page to your own page.
- **Request** your own vote-by-mail ballot so you have it in case you need it. Then encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same thing.
- **Return** your vote-by-mail ballot **early** and encourage others to return early also!
- **Research** Let us know about locations that could use a **Vote411.org** poster and we will get them there.

Use your bumper sticker and t-shirt to spread the word about Vote411.org

Carla Christianson, Voter Service Chair

Reclaim4all@gmail.com

Education Action Team Report

The Education Action Team has been very active this summer. We can report the following activities:

1. A virtual forum for the three school board candidates. Ann Smith was the very capable moderator, Sari Leman Clark was the timer and we had participation by all three candidates: incumbent, Ida Wright, Anita Burnette and Dr. Andre Grant.
2. We have scheduled a Hot Topics presentation on school opening under pandemic conditions with deputy superintendent, Dr. Carmen Balgobin, and VUE president, Elizabeth Albert.
3. Members will follow any discussion of school attendance boundary changes in the Halifax Area that could effectively re-segregate those schools.

Our next meeting is Sept. 14 at 3:00 pm. These are all virtual and we welcome new members. If you would like to join us, email me at patddrago@aol.com.

Pat Drago, Education Chair

Social Justice and Diversity Action Team Report

“Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without.” William Sloane Coffin, Jr.

The team met via Zoom on August 11, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. to discuss strategies to meet the goal: Promote collaboration and build positive relationships with diverse groups. We decided upon two strategies at this juncture.

First, because of our excitement and commitment to getting Americans to vote this election year, we will implement the “I VOTE BECAUSE...” video project and invite other organizations to participate. We will share guidelines for developing the video with a submission date of September 8, 2020, and encourage them to share the video with members of their organization as well as others.

Secondly, the team is encouraging members to participate in the Daytona Beach’s Mayor’s Equity Initiative. One does not have to reside in Daytona Beach to serve on a committee; Team members volunteered to serve on committees.

Team Members: Carla Christianson, Linda Lenk, Deb Noah, Jeanne Tanke, Pat Drago, Saralee Morrissey, Ann Smith, Vickie Presley, and Nicki Junkins

Vickie Presley, Social Justice & Diversity Chair

Census 2020

As we are sure you are aware, the United States is conducting Census 2020, the census conducted every ten years. Census 2020 is attempting to count an estimated 330 million people in 140 million households. The following are recent Census 2020 activities and dates:

- Census Timeline -- It's expected that the Census Bureau will extend the window for field data collection and self-response to October 31, 2020, which will allow for apportionment counts to be delivered to the President by April 30, 2021, and redistricting data to be delivered to the states no later than July 31, 2021. In mid-March, every household in the United States received an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. The Census form asks questions about everyone living at your address on April 1st, 2020. It takes about ten minutes to complete. Every household has the option of responding online, by U.S. mail, or by phone.
- In the first week of August, for those for which a response had not been received, a census worker is sent to their home to collect census data.
- Thus far, the response rate in the U.S. is 63.2%, in Florida 60.3% and in Volusia County 63.7 %.
- The U.S. Census Bureau has established a new schedule for counting people experiencing homelessness in the 2020 Census. The operation was originally scheduled for March 30, March 31 and April 1, but health and safety concerns with COVID-19 forced a delay in these activities. Between September 22 and 24, the Census Bureau now plans to send specially trained census takers to count people at shelters, soup kitchens, regularly scheduled mobile food vans, and locations previously identified by the Census Bureau where people are known to sleep outdoors (like under bridges) and at all-night businesses (such as transit stations and 24-hour laundromats). People experiencing homelessness will be counted where they are staying when census takers visit between September 22-24.
- The LWV Florida Statewide Census Committee is seeking volunteers to assist in a special Census outreach program for undercounted communities in Florida - texting people in undercounted communities and encouraging them to answer the 2020 Census. You can volunteer at [COE Texter Participation form](#). When it asks "Organization Name" please put League of Women Voters of Florida.

Important elements of Census 2020:

- Information provided is confidential and protected by Federal law.
- Census data is used for creating state legislature districts. Florida is projected to gain an additional 1 or 2 U.S. congressional seats after the 2020 U.S.
- Every year, the federal government distributes more than \$675 billion to states, counties and local governments based on census counts. Florida receives about \$29 billion annually. A study from George Washington University estimates that Florida will receive approximately \$1,445 for each person counted in the state.
- More information about Census 2020 can be found at <https://www.volusia.org/government/census-2020/#>.

The LWVVC encourages you all to participate in Census 2020 and be counted. Also, we ask that you encourage your friends and neighbors to participate. SPREAD THE WORD!

Thomas Hilburn

One Hundred Year Celebration Report

Covid 19 changed things for some of our final plans for the celebration of the 19th Amendment passage but not everything on our wish list.

The display at the Historic Society continued as they reopened to the public so more could see the great work on that display.

Suze Peace put up the final of our many library displays in DeLand for the month of August. The Library put together a wonderful video for Equality Day about women in Florida and the struggle to get the vote. The League's display in DeLand is highlighted at the end.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=311917746595147>

A very powerful Letter to the Editor was written by Nicki and published in Sunday August 16th News-Journal. If you missed it you can read it on our website LWVVC.org.

Nicki continued to mention the passage of the Amendment on our Social Media.

A great job! Happy 100 Years of voting rights for women!!!

Carla Christianson, One Hundred Year Celebration Chair

Observer Corps Report

The following are key issues reported by League Observers at local meetings. We need additional Observers for Volusia county city meetings not currently represented. Please contact Susan Bayley, susancbayley@gmail.com or Ann Harrell, aharrell595@aol.com or Nancy Nusbaum, nusbanh@gmail.com if you can help.

Edgewater City

Linda Mojer, Observer

<http://www.cityofedgewater.org/bc/page/agendas-minutes>

See website for information

Daytona Beach

Keturah Thompson, Observer

www.codb.us/577/Agendas-Minutes

See website for information

Daytona Beach Shores

<https://www.dbshores.org/289/Agenda-and-Minutes>

Pat Gadbow, Observer

April and May, 2020

I did not physically attend the meetings. At the April meeting it was announced that Nancy Maddox has replaced Roni Jackson who has retired as Recreation Director. Roni was very effective as a

recreation director.

Ordinance 2020-05 allows for outdoor dining with restrictions. After much discussion in earlier meetings this ordinance is approved.

In the May meeting it was announced that Halifax Health Urgent Care Center opening in the vacated recreation building has been delayed due the coronavirus.

At the May meeting there was a discussion of opening a part time Chamber of Commerce office in DB Shores. Becky Voce is the new City Attorney.

Face Masks are strongly urged but not mandated due to the difficulty in enforcing.

Richard Bryan and Michael Politis were unopposed and will serve a second 4 year term

Deland

<http://www.delandfl.iqm2.com>

Mara Whitridge, Observer

Mainly the only big items have been in land use. Two big projects one off Plymouth goes through Orange and Adelle. It is mixed use and housing. The second big change is 318 acres located west of Lake Winnemisset and north of Services Road where both major residential and commercial projects are planned to take place.. more major projects include the Reserve at Victoria, which will consist of 406 single family homes and 162 townhomes south of East Beresford Avenue and west of Dr; Martin Luther King Jr. Beltway: Park Lake Estates with 450 homes across the Beltway and Victoria Oaks where several of the 581 homes have already been built just southwest of Park Lake Estates.

Halifax Health Board of Commissioners

Susan Pate, Observer

No report this issue

Holly Hill

Susan Pate, Observer

www.Hollyhillfl.org/bc/page/agendas-mintues-meeting-recordings

New Smyrna Beach

www.cityofnsb.com/315/Agendas-and-Minutes

Nancy Nusbaum, Observer

April 2020

This was the first virtual meetings with officials participating from home. Other measures were taken to protect public health including initial closing of boat ramps on March 27 with opening to residents only on April 17 to May 15. The Utilities Commission suspended disconnects and late fees until June 1 and decreased electric bills an average of 22% for residents. The City agreed to defer rent payments for city properties for three months that could be paid back over the next year without interest. All special events, playgrounds and park restrooms were closed to May 15.

Commissioners addressed more issues around managing aspects of growth and development including traffic calming, and designated loading zones on Flagler Street to reduce blockage.

May 2020

Continuing with management of response to COVID-19, the Commission agreed to postpone July 4 fireworks to a Labor Day show. City employees were to return to work and in person meetings of maximum 10 people were to resume on June 1 with CDC precautions.

The Commissions addressed utilization of a North Causeway riverfront site that is used for overflow trailer and vehicle parking. Utilization of this prime property is controversial including proposals to make it a park, to commercial development to continued parking. There have been complaints from the neighbors about vehicle congestion, poorly behaved beach goers, trash, etc. There also was discussion about another riverfront property, on which the Boat and Ski Club has held a below market lease since 1960. There is controversy about this “sweetheart” lease due to the value of the property versus the historic relationship between the club and generations of NSB residents. The Club was granted a 90day extension of the lease that is scheduled to expire on July 31.

June 2020

The Commission agreed to “Taking It To The Streets”, permitting businesses on Canal Street to celebrate on the street, on Thursday evenings through the end of July. The objective was to allow the community to spread out, maintain social distance while enjoying the Canal Street district.

In 2019 NSB citizens voted for a \$15 million bond referendum to allow the city to buy land along the historically and ecologically important Turnbull Creek for preservation. Subsequently, 152 acres of the Turnbull Trace property that had been planned for a subdivision were purchased along Pioneer Trail and Otter Boulevard using the bond dollars and a Florida Forever grant. In the June 23 meeting the Commission agreed to an option to purchase an additional 3 parcels for 10.08 acres (from Sea Star Realty, LLC and Neal Harding) for \$1.2 million. The property, with many specimen and historic trees, which had been planned for development, would be added to the land selected for preservation by the Turnbull Creek Preservation Committee. The actual purchase is pending disbursement of \$3,620,000 from the Florida Communities Trust grant (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) specifically for acquired Turnbull Trace property.

Ormond Beach City

www.ormondbeach.iqm2.com/citizens

Susan Bayley, Observer

April 28, 2020

Another virtual meeting, not surprisingly dominated by COVID-19 issues. As a member of the state task force on COVID-19*, State Representative Leek was proud to report on city and state efforts, an example being that 15% of cases have required hospitalizations. He mentioned that the state’s unemployment program is a “fiasco” because of design flaws that weren’t realized during the recent good economy. (No mention was made that the system has been underfunded for years.)

Commissioners said that constituents were calling them about this serious problem. Partington worries that the 32174 zip code that has a number of cases encompasses a large geographic area. He didn’t mention the high number of cases in the city’s nursing homes, though. After Leek left the meeting, Shanahan complained that the state was not releasing information about nursing home cases.

Commissioners are upset with plans for the Avalon project, with Daytona Beach changing its rules regarding development. They will hold a workshop on this issue as soon as possible.

*Agriculture is not represented nor is the Secretary of Agriculture.

May 12, 2020

Residents of Ormond by the Sea voiced concern that annexation to the city would be required for use of the city’s potable water service. Partington disabused them of this concern.

Most of the meeting dealt with the city’s July 4 celebration now that the governor declared that no large groups could gather before July 7. A far much discussion with one commissioner wanting to hold the event on July 4 anyway, to others who cautioned against rescheduling it later in July, commissioners agreed to hold it on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend (9/5/20). The contractor for

this event has agreed to offer services for this new date. Commissioners agreed to pay \$7,000 more for an additional five minutes of fireworks.

May 26, 2020

Probably because of COVID-19, no residents reported concerns to the commission. However, Deb Denys, member of the Volusia County council reported that the county had just approved \$15 million to its 16 cities for COVID-19 expenses. Ormond Beach should receive a little more than \$1 million. Routine business was addressed, while commissioners' comments proved more noteworthy. Selby reported resident complaints about very low water pressure. He also said that the city needs more water storage, now only having 8 million gallons capacity and that there should be water meters. Partington wants more information about this issue.

Persis agreed with Selby that everyone wants schools to re-open in August, but if so there will have to be changes. She is optimistic that it will all work out," but there may be hardships.

June 9, 2020

Mayor Partington opened the meeting with a strong statement about the George Floyd murder and protests, saying Ormond Beach stood in solidarity with African Americans. He reported that the city's policemen wear body cameras and are accredited with an audit every three years. There is a citizen law enforcement advisory board that reviews complaints about its police department.

The city will install more electric charging stations for cars. At this point, there aren't plans for signage not allowing other cars to park there.

The city's new floating dock of six slips is dedicated for residential, not commercial, use. Its usage will be monitored.

Commissioners passed an ordinance outlining standards for professionally installed electric generator, even though newer ones aren't as noisy as earlier ones.

July 28, 2020

Because the governor has declared a state of emergency, the meeting was virtual. Commissioners were pleased that the FY20-21 budget is balanced and that residents' tax bill will be slightly reduced. COVID-19 and its effects dominated discussion.

Commissioners agreed to proclaim wearing masks in public without mandating it.

Labor Day fireworks have been cancelled with the possibility of rescheduling on Thanksgiving weekend or the next weekend after the Christmas parade.

Final decision about special event permits/Biketoberfest will be made at the next meeting on August 4, recognizing that this decision is tied to whether the governor decides to move to Phase Three for reopening the economy and more importantly what Daytona Beach decides.

August 4, 2020

Another virtual meeting because of COVID-19, so not surprisingly, there were no resident remarks at the beginning of the meeting. They are anxious to return to meetings at city hall.

An item was taken off the consent agenda because Sunrise Aviation challenged as non-competitive a lease for corporate hangars at the Ormond Beach airport. Legal counsel Hayes reported that this matter is not subject to competitive bidding so commissioners approved the lease with its current company. Commissioners also received an update on the sewer maintenance project, necessary because of a break in July 2019. Repair is about to be finished, including an upgrade at Granada and Clyde Morris. There will be lane closures from September 23-30, while all work will be done at night. Commissioners were particularly concerned about traffic at this busy intersection.

Pierson

www.townofpierson.org

Susan Bayley, Observer

June 23, 2020

Laurie Asbury, CEO of Family Health Source*, was asked to respond to a "rant" from Larrivee about testing for COVID-19 in Pierson at its June 2nd meeting. She reported there is not a problem with specimens, saying it was hearsay that there was.

Halifax Humane Society is releasing neutered cats back to Pierson, but the town doesn't want them back. Council needs more information about this ongoing problem. Most of the meeting was about retrofitting a former elementary school for Pierson's new town center. Town attorney Waugh has completed his review of town's ordinances, including costs, procedures, and surveys for annexation. Mayor Bennett welcomes annexation.

Interestingly, Asbury along with three of the six council members and legal counsel were not wearing masks at the meeting. After the meeting, I asked Asbury why she wasn't wearing mask. She said that she had difficulty breathing with it on. I suggested she wear one, at least putting it under her chin. She thought that a good idea!

July 14, 2020

The council addressed an emergency ordinance, whether the town should require wearing masks in public. The mayor, vice mayor and one other councilman were not wearing masks. Because the ordinance would be an emergency (a state requirement for such an ordinance), it would last only for seven days. No mention was made of the seven-day timeframe. A proposed penalty of \$20 for a first offense and \$50 for a second one was mentioned. Two residents offered their opinions, with one resident saying it would be like the Gestapo, and affront to one's freedom. Another resident reported that a business would not want customers to wear masks because of fear of a robbery. The mayor and vice mayor simply stated that they could not support this ordinance, with no explanation for their position. They were simply bothered about it. The ordinance was not passed, with a 3 to 2 vote. The two oldest members of the council supported the emergency ordinance.

Note: Because I had not seen the agenda before the meeting (as I usually do), I didn't know that masks would be on the agenda. When I entered the room, I noticed that the lawyer for the council was wearing a mask, which he had not done at the previous meeting. I learned that he does not support the requirement that one wear a mask because it is a civil right; he cited the first amendment; it isn't a law. It was his choice to not wear a mask, as wearing one would be mine. He does not recognize the need for a community approach to this issue.

July 28, 2020

The first item on the agenda was a resolution encouraging use of masks in indoor settings in the town. It is copied from one that Ponce Inlet just endorsed. The mask mandate was defeated by a 5-3 vote. Two items about building on undeveloped roads were tabled. A resident who always attends council meeting reported on his investigation to purchase town shirts for council members and the planning commission for official business as other town officials do. The council approved purchase of such shirts from a Pierson business, not only to support this business but because it offered the best deal.

August 11, 2020

Council members spent most of the meeting on administrative decisions because Pierson is too small (population 18,000) to have a city manager. It reinstated its seven-day framework for states of emergency. Herbert Bennett reported an increase in COVID-19 cases, now 150 (compared to four cases in mid-May). The mayor, Michael Bennett (not related to Herbert) reported that his nephew in Seville had COVID-19 and believes his life was saved because of taking hydroxychloroquine!

Ponce Inlet Town Council

<http://www.ponce-inlet.org/129/agenda-minutes>

Pat Gadbow, Observer

The meetings are held @ 6 p.m. on the third Thursday. I have not attended nor listened. I scanned through the minutes, ordinances and resolutions since my last report.

Changes in town real property now requires a super majority. In regards to change the status

Regarding amendments to the cost sharing agreement between Ponce Inlet and Port Orange septic-to-sewer construction project remains contingent upon final approval of budgetary allocation from the St John's River Water Management District(SJRWMD). SJRWMD is schedules for their board meeting on September 22, 2020

River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

Ann Harrell, Observer

<https://www.r2ctpo.org/board-committees/tpo-board/>

See website for information

Volusia County School Board

Ann Harrell, Observer

www.vcsedu.org/school-board/agendas-minutes

June 23, 2020 – Regular School Board Virtual Meeting

▲ Resolution 2020-23 “Concern of the Volusia County Local Mitigation Strategy” was approved. Mr. Greg Akin, Chief Operating Officer, stated Volusia County Schools is an active participant in “Volusia Prepares” which is a local mitigation strategy working group. The purpose of the local mitigation strategy is to establish an ongoing process that will make hazard mitigation part of the daily functioning of the entire community, including both public and private sectors and our residents themselves. The Local Mitigation Strategy serves as a bridge between local governments’ comprehensive growth management plans, the county comprehensive emergency management plan, land development regulations, and relevant ordinances and codes such as those for floodplain management. The strategy integrates mitigation initiatives established through various policies, programs, and regulations into a single stand-alone working document.

▲ Dr. Fritz stated he wanted to ensure the public knows the district has a backup plan for graduation ceremonies. He discussed the current plan for graduation ceremonies being held at the Ocean Center, allowing two guests per graduate. He stated should the situation call for a change due to the number of COVID-19 cases, the ceremonies will still take place at the Ocean Center but would include the graduating students only. He explained the ceremonies will be live streamed for family members and friends.

▲ Board approved the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) Franchise Agreement between FLVS and the School Board of Volusia County for the 2020-2021 through 2022-2023 School Years.

▲ The Board approved the purchase of COVID-19 supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE), Teacher Supply Kits and other materials related to the prevention of COVID-19 to prepare for school reopening.

▲ Mr. Doran discussed an executive order issued by Governor DeSantis that strongly suggested school districts make their facilities available for polling places for voting up to and including cancelling school on the date of the election so the facilities can be taken over by the Supervisor of Elections. The Board agreed to permit the Volusia County Supervisor of Elections to use Volusia County Schools based on the executive order issued by Governor DeSantis for the primary and general elections.

Next Regular School Board virtual meeting – July 28, 2020, 3:30 p.m.

July 7, 2020 – School Board Special Session – 10:00 a.m.

▲ Superintendent Scott Fritz announced that he will be starting treatment next week for stage three rectal cancer. Dr. Carmen Balgobin was appointed as interim superintendent for the period of July 1, 2020 through August 28, 2020, or until such time Dr. Fritz is able to return to work.

July 21, 2020 – Special Emergency Session

▲ Board members met in a marathon meeting that lasted for more than 7 hours to discuss and finalize back-to-school plans during the coronavirus pandemic, with many teachers and parents providing comments at the virtual meeting. The Board agreed to push back the start of school to August 31, 2020 for all students and approved a live stream option known as **Volusia Live (pending approval from FLDOE)** in addition to the traditional classroom setting (Brick and Mortar) as directed by FLDOE. Teachers will report for duty on August 11, 2020.

July 28, 2020 Regular School Board Virtual Meeting

▲ For fiscal year 2020-2021, the Board approved a tentative tax rate of \$5.91 per \$1,000 of taxable value, which is down almost 3% from last year's rate of \$6.08 per \$1,000. But take a look at this year's rolled-back rate — \$5.72. This will enable the school district to generate additional funds.

▲ An emergency adoption of Policy 503 – Mandatory Face Coverings – was approved by the Board. As the Policy states, face coverings must be worn by all students, employees, visitors, vendors, or any other persons, while in or on school board property where social distancing guidelines from CDC cannot be maintained. This include, but is not limited to, school buses, class changes, cafeteria lines, in confined quarters, or any other places where social distancing guidelines cannot be followed. Students who refuse to wear a mask in the Brick and Mortar school setting may chose “Volusia Live” as an educational setting where masks are not required. “Volusia Live” is live streaming instruction. For exceptions, see Policy 503 on the School Board website. www.go.boarddocs.com

August 11, 2020 - School Board Meeting - Special Session

▲ Update on Volusia County COVID-19. A summary of the COVID-19 statistics through August 9, 2020 was presented by Patricia Boswell, Administrator, Volusia County Health Department. Total tested: 74,295; positivity rate for children is 14% but is trending downward in Volusia County. The Volusia County Health Dept. will stop offering testing to the public on August 21 but will focus on testing students and staff in schools. Take away: The Health Department and the schools will work together to help slow the spread of Covid-19.

▲ A report from the Mask committee outlined the procedures for Mask compliance and was presented by Rose Roland, Area Superintendent. Procedures recommended by the Mask committee to execute emergency Policy 503, Mandatory Face Coverings, were edited by the Board.

▲ Request for Waivers – approved the submission of a waiver request to Gov. DeSantis for FULL FTE Funding for Reduced class size and students who tune into classes from home (Volusia Live) during the pandemic and a waiver for a stay of high-stakes testing enforcement due to the circumstances facing the school district resulting from the on-going effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

▲ HR Corner: Leaving and hiring updates, August 10, 2020

Employees requested FFCRA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act) leaves – 35; Employees requested extended leave – 56; Retirement – 113; Resignations – 187; Instructional vacancies – 128; Instructional hires – 190; Support vacancies – 122; Support hires – 78; Available substitutes – 2,742.

Next regular virtual school board meeting – Tuesday, August 25, 2020, 5:30 p.m.

2020-2021 LWVVC Board Members:

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Carla Christianson1st Vice President
Cathy Egley.....2nd Vice President
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